

THE FAMILY OF GOD

TEXT: MARK 3:31-35

Introduction:

1. God has ordained the family. God has only ordained three institutions: the family, human government, and the local church.
2. All three of these institutions are under attack by the devil. God's order for the family is found in the Bible (cf. Col. 3:18-21). But I am not going to preach much on the family tonight.
3. I do believe however, that the modern family is all mixed up. The Bible says wives should submit themselves unto their own husbands (Col. 3:18), but nowadays most wives will not submit.
4. This reminds me of the nagging wife who nagged her husband so much that she sent him to an early grave. When the preacher found out, he went by the house to visit the family. He asked their youngest son, "What were your father's last words?" The little boy said: "He didn't have any last words. Mama was with him right to the end."
5. And next the Bible says, "Husbands, love your wives..." (Col. 3:19). Some husbands are not very loving. And some children are not very obedient (Col. 3:20).
6. This is an important subject but I am not going to preach on the family tonight. Rather I am going to preach on the family of God. There's a popular Gospel song that goes, "I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God" (cf. Eph. 2:19; 3:14, 15).
7. Interestingly, Ephesians 3:15 is the only reference to the word "family" in the NT.
8. Tonight I would like to speak on the family of God (Mark 3:34, 35).

I. EARTHLY TIES HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE FAMILY OF GOD

1. Our Lord taught that our relationship to Him was far more important than our relationship to our relatives.
2. Family relationships have nothing to do with getting into the family of God. To get into the family of God you must be born again (John 1:12, 13; 3:7; I Peter 1:23).
3. Therefore, earthly ties have nothing to do with spiritual ties. Our Lord said to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6).
4. Sometimes God will save an entire family but oftentimes He will not (cf. Acts 2:39; 16:30-34; 10:44; cf. 11:14).

5. I have said all of this as a lengthy introduction to our text. When our Lord said, “Who is my mother, or my brethren?” (Mark 3:33), He was making a distinction between earthly ties and spiritual ties; families of men and the family of God.
6. Some Roman Catholics teach that the “brethren” mentioned here are His “spiritual brethren” (i.e. disciples), but that would make the entire passage meaningless. If these men are His disciples, then what is the point?
7. Do you remember the time “a certain woman” shouted out, “Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked”? (Luke 11:27). Our Lord corrected her (11:28).

II. OUR LORD HAD BROTHERS AND SISTERS

1. This is not the only passage which speaks of Mary’s children; there are a few others as well (cf. Matt. 13:53-58; Mark 6:1-3; Luke 8:19-21; I Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:19).
2. The RCC teaches that Mary remained a virgin her whole life but this is contrary to the Bible (cf. Matt. 1:18, 25).
3. This false doctrine, called “the perpetual virginity of Mary,” ties in with their false teaching that celibacy makes one holy. Therefore, their priests and nuns are forbidden to marry (cf. I Tim. 4:1-3).
4. This “doctrine of devils” has led to much mischief and immorality.

III. OUR LORD WAS REJECTED BY THE MEMBERS OF HIS OWN FAMILY (JOHN 7:1-5).

1. It is not clear, but it seems as if our Lord’s brothers wanted to bring Him home because they completely misunderstood His ministry (Mark 3:31, 32; cf. 3:21).
2. Perhaps they were fearful that our Lord’s ministry had caused the religious establishment to rise up against Him.
3. Apparently our Lord’s brothers did not get saved until after His death and resurrection. When our Lord hung on the cross, He asked John to look out for His mother (cf. John 19:26, 27). This is probably because Joseph had died (he is last mentioned when our Lord was twelve years old), and because His brothers were still not saved.
4. It would have been better for Mary to stay with saved non-relatives, than unsaved sons and daughters. I think Christian parents are wise to have Christian brethren take on the responsibility of raising their children, rather than unsaved relatives.

5. We know that James and Jude were converted later on, after the resurrection of our Lord (cf. I Cor. 15:7; Acts 15:13; Jude 1).
6. We do not know who else was converted but Luke refers to “His brethren” being in the upper room with the other disciples, indicating they were saved shortly after our Lord’s death and resurrection (Acts 1:14).
7. Our Lord said in Mark 3:35, “For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.”
8. Are you doing the will of God?
9. Those who are truly related to Jesus are characterized by obedience to the will of God.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Lord has burdened me for all of our members with unsaved loved ones. For example, my brothers, sister, nephews and nieces, etc.
2. We have men here with unsaved wives, and wives with unsaved husbands, parents with unsaved children, etc.
3. Or maybe you are not sure if they are saved or lost.
4. Why don’t we all gather up front and pray for our unsaved relatives.
5. God answers prayer.

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