



- Session 1 -

## **Foundations for Creating Households of Faith**

# **Select Learning**

## FACILITATOR GUIDE

### Welcome, Introductions and Opening Prayer

#### Gathering Table

Include one or more open Bibles, a candle to light as part of the opening prayer, devotion books your congregation or Sunday School may already provide as part of its ministry.

#### Introduce the Video - Guests: Dr. Dick Hardel and Dr. Dawn Alitz

*Use the following or similar words to introduce the group to the theme. The questions are a way of preparing and focusing minds and hearts on the content that participants will experience in the video.*

In the video for Session 1, the focus is on “why” it is critical for congregations to equip households as centers for faith formation. There are references to Scripture, to some solid research and an interview with someone who takes a very personal approach to equipping parents and adults to be the teachers of the faith in daily life. As you watch this segment, consider:

- What grabs your heart? Your mind? Your ears? In what ways are the ideas presented new to you?
- How does your congregation equip households to be centers for faith formation?
- Do the adults in your congregation, your family and household, know God's stories?

### Watch the Video

#### Discussion

#### Segment 1. The Foundations for Creating Households of Faith

Dick believes there is a crisis in our congregations and homes – that we do not know The Story. Further more, our children do not know the faith stories of the adults who surround them in daily life. He encourages us to “grab some fire,” a reference to chapter 16 in Numbers. (*The overall theme of Numbers: God is with us. God's children are never alone, even in the midst of conflict, disaster, and horrible events in our daily lives. God is in our story.*)

In small groups discuss:

Do you agree with Dick, that there is a crisis – that we are not passing on the faith?  
Why or why not? What is the evidence for your answer?

*Assign each passage below to a small group or if time allows and the class is smaller in number, then do this exercise as a whole.* The idea that a church-home partnership is the foundation for equipping homes to teach and nurture the faith is not the newest and latest fad or curriculum. Look up these passages and answer the two questions for each one:

**Romans 10:8-10      Deuteronomy 4:9-10      Deuteronomy 31:12-13      Psalm 78:1-6**

- What do the passages above tell us about when or how faith is passed on?
- What are the signs that faith is being nurtured in your congregation and home?

Dick shares the following five faith practices as essential for a strong church-home partnership:

1. **Corporate worship**, all ages worshipping together as a community of faith.
2. **Devotions** at gatherings and meetings at church and in the home . . . reading Scripture, telling stories, singing songs of faith.
3. **Rituals, Traditions** and **Symbols** of faith in the congregation and in the home that shape people's identity as Children of God and followers of Jesus.
4. **Acts of Service** for and with others, out of deep faith and concern.
5. **Conversation** and sharing personal stories which include recognition of God and Jesus in one's daily life.
  - In which of these five areas does your congregation do a good job of modeling, equipping and empowering households to learn and practice the faith? Give examples.
  - Which of these could your congregation improve upon? How?

*(Let people know Sessions II, III & IV will go deeper into the “how” of these faith practices!)*

## **Segment 2. Finding God's Story in Your Story**

In conversation between Dr. Dawn Alitz and Linda Staats, Dawn shares how she walks alongside parents and adults in her congregation so they begin to know God's story as integral for their lives. *Invite participants to reflect with one another on the following questions:*

- How do you, or the parents and grandparents/godparents you know, react when you (they) hear it is your (their) job to be the primary teachers of the faith?
- Is it a focus of your congregation for adults to know how God's story fits into everyone's life story?
- Name the wise men and women in your congregation and in your life, who are naturals at sharing God's story and faith stories with others.

### **Make it My Own – Take it Home**

*Check the Introduction to this unit for a more in-depth explanation for this section. Give people time to name one thing for each question. Invite people to share their responses with one other person or if time, the entire group.*

This is the time to review and plan for next steps:

1. **Celebrate:** What have you heard presented in this session that your congregation is already doing? What can you affirm in your own life and that of your household?
2. **Tweak:** What have you heard that is new to you? How has this session “tweaked” your thinking about the role of adults and the home in nurturing faith?
3. **Add:** Name someone with whom you would like to share the message of this session. What is one highlight you would share with them?

### **Closing**

*Use this time to thank everyone for participating. Invite people to the next session and give a brief preview. Be available for questions following the session. Close with prayer.*

### **Extend the Conversation**

- Name the people who have significantly influenced your life of faith.
- Look up one or more of the following texts and answer the two questions given for the Biblical passages earlier in the session:

**Deuteronomy 6:4-9 & 20-22  
Acts 2:46-47**

**Deuteronomy 11:1-2  
2 Timothy 1:5**

### **Accompanying this Session**

- Participant Guide
- Bibliography and Resources

## PARTICIPANT GUIDE

**Prepare to Watch the Video – Guests:** Dr. Dick Hardel and Dr. Dawn Alitz

- What grabs your heart? Your mind? Your ears? Are the ideas presented new to you? Where may you have encountered them before?
- How does your congregation equip households to be centers for faith formation?
- Do the adults in your congregation, your family and household, know God's stories?

**Watch the Video**

**Discussion**

### **Segment 1. Foundations for Creating Households of Faith**

*Do you agree with Dick, that there is a crisis – that we are not passing on the faith? Why or why not? What is the evidence for your answer?*

Dick refers to the following Bible passages. After reading each one, answer the following questions:

**Romans 10:8-10   Deuteronomy 4:9-10   Deuteronomy 31:12-13   Psalm 78:1-4**

- What do these passages tell us about when or how faith is passed on?
- What are the signs that faith is being nurtured in your congregation and home?

The following are five faith practices Dick believes are essential for nurturing the faith:

1. **Corporate worship**, all ages worshipping together as a community of faith.
2. **Devotions** at gatherings and meetings at church and in the home . . . reading Scripture, telling stories, singing songs of faith.
3. **Rituals, Traditions and Symbols** in the congregation and in the home that shape people's identity as Children of God and followers of Jesus.
4. **Acts of Service** for and with others, out of a deep faith and concern.
5. **Conversation** and sharing personal stories which include recognition of God and Jesus in one's daily life.

- In which of these five areas does your congregation do a good job of modeling, equipping and empowering households to learn and practice the faith? Give examples.
- Which of these could your congregation improve upon? How?

## **Segment 2. Finding God's Story in Your Story**

Conversation between Dr. Dawn Alitz and Linda Staats

- How do you, or the parents and grandparents/godparents you know, react when you (they) hear it is your (their) job to be the primary teachers of the faith?
- Is it a focus of your congregation for adults to know how God's story fits into each and everyone's life story?
- Name the wise men and women in your congregation and in your life who are naturals at sharing God's story and faith stories with others.

## **Make It Your Own – Take It Home**

This is your time to review and plan for next steps:

- **Celebrate:** What have you heard presented in this session that your congregation is already doing? What can you affirm in your own life or that of your household?
- **Tweak:** What have you experienced that is new to you? How has this session influenced or “tweaked” your thinking about the role of adults and the home in nurturing faith?
- **Add:** Name someone with whom you would like to share the message of this session. What is one highlight you would share with them?

## **Closing**

### **Extend the Conversation**

- Name the people who have significantly influenced your life of faith.
- Look up one or more of the following texts and answer the two questions given for the Bible passages earlier in the session:

**Deuteronomy 6:4-9 & 20-22   Deuteronomy 11:1—2   Acts 2:46-47   2 Timothy 1:5**

### **Accompanying this Session**

- Participant Guide • Bibliography and Resources

## BIBLIOGRAPHY, REFERENCES and RESOURCES

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