ONE SUFFERS. ALL SUFFER.
ONE REJOICES. ALL REJOICE.

BIBLE / VIDEO / PRAYER
YOUTH SESSION OUTLINE
As Christians we’re part of one massive, global family. Rich, poor, persecuted, free – all those who call on Jesus’ name are connected. We have one hope, we are one family. And as family, we believe no one gets left out, and that no-one is forgotten.

**ABOUT THIS SESSION**

This simple session outline is based around a short film by Open Doors Youth that features Krish Kandiah from London School of Theology and Home for Good. The video uses Krish’s own journey to explore what God’s ideal of family is all about. Krish introduces us to Daniel, a young church leader from Iraq who’s own understanding of family has been changed by the current refugee crisis. As a response the session highlights that, as part of God’s family, there’s something much deeper than biology or proximity that connects us to other Christians around the world.

We hope you find the session useful – we’d love to know if you use it with your youth/small group. Email us at youth@opendoorsuk.org with any comments or questions. Thanks for the support too!

**SESSION AIM**

- To help people re-frame their understanding of family
- To realise we all have an essential place in God’s church; our global family
- To inspire us to be passionate about getting others to become part of God’s family
One Family / Youth Session Outline / 4

Intro
1 minute

Leader notes - use these points to introduce the session: This session is all about family. The best families know each other pretty intimately. And in this session we’ll get to see how God calls us into a family with people we will never meet, but with whom we have an incredible connection.

Truth or dare
5 minutes

Leader notes – make this fun! Pick a few volunteers. Ask them to think of three facts about themselves, two that are fictional, and one that only their closest family would know about them. Ask each in turn to say their three facts. The rest of the group have to try and guess which fact is true and which two are lies! Once you’ve got through all your volunteers explain the point of the game: Family should be about being included, being known and being accepted. In the best families we’re known inside out, including all the good stuff and bad... In the best families we know we’re loved no matter what.

Discussion and film
35 minutes

Leader notes - Get your small group comfortable, and use the following questions and points to begin a discussion about what people see in the film. This can go on for as long as you like, but try to involve everybody, and ask your own questions too - these are just a starting point.

1. What defines family for you? Draw your family tree, as far back as you can remember/know. You can include pets!

Leader’s notes: We’ve all got different families. Some of us might have grown up with just one or no parents, whilst others of us have mum, dad, brothers, sisters, pet dog and a massive extended family too. Chat through experiences of family and draw out how those experiences have impacted the people in your group. People don’t have to share their family trees if you think it inappropriate, but the point is to highlight families are all different. Once done, spend a while talking about what people think an ideal form of family should look like.

You will need
1. The film ‘Family: Krish Kandiah’
   Find it on our YouTube channel in the ‘Thoughts and Reflections’ playlist (www.youtube.com/opendoorsyouth)
2. A laptop that can play the movie(s)
3. Some paper and pens

Time
45 minutes to an hour
2. Show the film

3. Read 1 John 3:1 - How is God’s idea of family different from ours?

Leader’s notes: Being a Christian gives us a massive shift in our understanding of what family means. 1 John 3:1 says ‘See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God’. Accepting Jesus means we get a new Father, but that also means we get a new family too. Our love of God, and His Spirit in us, gives us, as Christians, a connection, or bond, that Biblical writers liken to family. God’s idea of family isn’t simply about biology, or even a geographic proximity. It goes beyond all of that... it’s something much, much bigger.

4. How does this effect how you view your own family, and your church family?

Leader’s notes: We all know that we don’t get to choose our families. We have to stick with what we’ve got, through good and bad! That’s true of our church family as much as our biological families. Look at Daniel in the story. He’s a young leader whose church is suddenly overwhelmed by hundreds of Christians fleeing Islamic State. Scared, tormented and tired, they needed help and safety. The church was the only place they thought of going. Daniel does what all good families would do, offering a place of safety.

5. Get someone to read 1 Corinthians 12: 1-27. Anyone heard this before? What does this mean for how we do family in our current church? Who do we assume are the lesser parts, or even the most important parts? Where do we put ourselves on that scale of importance within the church? What if we extend the image of the body to include our global church family? How does that change our perspectives?

Leader’s notes: This is probably one of the best known passages about the church in the whole New Testament. Ask the group who the most important people in your church are. What about the less important people? Where do they place themselves – if they were a body part, what would they be? Let the group spend some time working through the passage, pulling out the idea that in God’s family, everyone has an essential part to play. Everyone in the group is part of this local and global body of Christ. They are all important, valued, loved and have something to offer. And what is true for them is also true for persecuted Christians in Iraq, Syria and dozens of other countries around the world. Now focus on verse 26. We’re connected with those who suffer, and as family we should be doing all we can to help those that do suffer for their love of Jesus.

6. How does seeing and hearing about Daniel, and those families he is helping, change how we view Christians on the other side of the world?

Leader’s notes: Like Daniel, God is asking us to be people who are inclusive, open and desperate to show his love to those around us. He’s also calling us to widen our perspectives and see our global church family as important as the people we see each week on a Sunday at church! Will we respond?

7. In what ways is God calling us to redefine our ways of being and doing our biological, and church, families?

Leaders notes: Talk through practical ways your church and biological families can respond to Krish’s challenge to better show God’s love - to those inside and outside of our church community.

PRAY
5-10 minutes
Leader notes – Lead a time of prayer and reflection. Encourage people to pray the points below and as they feel led.

- Ask God to help you redefine your understanding of family
- Pray for Daniel and other leaders helping to create, restore and maintain family in Iraq
- Pray for help and passion when inviting others to be part of God’s family.

You could end the session by praying something like this:

Father,

Thank you for Your church around the world, and be inspired by their passion for You. Holy Spirit, change our hearts and equip us to be desperate to see many become part of Your family.

Amen

ACT NOW
1. Write a letter to a member of your global family that has suffered for Jesus

Head to opendoorsyouth.org/sendhope for a list of people you can write to that have experienced persecution because of their choice to follow Jesus. You’ll also find some simple letter-writing tips as well as downloadable cards you can print-out and get the group to write or draw on.

2. Show a second film, ‘My Sister, Sarah’ and ask the group to share it online

Check out the short two minute film called ‘My Sister, Sarah’ on our YouTube channel (under the Thoughts and Reflections playlist at www.youtube.com/user/opendoorsyouth). Show the film then text / email the link to the video around the group. Ask them to share it on their social network profiles to show their connection to their global church family.

OneFamily / Youth Session Outline / 6
One suffers. All suffer.
One rejoices. All rejoice.

**what now?**

**BEEN INSPIRED BY YOUR PERSECUTED FAMILY?**
**DON’T STOP NOW. KEEP GOING! THERE ARE LOADS OF THINGS YOU CAN DO TO CONTINUE A JOURNEY WITH YOUR PERSECUTED FAMILY — TRY ONE OF THESE:**

**KEEP PRAYING**
Follow us on Twitter and Instagram or like us on Facebook to get daily prayer updates, stories and articles to help you connect with your persecuted family.

**RAISE MONEY**
Check out our website, [www.opendoorsyouth.org](http://www.opendoorsyouth.org), for loads of ways that you can raise money for Christians facing persecution. There's our annual sponsored social media fast, Blackout, as well as simple ideas for groups too.

**SPEAK UP**
We run regular campaigns, petitions and ways to help you use your voice to speak up for your persecuted family. Head to [www.opendoorsyouth.org](http://www.opendoorsyouth.org) for the latest campaigns, and make sure you like and share our social media updates to spread the word!