

The Lord's Message: Who Is in the Family of God?

Date: January 21, 2024

Where: Tilghman Methodist Church

Scripture Reference: Mark 3:31-35

While growing up I was told numerous times, "Family is important." I come from two very large families. My mother's side of the family were all farmers and they all had large families. She was one of six children. Dad was one of four children. My grandparents came from large families as well. So, I have lots of cousins.

Tracing family lineage has become a growing trend. I love watching the PBS series, "Finding Your Roots." Famous people are given the opportunity to find out more about their family roots. Some of those roots take unusual twists and turns.

In any family, there are usually family members that are in conflict. There is never a perfect family because we are imperfect people.

Let us pray.

If you would like to follow along in the Bible this morning, we are starting at Mark 3:31, which is found on page 1556 in your Pew Bible.

Jesus knew all of this. Jesus had a family. His family tree is listed in two places in the Bible in Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-37. Jesus had an earthly dad, Joseph. Jesus had an earthly mother, Mary. Jesus even had earthly sisters and brothers. This information is found in **Matthew 13:54-56**.

In **Mark 3:31**, Jesus is being visited by his mother and his brothers. This visit is not a friendly visit. Let us look at **Mark 3:20-21**. In Jesus time, family was very important and a member of the family acting out of the normal, would have brought shame on the family. As a reminder from last week's Message, we look at **Luke 4:28-30**. The people in His hometown, Nazareth, wanted to kill Jesus. Jesus apparently left Nazareth and journeyed back to Capernaum after this near-death experience. Who could blame him?

We need to understand that Jesus was probably the talk of Nazareth, but not in a favorable way. His mother and brothers travel to Capernaum to physically bring Jesus back to Nazareth, because they think that He is out of His mind. Talking about being the Son of God. Performing miracles, even on the Sabbath. Saying that He is fulfilling scripture. What is wrong with Jesus? He is out of His mind. Bringing so much shame on the family.

Commented [DK1]: But didn't Mary know He was the Son of God?

In **Mark 3:31**, they arrived at the house ~~that~~ Jesus is staying in Capernaum. They find a large crowd surrounding the house. In verse 32, they send someone in to Jesus to tell Him that His family is standing outside of the house. Jesus knows the reason for their coming. They think that Jesus is out of His mind and have come to take Him home.

Commented [DK2]: In which

How many times as moms and/or dads of grown adult children have, we wanted to run their lives? We do not do that because we know that they have to make decisions about how they want to live. This can be very painful to watch them, especially when they are making some of the same mistakes that we made, or their decisions do not align with our values. We love them so much that we might counseel them, but we still allow them to make their own decisions. That is the only way that they are going to learn. God works on this principle of love in the same manner. God through His Word, the Bible, counseels us, but then allow us to make our own decisions. Even when those decisions cause us to sin. God, then, shows how much He loves us, by sending His Son, Jesus, to become our atonement, by pay the penalty of death for our sins.

What Jesus says next is very shocking to all those that hear it. He says in verse 33. In Jesus' day, there were strict guidelines that the oldest son would inherit the family estate and carry on the family name. The first-born male, most likely followed in his father's footsteps when it came to carrying on the family business. Jesus' question and the following answer given by Jesus in verse 34 disowns His family. He goes even further in verse 35.

Jesus at this point distanced Himself from His family because His family is ashamed as to what He is doing. I know when I told my family that I was going to be a minister, most of them were very supportive. They are still supporting me through their daily prayers. There are some of my family members, though, that are not Christians, they do not hold me in a favorable light. I would say that they tolerate me. I am blessed.

There are places in this world, that if you say you are a Christian, your family members are obligated not just to disown you, but to kill you.

Now, I know that some of you are here, and your adult children have left their faith. You have been praying for them and you are not seeing any signs that they are returning. Keep praying for them.

At first Jesus' family was ashamed of Him. That changed. His mother, Mary, was at His cross and she and His brothers stayed in Jerusalem until Pentecost. We find this in **John 19:25-27** and **Acts 1:12-14**. One of Jesus' brothers, James, who wrote the book of James, would become a leader of the church in Jerusalem. Let me read the introduction to the book of James. ~~So,~~ Jesus' family changed from being ashamed of Him, to joining Him in faith. If you have family members that are ashamed of your faith in Jesus, pray that God will change their hearts.

There may be people here or joining us on Facebook who have lost parents or ~~brothers or sisters~~siblings or other family members and feel that they do not have a family. I want to remind you that God is your Father. You have a family here at this church. You will have a family in heaven. A family so large that this family will dwarf the size of any family that we have on earth. In **Revelation 7:9-17**, the Bible describes this family and what they are doing.

You might be here today and ~~having~~hearing this Message. God is speaking to your heart and telling you that He loves you and wants you to be in His family. Maybe your family has rejected you and turned their backs on you. God will never reject you. You might be thinking ~~well~~ if God knew what I have done, He would never love me. That is the devil making you think that. God loves you so much that He died for you to erase the debt of sin. The Bible tells ~~sin~~ **Psalm 103:8-14**. The Father is calling all of us to come to home to the Family.

Family is important. Who is in the Family of God? Those, who believe in Jesus as the Son of God and as Jesus says, "whoever does God's will is My brother, and sister and mother." We grow in faith together as God's family. Amen.