

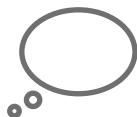


WEEK TWO

PAUL IN ATHENS / UNKNOWN GOD • ACTS 17:16-34



**SAY THIS:**  
YOU CAN HELP  
OTHERS KNOW JESUS.



**REMEMBER THIS:**

“God’s grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn’t come from anything you do. It is God’s gift.”  
EPHESIANS 2:8, NIV



**DO THIS:**



Q & A for kids: Why do you think we give gifts?  
Q & A for parents: What was the best gift you ever received as a child?

**FAITH:**

TRUSTING IN WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE  
BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU CAN SEE

**FAMILY VOICE**

By Carey Nieuwhof

There’s this thing that I believe every family has. I don’t actually know what to call it. If we were having a conversation, I wouldn’t be able to imitate it.

But I know it when I hear it. I hear it in shopping malls, in crowds, when families get into and out of their homes and cars, at restaurants, and when I’m a guest in someone’s home. I’ve heard it for years in my home. And I have one too.

What is it? This isn’t the scientific name for it at all, but in my head I call it *family voice*. You know what I’m talking about. It’s the tone of voice you would never use except around the people closest to you. It contains hints of expectation, exasperation, frustration, and quiet fatigue. Add in tones of command, whining and a touch of rudeness, and you’ve got family voice. Sometimes it’s strong. Sometimes it’s subtle. But all the time it’s reserved for the people you live with.

If you used it at work, you’d be shunned or maybe even get fired. If you used it in your social circle, you’d have no friends. You’re likely distant enough as a grown adult to not use it on your parents or siblings anymore. Chances are you only pull it out in the square box you inhabit with a handful of other people we call family.

And ultimately, it’s disrespectful. That’s

why you would never use it on other people. But somehow on the people we love most we feel free to pull it out regularly. I don’t know why. We just do.

So if you want to increase the level of respect you show for each other at home, try this: eliminate your family voice. I know, it’s hard. Because I’m convinced we don’t even hear it in ourselves anymore after a period of years.

When I catch myself, this is what I do: I pretend my wife and kids are perfect strangers, someone from work, or a friend I haven’t seen in a while. Why? Because then I’m kind, courteous, charming, and engaged. Which is what they deserve. Every day.

Try it today. Speak to your family as if they weren’t your family. You might be amazed at what happens to the levels of respect and delight in your home. (And let us know how it goes.)

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