

The Family of God

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- [0:00] Your Bibles turn to Mark chapter 3. Mark chapter 3. There's nothing like family. You can feel like you can't live with them, but you know you can't live without them.
- One minute you're thanking God for them, and the next you ask them to give you help dealing with them. They make you as mad as anybody in the world, but you'd fight to your death for your family.
- You can talk about them, but you better never hear nobody else talk about them. Comedian Ray Romano talks about how when kids are in the house, he said, having children is like living in a frat house.
- Nobody sleeps. Everything's broken, and there's a lot of throwing up. Well, Jesus had a family too. After Jesus was born, his earthly parents had children, and therefore he had half-brothers.
- And as wonderful as Christ was in every way, his family didn't quite get it. They didn't quite understand him. I want us to look today at the family of God. In the second half of Mark chapter 3, there's something unique happens here.
- [1:22] Theologians call it a marking sandwich. It's a technique that Mark uses six times in his gospel. It happens when he begins to talk about one subject, and then he moves to another subject, and then he goes back to the first subject and shows the connection between the two.
- And what you see in the second part of Mark chapter 3 is that he talks about the family of Jesus and their misunderstanding of Jesus. And then he talks about the scribes and their misunderstanding of Jesus.
- And then he goes back to the family of God and shows that commonality. Now, we're going to tear the sandwich apart this morning, okay? I'm going to take the two pieces of bread off the sandwich and deal with the family.
- And we'll see the accusation of the scribes later. But I want you to remember the context. We spent three weeks talking about him calling the apostles, okay?
- After he calls the apostles, Mark tells us. Then he went home. And the crowd gathered again so that they could not even eat.
- [2:48] And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they thought he was out of his mind. Now, Mark then speaks of the scribes who thought he was of the devil.
- And when Mark comes back to the family, he says this. And his mother and his brothers came. And standing outside, they sent to him and called him.
- And a crowd was sitting around him. And they said to him, your mother and your brothers are outside seeking you. And he answered them, who are my mother and my brothers?
- And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.
- Let's talk for a few minutes about the family of God. First is a natural family. The natural family is the one that we were raised in.

- [4 : 00] We all have a natural family. Warts and all. Whether we want to claim them or not, we all have a natural family. And some of our families have been the Christian example that we needed.
- And we know the Lord today. And we've walked with the Lord. And we've been inspired by those that lived in our home. And by those that love the Lord.
- And if that's in your category this morning, you're a blessed person. Others have family that have allowed you to pursue your trek toward God.
- They weren't combative about it. They weren't really supportive about it. They just allowed it. Maybe they superficially were religious of some sorts.
- And then some of you never saw God in your homes growing up. And you may be scarred by that. Jesus was raised in a godly home.
- [5 : 06] He was dedicated in church after his birth. He was brought to the temple as a boy. He was raised by a mom that supported him his whole life.
- But his family didn't understand what he was doing. Now, I said his mom because we don't have any record of his father after his boyhood.
- We just don't know. Theologians have said he must have died because we don't know what happened to Joseph. He's never mentioned after the boyhood of Christ.
- But his mother loved him. But they didn't understand what he was doing. It appeared that he had stopped working as a carpenter.
- And by the way, a carpenter in that day primarily worked with stone, interestingly enough. More of a stonemason than what we would call a carpenter today. But he no longer was doing that.
- [6 : 08] No longer was he supporting his extended family. He had become a wandering preacher that was hanging out with the wrong people and colliding with the wrong people.
- Actually, the people he was colliding with was thought of as the right people. They were the leaders people looked up to. But now you need to understand the family dynamic of the first century.
- The first century Jewish family was not the same as the Western family today. They were tighter. Meaning they were more dependent upon one another. Several generations lived together by choice.
- Are in a compound setting. And remain dependent upon each other throughout their lives. And it appeared apparently to his family that Jesus had abandoned them.
- And now he was running into trouble. Now I don't think they were judging him. They were concerned. But they thought that he had lost his mind. Therefore, they traveled from Nazareth to Capernaum.
- [7 : 15] About 30 miles. About 25 to 30 miles. About a 10 to 12 hour walk to get to him. To seize him is what the gospels say. They were going to make a citizen's arrest.
- And take him home. They were concerned about his safety. One, he was running with the wrong people. He was running with fishermen.
- They can be rough. I know some. There's some in here. They are. Not only that, but he was running with tax collectors too. A tax collector. He had a zealot with him.
- Who was known. Zealots, at least some of them, were known to have daggers. With curved blades. Under the folds of the robe. He was also going after the wrong people.
- He was going after the religious establishment. They knew that he was not safe. They were concerned about his health. Verse 20 tells us he was missing meals.

