



THE BIG IDEA

Not-so-typical families are often used by God.

THE BIBLE

Genesis 2-4; Romans 5:18-21;
Galatians 5:22-23

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- **What does a "normal" family look like?**
- **Compared to other families you know, how "normal" is your family?**
 - Super normal
 - Kind of normal
 - Not-so-normal
 - Totally not normal
- **In 30 seconds, tell us a little bit about your family, including one funny way your family is not normal.**
- **Have you ever wished your family was different or more like other families? If so, how?**

NO FAMILY IS PERFECT – NOT EVEN THE ONES THAT SEEM ‘NORMAL’ ON THE OUTSIDE. THERE’S NO SUCH THING AS A ‘NORMAL’ FAMILY – ALL OF OUR FAMILIES ARE ATYPICAL IN SOME WAY AND THAT’S WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE. GOD USES ATYPICAL ALL THE TIME.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | Genesis 2-3

- **No matter how imperfect, abnormal, or dysfunctional you feel your family is, I have some good news. As crazy as it may sound, God can use your family to do great things.**
- **Maybe that sounds unlikely, but wait until you hear about the families we're going to meet in this series. If God could use these families to do something great, trust me – God can use your family, too.**
- **Adam and Eve were the first not-so-normal family. In fact, they were the first family ever.**
- **INSTRUCTIONS: Read or summarize Genesis 2-3 together. Try reading from a version like *The Voice*, *New Living Translation*, or *The Message*.**



- Imagine a world where life is always good. You'd never have to worry about how to get food to eat, or a place to sleep, or money to live. All you'd have to do is wake up and live a life of complete peace and joy, twenty-four-seven. That was life for Adam and Eve!
- God designed this first family to live a life of closeness with God and with each other. But because of their choices, everything changed.
 - They lost: their innocence, the Garden of Eden, and the access to God they once took for granted.
 - They gained: shame, a new and more difficult life, and a cycle of sin that wouldn't just impact them, but would impact their future children and the entire world.
- This family started out with so much hope and promise, but their poor decisions led to pain, loss, damaged relationships, and brokenness.
- But what was God's response? God was disappointed, and there were consequences for their actions, but God still took care of them. **Despite their mistakes, God did not leave this family hopeless.**

SCRIPTURE | Romans 5:18-21

- The birth of Jesus was a fulfillment of the promise God made to Adam and Eve all the way back in Genesis 3:15. Someday, a child would come and crush evil forever – and He did.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Romans 5:18-21 together.*
- This first family made some big mistakes, and we've been making big mistakes ever since. But, "where sin increased, grace increased all the more (NIV)."
- God never gave up on Adam and Eve's family, and He's never giving up on your family either. **Despite our mistakes, God doesn't leave us or our families hopeless.**
- Adam and Eve introduced sin into the world, but God used their family to conquer sin forever through Jesus. What an amazing reminder that **every family (including imperfect, not-so-typical families) can be used by God.**

DISCUSSION

- **What does your family have in common with Adam and Eve's family?**
- **What's one way God was good to Adam and Eve's family? How has God been good to your family?**



NOW WHAT? *What does God want us to do about it?*

GOD CAN USE YOUR ATYPICAL FAMILY

- Your family is already "atypical" because no family is normal or perfect. **But what if God is calling your family to be even more "atypical?"**
 - Every family has imperfections, problems, and struggles. But "typical" families either try to handle them on their own or never handle them at all.
 - "Atypical" families, on the other hand, invite God to take their imperfections, problems, and struggles, and use them for good.
- There is no family too simple or too complex for God to use.
 - Maybe the painful things about your family can't be fixed.
 - Maybe you'll never see that difficult family member change.
 - But your family can be used by God to do "atypical" things in the world – and it might all start with you.
- **Not-so-typical families are often used by God – and yours can be too.**

DISCUSSION

- **What's one major way your family seems "imperfect?" (Is it your family structure? Family dynamics? Your family's situation? Your family's past? Your family's faith?)**
- **How do your family's imperfections make you feel? Give an example.**
- **How has God been good to your family?**
- **How does your family need God's help?**
- **Read Galatians 5:22-23. What are some ways we can demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit when we're hurt, frustrated, or angry about our family's imperfections?**
- **What's one way you'd like God to heal, transform, comfort, or help your family?**
- **This week, what's one way you're going to let God use you for good in your family?**