



The Family of God!

Introduction:

- ▶ I. Possibly this evening, tomorrow, maybe even yesterday; you came together to be with family!
 - A. The Holidays are times in which families come together! I hope you have a wonderful time with your family!
 - 1. Families are such blessing when they are grounded and settled in the Lord. It is my prayer that your family whether the one in which you were born, or the family that you had made; truly honors God's will.
 - 2. If your part of your family does not cherish the Lord and being with family is difficult, then our prayers are that you can create an environment that honors God and the rest of the family decides to follow Him as well.
 - B. Yesterday, the Bush family came together at our house.
 - 1. My brother and his family came down from Indy.
 - 2. My sister and her husband with their loyal dog Diesel came up from Nashville.
 - 3. We got Daddy for the day out of Good Samaritan; and all of us had a great and wonderful time being together!
 - C. Our family time during the holidays has changed over the years.
 - 1. Up and until just a couple of years ago, the Bush family always traveled to Waverly and enjoyed the holidays at the house in which I grew up.
 - 2. As a child my grand-parents would come to the house and we would have a big dinner in the living room where the big dining table sat. You knew it was a special day because it was the only time we ate at this particular dining table... in the living room.
 - 3. And when we kids moved out of the house and began living in other places, during the holidays we all would come back to what we knew as home.

4. And when we started having our own families the trip to Waverly was shared with in-laws. Our Evansville family clan started making a round trip through Tennessee.
5. We usually made the trek to Martin, TN and spend a couple of days at with Randa's Dad. Then we made our way to Jackson, TN and spend a few days with Granny Margaret and Randa's extended family there. And then the van turned to Waverly where we spent a few days with my Mom and Dad.
6. Things are different, our trip to Tennessee does not happen anymore.
 - a. Randa's dad has passed and her Aunt Margaret has as well.
 - b. My mom is gone and we have moved Daddy here to Evansville.
 - c. So, our house now is the center of focus.
4. Yet, it really does not matter where we go, but who we are with! Family!
 - a. Families treasure relationships, we treasure the memories, we treasure being together.
 - b. At least that is how God designed the family to be!

▶ II. This is probably the reason God created the "family" and then parallels it with His church!

- A. As Christians we are part of a family that is eternal.
A family that has relationships and connections that are so very special.
A family that will supersede death, and when such happens there will be no more separations caused by death.

▶ B. Paul does exactly that when talking to the Ephesian church.

Ephesians 3:14-15

"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,"

▶ C. How many of you right now are thinking of the song:

We're part of the family that's been born again;
Part of the family whose love knows no end;
For Jesus has saved us, and made us His own,
Now we're part of the family that's on its way home.

When a brother meets sorrow we all feel his grief;
When he's passed thru the valley we all feel relief;
Together in sunshine, together in rain,

Together in victory thru His precious name.



And though some go before us, we'll all meet again;
Just inside the city as we enter in;
There'll be no more parting, with Jesus we'll be
Together forever, God's family.

And sometimes we laugh together, sometimes we cry;
Sometimes we share together, heartaches and sighs;
Sometimes we dream together of how it will be
When we all get to Heaven, God's family.

- D. In the next few days as we celebrate and enjoy being with our physical families, please enjoy that time together; but let us not forget the amazing family that the Lord has created for us, the Family of God!

Discussion:



- I. Have you ever noticed the many different descriptive family terms to identify who we are as Christians?
- A. We are considered **brothers and sisters**.
1. The Apostle Peter commands that we are to love the brotherhood.

I Peter 2:17
“Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”
 2. The word brother is used 319 times in the New Testament and the word sister is used 22 times.
 3. The majority of the time these terms are used in speaking about a physical brother or sister.
 - a. Andrew was Simon Peter’s brother. (John 1:40)
 - b. Lazarus was the brother of Mary and Martha. (John 11:2, 19)
 - c. Mary and Martha are sisters. (John 11:28)
 4. Yet, there are times in which brother and sister are used in a spiritual sense and referring to Christians.
 - a. Acts 21:17
“And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.”
 - b. I Timothy 5:1-2

“Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers,
older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.”

5. What a wonderful and unique relationship that we have with one another. We many times sing the song:

“You're my brother, you're my sister, so take me by the hand.
Together we will work until He comes.
There's no foe that can defeat us when we're walking side by side;
As long as there is love, we will stand.”



B. If we are brothers and sisters then we are also **children!**

1. Again there are passages that talk about children that are referring to the physical relationship between parents and their kids. There are also passage that simply speak about younger individuals.

- a. Ephesians 6:1
“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.”
- b. Jesus on one occasion directed His Apostles to allow the children to come to him. (Luke 18:16)

2. There are times when the word children is used and it is referring to the descendants of Abraham, the Jews.

Acts 7:37

“This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, ‘The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.’”

3. Yet, many times the word children is in reference to a Christian’s relationship with the God of Heaven.

Romans 8:16

“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,”



C. This leads us to another family term and that is God being our **Father!**

1. God is desiring that we have a close and precious relationship with Him, as a godly father would have for his children.