- [8 : 14] So busy with the crowds and the people around him. He was putting himself at risk. Not only that, but they were also concerned about the family name. They were getting embarrassed.
- About what he was doing. He wasn't concerned about what people thought. Of what he was doing. But they were concerned about what people thought.
- Of what they were doing. The author H.G. Wells. Said for most people. The voice of their neighbors is louder than the voice of God. The reality is that most people.
- And too many Christians. Are always worried more. About what other people think. Than what God thinks. What other people want.
- Instead of what God wants. A stand for Christ. Hear me today. A stand for Christ will cause ripples in your family.
- [9 : 12] If you stand up for Christ. It can cause ripples. Even in a good meaning family. You know what Christ said. In Matthew chapter 10 verse 36. He said a person's enemies.
- Will be those of his own household. Now don't misunderstand me. I'm not speaking bad of family. I believe in them. I'm part of them. I'm in one. Okay.
- And they're watching me. You know. So I'm not speaking bad of them. But don't be surprised. When your family is not supportive. Of your stand for Christ.
- Thank God. For the believer. You have another family. Another family besides your natural family. You have a church family. Notice in this passage.
- As Christ is inside. His family is outside. When people told him that his family was outside. He replied and said.
- [10 : 10] Who are my mothers and brothers? And looking at those who sat around him. He said. Here are my mothers. My mother and my brothers.
- For whoever does the will of God. He is my brother. And sister. And mother. Now listen. He's not throwing shade on his family here.
- He's not putting them off. However. What he's saying is. I'm not going to be slowed. By my family. He could not let them hold him back.
- From the mission. That he was called to do. And. That they couldn't see. They didn't understand. He is aligning himself. With people.
- That were hungry. To do the will of God. He was aligning himself. With people. Who wanted God to lead. And those that were dedicated. To him. And after the death.
- [11 : 06] And resurrection. And ascension of Christ. Those people. That were around him. That were committed. Those that were aligning with him. Became the church. Of Jesus Christ.
- Let me tell you something folks. The common bond of Christ. Is what makes the church strong. There are a lot. Of differences.
- Among the people. Of Pickens First Baptist Church. There's a lot of differences. Among the people. In this room. There are different backgrounds here.
- There are different heritages here. There are different experiences. Here growing up. There are different circumstances. That you face. We have couples here.
- We have families. With small kids. We have parents. Of college kids. We have empty nesters. We have those whose nest. Ain't empty anymore. We have retired folks.
- [12 : 04] We have the widowed. We have a lot. Of differences. Along the way. And the thing. That makes us one. One. Is not. The everyday.
- Different circumstances. What makes us one. Is the common bond. That we have. In Christ. Listen. You can't be a member. Of Pickens First Baptist Church.

Unless you publicly. Proclaim Christ. Unless you follow. A salvation experience. With baptism. By immersion. And commit to live your life. For Christ.

That is a common bond. That we have. Or let me say it this way. That's a common bond. That we are to have. Among all of us. Now I want you to listen to what the Apostle Paul.

Urges us to do. The Church of Jesus Christ. He says. Walk in a manner worthy of the calling. To which you've been called. With all humanity. And with humility.

[13:00] And gentleness. With patience. Bearing one another in love. Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit. In the bond of peace. There is one body. And one Spirit.

Just as you were called to the one hope. That belongs to your call. One Lord. One faith. One baptism. One God. And Father of all. Who is over all.

And through all. And in all. Amen. Listen. The Church family. Is all about Christ. That's the common bond that we have. It is Christ that we stand.

It is in Christ that we stand. And we stand together in Christ. Through the hurt that we feel. We're there for each other. In the triumphs.

We celebrate together. In fellowship. We dedicate ourselves. To dig a little deeper. I want to encourage you.

[13:57] Don't stand on the outside. Come on in. Be a part of us. Be a part of the many possibilities. That you have. In this church. Because I really believe.

That if you walk in the doors of this church. Right before we start. At 1030. And you. Leave out of here like some of y'all do. Like Stampede. Worried somebody going to get in front of you.

At the restaurant. I believe if that's the case. If you do both of those. I believe you miss the blessings. What the church is about. I really do.

You need to find a life group. People that you can bond with. You can't bond with people. Just when you sit in the pew. For an hour with them. We won't let you talk to each other. We're too busy doing other stuff.

You need to be able to build a bond with folks. And that's what life groups are about. You'll miss the nucleus. The secret sauce. Of the church. If you're not a part of that.

[14:53] So commit to that. Find a discipleship class. That speaks to you. That speaks to a need in your life. That speaks to something God's leading you to. Find a place to serve. Listen. I'm firmly convinced.

Based on God's word. That we are all to be served in the church. And we're all to serve in the church. In some capacity. When God leads you to a people of God.

Commit yourself. And be a part of that. I heard a clip from probably my favorite preacher. Adrian Rogers. I heard a clip from him this week. And he said this. He said you're to go to church.

Why? Why church attendance? You say pastor. I don't have to go to church to be a Christian. That's right. You can be saved anywhere. But if you love Jesus. You're going to love what Jesus loves.

