

Study Guide 1-11-26 All In The Family - In The Freedom Family

Overview

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being fully committed ("all in") to **God's family** and specifically the **Freedom Church family**. It acknowledges that people often struggle more with God's people than with God Himself due to hurts, offenses, and imperfections. The message stresses healthy boundaries, grace, forgiveness, and reconciliation while highlighting **five key characteristics** that should define the church family: Give cheerfully • Serve wholeheartedly • Share unashamedly • Water liberally • Love unconditionally. The goal is authentic relationships with God **and** His people, personal growth, and active participation rather than just attendance.

Main Points

1. Being in God's Family

- Salvation is simple: confess Jesus as Lord, believe in His death & resurrection, repent (Romans 10:9 implied).
- Church people are imperfect ("just as messed up as people in your family").
- Hurts happen; the cost of relationships is the risk of pain.

2. Healthy Boundaries & Reconciliation

- Not everyone can handle your full story — set wise boundaries.
- Boundaries are needed when: repeating unaddressed issues, malicious hurt, no change after confrontation, refusal to reconcile.
- Follow **Matthew 18:15–17** and **Galatians 6:1–2**
- Aim for mercy over justice, forgiveness over vengeance; be gracious and correctable.

3. Five Marks of the Freedom Church Family

- **Give cheerfully** — Time, resources, finances, encouragement (Luke 6:38; 2 Cor 9:6–7; Malachi 3:10–11; Matt 23:23). Cheerful giving reflects trust in God and moves His heart.
- **Serve wholeheartedly** — Use your gifts to serve others (1 Pet 4:10; Gal 5:13; Mark 10:45). "Sit one, Serve one" — balance receiving and giving.
- **Share unashamedly** — Share your testimony to destroy the accuser's work (Rev 12:11). Overcome shame; others need your story of freedom.
- **Water liberally** — Generously encourage, pray, bless, love (Prov 11:25; Luke 6:31). Sow what you want to reap — pour a waterfall, not a drop.
- **Love unconditionally** — Covenant love that endures, keeps no record of wrongs (John 13:34–35; 1 Cor 13:4–7). "My love is not fragile."

Reflection Questions

1. What has been your biggest struggle with "God's people" (church hurt, offense, disappointment)? How has that affected your involvement?
2. Where do you need healthier boundaries right now? Are any of your current boundaries based on annoyance rather than serious, unaddressed harm?
3. Of the five marks (Give, Serve, Share, Water, Love), which one feels most natural to you? Which one feels most challenging or convicting? Why?
4. When was the last time you shared your testimony? Who might benefit from hearing it? What shame still holds you back?
5. How has God been asking you to give, serve, or love more generously/cheerfully in the past few months?

Application

- **This week:** Identify **one** of the five marks to lean into intentionally (e.g., schedule a serving opportunity, prepare to share part of your testimony, give an extra encouragement/prayer, or take a specific step toward cheerful financial giving).
- If you're holding a grudge or unresolved offense → follow Matthew 18 steps this week: pray first, then go privately to the person.
- If you've been on the sidelines → get off the bench: sign up to serve, start tithing cheerfully, or share your story with one person.
- Daily prayer: Ask the Holy Spirit to help you be obedient in these five areas and to soften any hard heart toward others in the church family.

Group Discussion Prompts

1. Share a positive experience of feeling truly loved, served, or encouraged by someone in the church family. What made it meaningful?
2. Why do you think people leave churches quickly after being hurt, even when they've experienced great community before?
3. Which of the five characteristics do you see most strongly in our church right now? Which one do we most need to grow in as a family?
4. How can we practically help each other overcome shame and share testimonies more freely?
5. If Freedom Church were known around the city for **one** of these five things above all others, which would you want it to be — and why?
6. End with prayer: Invite group members to share one personal next step and pray for each other.

These five marks aren't optional behaviors — they're identifiers of what it truly means to be **all in** the Freedom Family. Let's live them out together!