

# HOME ALONE



## MESSAGE NEXT STEPS

MESSY FAMILY

DECEMBER 19

Hurt people hurt people - especially those closest to them. When things are not messy, it usually means we're not that close. When we get close, we see differences, rub each other wrong, and step on toes. When we push through these difficulties to true acceptance and love of the other that is when we feel really known and loved. As we learn restorative principles in our church family, we can bring healing to our biological families.

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own, and get together with your running partner, life group, or friends and family to talk through what you are learning.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is your nuclear family and what are those relationships like (close, distant, vulnerable, toxic)?
2. What stood out to you from the message?
3. Read **Isaiah 58:6-9**.
  - a.) Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say):
    - Who is talking?
    - What is the circumstance?
    - Any repeated phrases?
    - What surprised you?
    - What stood out to you?
  - b.) Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean)
    - What questions do you have?
    - What do you think is going on in this passage?
    - What do you learn about the nature and character of God as you read this?
    - What do you learn about yourself or the world around you?
  - c.) Now make some applications (what's my response)
    - How do you respond to what you are reading?
    - What is the central truth that you could put into practice from this?
    - Who could you share this with for the sake of encouragement?
4. Read **Romans 15:1-7**. The first step toward loving our families the way God has set up is to take a personal inventory of the reality of our family dynamics and how you contribute to the health or destructive ways of relating that exist. Be honest - where are you thriving at loving your family well and where is there room for you to improve? How could you invite God and others into helping you where you are weak?

5. What is your family/ you (if you are single) known for? When people leave a time of hanging out with you what do they notice, sense, or feel from that experience? God's desire is for us to have homes that look and feel like Jesus. What do you want people to notice, sense, or feel after hanging out with you that might not already be there? What changes do you need to make for this to become a reality?
  
6. If you are going home for Christmas how can you bring Jesus with you and contribute to a loving environment? Ask other friends and community here at Gateway to pray specifically for you as you go to be with family this Christmas.

## KEY SCRIPTURE

**Romans 15:1-7** We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me." For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

**Isaiah 58:6-9** "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. "If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk,"