2. Examples of God being called our Father!

- a. Matthew 5:16
“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

b. Matthew 7:11

"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"



D. And if God is our Father and we are His children then Christ Jesus is our **brother!**

1. Do not take this likely folks, in our spiritual family; we are considered as brothers and sisters to the Creator of all things!

Hebrews 3:3-6

"For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.

For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.

And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end."

2. Because of our faith and obedience to Deity, we have become adopted within the Family of God, and we are sons and daughters to the Father and brothers and sisters to Christ.

Romans 8:14-17

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. "

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

Ephesians 1:5

"having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,"



E. What a wonderful opportunity to be within the **household** of God!

1. Paul relates that we are not strangers or even guests, but welcome members of God's Family.

Ephesians 2:19

"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,"

2. Paul also offers instructions to Timothy and therefore to us in how we are to live our lives because we indeed are part of the God's household.

I Timothy 3:14-15

"These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

3. Notice that Paul told Timothy that the house of God is the church that Jesus established. Jesus indeed is the One that built this special and wonderful household!

▶ II. Christ related that if we want to be members of His spiritual family then we must be born again.

- A. Babies being born at this congregation seems to be a common occurrence and we are so thrilled for families like the Huthers and soon to be the Dalps. It is such a wonderful blessing to see our families growing.
- B. Jesus had a private conversation late in the evening with Nicodemus, and He compared entrance into His spiritual family like that of a baby being born in a physical family.

John 3:3-7

"Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'"

Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

▶ Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'"

- C. So, the question comes, how are we "born again;" what is the process of being born of the water and the Spirit?

1. Friends, the plan that has been revealed to us came through the Holy Spirit inspiring the Biblical writers and it is plan and simply to understand.

▶ 2. Our rebirth begins with developing faith in the Word.

Romans 10:17

"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

▶ 3. Our rebirth continues through obedience of the Holy Spirit's directives.

- a. We are commanded to "repent" of our sins! That means we change our direction of thinking and following after sin to thinking and therefore having actions that are righteous.

Acts 3:9

“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,”

- b. We are to commit our lives completely to Christ and voice that commitment through confessing our allegiance to Him.

Matthew 10:32

“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.”

Romans 10:9-10

“that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

- 4. Our rebirth into God’s family is completed when we are obedient to God’s command to be immersed in water, or are baptized!
 - a. This again is directed from God’s Word that the Holy Spirit provided for us therefore it fulfills the rebirth requirements of being born of water and the Spirit.
 - b. Jesus taught that those that believe (have faith) and are baptized will be saved. (Mark 16:16)
 - c. And Peter relates that baptism is what saves us! (1 Peter 3:21)
- 5. So, our rebirth takes place when we develop, through a study of God’s Word, a faith that motivates us to repent, confess, and be baptized.
- 6. And then we live our lives with respect and honor to the Father of our spiritual family.

III. In a physical family we all have different abilities and responsibilities and no matter what your role might be, we know we are important and loved. The same is true with God’s family!

A. In God’s family each one of us has a place!

- 1. Paul relates to the Roman church that there are many different members of the body of Christ, and each individual has a function to accomplish.

Romans 12:4-5

“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,

so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.”

2. Paul continues relating some of the important areas for which one could fulfill. There might be those that minister to others, who teach, who encourage and exhort, who has the ability to give liberally, who can be a leader, who has a diligent attitude, who offers and provides mercy, and who is cheerful. (Romans 12:7-8)
3. There is a place for everyone! We all must fulfill our responsibilities and therefore find our place to belong in the family of God!



- B. We also have the responsibility to separate ourselves for the world.

II Corinthians 6:17-18

“Therefore

“Come out from among them

And be separate, says the Lord.

Do not touch what is unclean,

And I will receive you.

I will be a Father to you,

And you shall be My sons and daughters,

Says the LORD Almighty.””



- C. We must resemble our Father. We must look like God and act accordingly.

Ephesians 5:1-2, 8

” Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.”

“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light”



- D. We also love each other!

John 13:35

“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”



- E. We will assist and aid each other in times of need and we will be able to lean on one another when necessary!

Galatians 6:1-2

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”



- F. And we must do everything we can to bring others into the Family of God!

Matthew 28:18-20

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.”

► Conclusion:

I. God’s family!

- A. We are brothers and sisters together! We are children of God the Father and our brother is Jesus Christ!
- B. God’s family has been born again and therefore we have an inheritance that is in Heaven and will last forever!
- C. And there is room in God’s family for everyone. There is a place for you where you know you belong!

► II. I hope you are earnestly seeking after the “Family of God!”

- A. If you are **not** part of God’s family please allow us the opportunity to study God’s Word with you. Remember it is God’s Word that produces saving faith!
- B. If you have studied and you understand what you need to accomplish in obedience to Christ, yet you have been putting off your obedience. We are inviting you right now to wait no longer, repent of your sins, confess our allegiance of Christ, and be baptized in His name. Please determine to become a member of the Lord’s family.
- C. And if you are a Christian yet fallen out of God’s family due to sin. Please recognize that you can repent and return to a wholesome and godly relationship.
- D. If you are hurting and just need the prayers of your brothers and sisters, we are willing to pray for you!
- E. Whatever we can do to assist you today! Let it be known as we stand and sing!