

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

FAMILY OF ORIGIN - PART III

The Family Hero

Pastor Miles McPherson — September 23, 2012



ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. For all Rock Church events, please visit <http://www.sdrock.com/events/>.
2. If you are still rusty with Groups 2.0, or are not using it at all, please check out our video tutorials on Leader Central that will walk you through the process. Moving forward it is important that we are all using the system effectively. Please contact john.darrow@sdrock.com or jason.mayer@sdrock.com if you have any further questions.
3. If you know somebody that is interested in stepping up to lead a Community Group please have them go to <http://www.sdrock.com/communitygroups/lead/> to fill out an application to get started today! Our next New Leader Orientation is September 30th from 2-4 in room 232, please contact john.darrow@sdrock.com for more information.

MEMORY VERSE

“He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time”
(2 Timothy 1:9 NIV)

DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Use one or more of the following opening discussion starters)

1. Review the Sunday Message
 1. God’s acceptance is never in **jeopardy**. *Ephesians 2:8; Psalm 46:10*
You are worthy and you don’t have to work for acceptance.
 2. Allow yourself to be humanly **flawed**. *1 John 1:9*
Receive forgiveness.
 3. Practice letting go and not being in **control**. *Hebrews 11:1; Romans 1:17*
Rest in and accept the unknown.



2. Ask each member of the group to identify with one or two of the four kids of dysfunction (to promote participation start with yourself).
 - a. Hero
 - b. Scapegoat
 - c. Loner
 - d. Mascot

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS — FAMILY OF ORIGIN, PART THREE

Message Review and Introduction

Every family unit has a different dynamic. Parental expectations, culture, physical surroundings, personalities, and tradition all work together to shape the family environment. No matter how hard parents try to create a loving and accepting atmosphere for the children to grow and mature, our sinful nature opens up the opportunity for dysfunction to creep in. This dysfunction often manifests to the point where children take on one of four different roles.

The four kids of dysfunction:

- Hero – super kid, the little parent
- Scapegoat – troublemaker
- Loner – the quiet one who flies under the radar
- Mascot – family or class clown

As we discuss the personalities and behaviors of each role we will gain a better understanding of how the dysfunctions of our natural family are manifested into our relationships to those outside of our families. Additionally, families are not often aware of their interpersonal roles and relationship patterns. Not only will we gain a better insight of how we relate to others, we will also develop an awareness of how to interact with people who embody the traits of roles that are different from our own. Most importantly, our familial communication and behavior patterns are carried over into our relationship with God. Often, we end up with a skewed view of God and a skewed understanding of how He views us because of our own family experiences. We take the sins and shortcomings of our parents and siblings and project them onto God. Having healthy relationships is often difficult. However, by understanding why we think and act the way we do, we will free ourselves to develop a healthy biblical view of others and God.

This week we will be taking a closer look at the hero child. Potential learning outcomes for your group:

- The group members who identify as the hero child should discover how their dysfunctions have affected their relationships with people and God.
- Your group should discover ways to better communicate and show love specifically to the hero child.
- Discover the importance of truly accepting the forgiveness of God?
- Integrate your understanding of the hero child into your relationship growth plan from the last two weeks.



The following are the questions from the video study with supplemental questions and commentary to help guide your group discussion.

1. What are the dangers of being the “Hero”? For those of you who identify with the “Hero”, discuss how this has affected your relationships with others and with God.
 1. Use the notes from Sunday’s message to help promote an honest discussion.
 - A. What the hero feels on the inside:
 - Hurt, low self-esteem, can never do enough, not good enough, fear of failure, rejection and being found out, over-controlling to ensure things work out the way they want
 - Man’s and God’s acceptance are in jeopardy
 - B. What the hero looks like on the outside:
 - The “ 9-year-old going on 40”
 - The “perfect child”
 - The super kid/achiever
 - The athlete/prom queen/A student/etc.
 - C. What the hero means to the family:
 - They give the family self-worth
 - They provide proof that they are good parents
 - D. As an adult without help: Workaholic, need to control and manipulate, never wrong, can’t say no, can’t fail
 - They achieve “success” on the outside and get lots of positive attention but are cut off from their inner emotional life, from their true self
 - E. What the hero can become:
 - Very successful, must learn to say no
 - Learn to accept forgiveness, admit wrong and give up control
 - Confident and organized
 2. Read Luke 15:11-32 as a group. While many people focus on the younger, prodigal son, discuss with your group how the older son (25-32) exhibits the qualities of the hero child.
 1. Recognize the various emotions displayed by the hero brother
 - a. Bitterness
 - b. Anger
 - c. Resentment
 - d. Lack of compassion
 2. What blessings did the old son miss out on because of his own insecurities, low self-esteem, and fears?
 - a. Return from spiritual/physical death of his brother
 - b. Relationship with his brother
 - c. Continual love and blessings of his father
 - d. Father’s inheritance
 3. Ask if anyone has had similar experiences in their lives.

Add’l Notes:



2. Read 1 John 1:9 and take a moment to reflect on the promises of forgiveness and righteousness. How are relationships affected if we struggle with accepting God’s forgiveness?

1. Look at some of the following passages about God’s forgiveness and its relation to our efforts:

- Titus 3:5
- 2 Timothy 1:9
- Romans 3:20, 28
- 2 Corinthians 3:5

Knowing that our works have no affect on God’s forgiveness discuss the danger of trying to earn God’s favor.

2. Enjoying the blessing of forgiveness calls us to do likewise to others. Look at the following passages as you discuss this concept:

- Ephesians 4:32
- Colossians 3:13
- Matthew 6:14
- Matthew 18:33
- 2 Corinthians 2:7

3. When we struggle with accepting the miraculous forgiveness of God we are minimizing the cost He had to pay (John 3:16). To maintain the proper perspective on the cost of our sin we need to understand how amazing God’s forgiveness truly is. According to Oswald Chambers:

Forgiveness is the divine miracle of grace; it cost God the Cross of Jesus Christ before He could forgive sin and remain a holy God. Never accept a view of the Fatherhood of God if it blots out the Atonement. The revelation of God is that He cannot forgive; He would contradict His nature if He did. The only way we can be forgiven is by being brought back to God by the Atonement. God’s forgiveness is only natural in the super-natural domain.¹

Add'l Notes:

3. Review your progress in developing covenant relationships as part of your plan from last week. How does our understanding of the “Hero” help us to take more ownership of our relationships?

1. Discuss as a group how you applied the concepts of covenant versus contract into your relationship plan this past week.

¹ Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest: Selections for the Year* (Grand Rapids, MI: Oswald Chambers Publications; Marshall Pickering, 1986).



2. Identify the people in your life who fit the hero child role.
- Develop a strategy of how you will interact with these people moving forward.
 - If you are the hero child, how will you look to improve your relationships with others?
 - Are there people you are trying to earn their favor by your accomplishments?
 - How will you learn to better accept God's forgiveness?
 - What are some ways you can learn to let go of having control?

Add'l Notes:



GROUP HANDOUT

Which kid of dysfunction do you most relate to?

- a. Hero
- b. Scapegoat
- c. Loner
- d. Mascot

1. What are the dangers of being the “Hero”? For those of you who identify with the “Hero”, how this has affected your relationships with others and with God?

2. Read 1 John 1:9 and take a moment to reflect on the promises of forgiveness and righteousness. How are relationships affected if we struggle with accepting God’s forgiveness?

3. Review your progress in developing covenant relationships as part of your plan from last week. How does our understanding of the “Hero” help us to take more ownership of our relationships?

