

## Study Guide: We Are Family

Sunday, October 17 | Bronwyn Lea, Emily Morrison, Shawna Boren,

**Topics:** Community, Relationships

### Short Summary:

The final teaching of this series is a panel conversation with Bronwyn Lea on the topic of church as family, where Shawna Boren and Emily Morrison explore how the church can move into this experience in everyday life.

### Extended Summary:

Today's teaching came in the form of an interview with Bronwyn Lea, a pastor from California who wrote the book *Beyond Awkward Side Hugs*. In it she challenges the common cultural relationship patterns that hinder authentic biblical community and proposes ways to move forward to be the true family of God. In this conversation, Shawna Boren and Emily Morrison engage Bronwyn to tease out what it means to be the church in a world where we have lost the ability to love one another well. The questions that were addressed in this conversation include:

- Why is this topic so important, specifically in a context that is dominated by questions related to sex and sexuality?
- Why is the “Church-as-Family” paradigm important and how does it address the challenges we face in our culture?
- What are some of the practical advantages to the “Church-as-Family” paradigm?
- What roles does “healthy boundaries” play in our relationships?
- What are some practical first steps people can take when it comes to forging these relationships?
- When people hear that the “church is family,” many people have triggers due to unhealthy family experiences. What can we say to help people in this situation?

This conversation concludes the series on The Lost Art of Friendship. But it does not conclude our pursuit of spiritual friendship with one another. May God bless us as a church as we seek to be God's family in our everyday lives.

**Reflection Questions:**

- What impacted you from this conversation?
- When you hear “church as family” what is your response? What healing do you need in order to pursue this in your life?
- What might “church as family” look like? How might this help you grow in Christ?
- What steps can you take to pursue the development of church as family?
- Take some time to pray now and ask the Spirit to lead you deeper into this experience.