

# The Family of God – Lesson 3

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- I'm so thankful for my immediate and extended natural family
- Their importance should never be underestimated, but let's explore a bigger picture
- Our life on this earth involves much more than just "us four and no more"

## An Eternal Family

**Ephesians 3:14-15**, "For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name."

- When we accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we were adopted into God's family
- God the Father became our spiritual Father
- Romans 8:15 says we received the Spirit of sonship; through whom we call Abba Father

**Ephesians 1:4-5**, "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will."

- Well, if God is now our Heavenly Father, what does that make other believers?
- **Question:** "What does that old saying mean, 'Blood is thicker than water'"
- Through the blood of Jesus we are all related as family; sharing the same Father

**Galatians 3:26-28**, "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

**Galatians 6:10**, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

**Question:** How does Christianity counter the challenges of racism around the world today?

- **Please Read:** Ephesians 2:11-22
- Technically there are only three groups of people according to 1 Corinthians 10:32
- Unsaved Jews and Non-Jews and the Church of God

- In Psalms 68:5, God is the Father to the fatherless and a defender of widows
- That same sentiment has not changed- God's heart is to care for the weak

### **James 1:27**

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

- But when a person is born again into God's Family there are some huge benefits
- If you were orphaned or abandoned by your natural family
  - o God has something special for you

**1 Timothy 5:1-2**, "Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity."

**Question:** Why do gangs hold such an appeal for troubled youth today?

- One of the big benefits of a natural family is love, provision and protection
- A place where one belongs, is significant and appreciated
- Having a big brother or sister is invaluable
- How about the role models and examples that comes from parents
- In God's family we have it all don't we!
- **Please Read: 1 Thessalonians 2:6-12**

**Question:** What impact has your spiritual family had in your life in times past?

**Matthew 23:8-10**, "But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ."

- **Please Read: Matthew 12:46-50**

Jesus was not diminishing the natural family, but rather opening our eyes to something bigger and eternal. People matter to God, and how we treat others is how we are treating Him.

## We have what the World is looking for

- Nothing in this world can satisfy like experiencing God's love for us
- Everyone is looking for love; some kind of satisfaction in relationships
- Jesus offers the God kind of love "Agape" in God's family and so much more

### **John 13:34-35**

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

### **John 15:12-13**

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

- **Question:** What challenges do we face as the Body of Christ, to demonstrate this love?
- Generally speaking it's spiritual immaturity that poses the greatest threat
- However, as we speak the truth we will grow up- Ephesians 4:15

**Galatians 5:15**, "If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other."

**Romans 12:9-10**, "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves."

- We can't take anything material out of this world with us into eternity
- But the impact and investments we make in people lasts forever- Colossians 4:12-13

### **Philippians 2:19-21**

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

### **Hebrews 6:10-12**

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.