And he loves the church. The church is not this building. It's the people gathered together. And when you're here this morning. Do you know what you're saying?

[15:53] There are two things that you're saying by being here. Living in the light of the soon coming of Jesus Christ. One. You're saying God is important to me.

And number two. You're saying that the people here are important to me. End of quote. Listen. Listen. Your family may not always get your passion for Christ.

But your church will. So let's go above and beyond for his cause. And for his people. But do you know what else?

It's bigger than the church. It is. We're part of something bigger than the church. Because it's also about a kingdom family. Now I want to be clear this morning. I love Pickett's First Baptist Church.

I think this is a great church. And I thank God daily to be a part of it. It's a privilege to be your pastor. It's a privilege to be a part of it.

[16:59] And one thing that I love. There's many things. But one thing that I love about it. Is that we know it's not about us. It's about the gospel.

It's about go and therefore make disciples. And by the way, go is not a command. It makes for a good sermon. But it's just not true. It's not a command. It's a participle. Really what it means is as you go.

That means daily in what you do. Whenever you leave the house. Whatever you do. It means that you make disciples. That's the command. You make disciples.

That means that as you go each day. And as far as God allows you to go. You go in the name of Christ. We have a strong mission mind in this church.

We give faithfully to missions. Pick up that budget. You'll see. We're faithful to give to missions. We promote missions. We do a missions conference every year. Bring in missionaries that we support.

[18:02] And that we pray for. We support individual missionaries. And we're trying to fight to keep some of them on the field. I've been in contact with denominational leaders in the past two weeks. Saying I know a man that needs more support on the field.

God's called him there and I want him to stay. And you need to do more. Through the Light and Moon Christmas offering that we'll be promoting in coming days. We support 3,500 missionaries across the world.

Friend, I'm going to tell you something. It's not just the church family. God has given us a kingdom family. We stand on the shoulders of those that have went before us. We stand on the shoulders of those who wait in glory for us.

Hebrews chapter 12. Now listen. I'm going to tell you something. And I don't know everything about this. But nobody that writes in books knows everything about it either. Okay.

I'm just going to tell you. There's some mystery here. That we'll know when we get there. Okay. I don't know everything about heaven. I know what scripture tells us about heaven.

[19:08] I don't think that people in heaven are fascinated with what we're doing. I really don't. I really don't. I think they got a lot more going on than we do. Okay.

And I think that they're with them in the presence of Jesus. Physically or spiritually. Whatever you want to work that out. But I mean they're there. Okay. They've made it. So I don't think they're caught up with us.

But it's interesting. Hebrews chapter 12 verse 1 tells us that we're surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses.

And the Hebrew writer says that right after he goes through what I call the hall of fame of faith. Where he talks about all those fathers that have went before us.

All those who live for the Lord before us. Who are now in glory. And he says we have a great cloud of witnesses around us. I think that somehow at times heaven gets a glimpse of what's happening on earth.

[20:16] Now listen. They don't see it all because there's no more tears in heaven. It's like they sang a little while ago. Okay. And if they saw the mess that we're in today they'd be crying. Okay. So. But listen.

The reality is they see the rest of the story. They see it from a different perspective than we can now. Because I believe once you see the face of Christ it all becomes clear.

It's not like a whole bent out piece of metal mirror like Paul was talking about. By any means. It becomes clear. We don't know what's around the corner tomorrow. They already know all that. They got it figured out.

They know all that. So they're not worried. Not wringing their hands. Book of Revelation. One of the powerful passages of the book of Revelation is to say. Heaven is praising God the whole time the earth's doing whatever the earth's doing.

They never stop in their worship. Ever. And the reality is. I believe they catch a glimpse from time to time. And I'll tell you how I know that.

[21:12] Jesus tells us in Luke chapter 15. That all of heaven rejoices when one sinner repents. Oh can you think about heaven? Can you imagine what it must be like? All the believers through Christ.

That have ever lived. Will gather together around the throne of God in glory. Just notice what John says. When God just peeled back the curtain of heaven. And gives John a glimpse on the island of Patmos.

And he says this in Revelation 7. He says. After this I looked. And behold a great multitude that no one could number. From every nation. From all tribes and peoples and languages.

Standing before the throne and before the Lamb. Clothed in white robes. With palm branches in their hands. And crying out with a loud voice. Salvation belongs to our God. Who sits on the throne.

And to the Lamb. Folks I want to tell you something. It's not about me. And I'm sorry. It's not about you. It's not even about us. We are in a kingdom family.

[22:13] You know what excites me. He says. We give faithfully to missions. And as we go. On the mission field. When God gives us opportunity.

And we follow the Lord's lead. In those things. All those tribes. And language. And people. That we see. What about the people that's in heaven today?

Because it's something we gave. To enable a missionary to be on a field. And share Christ with them. What about the. What about the people who sit in the churches.

That those pastors. Pastor. That this church has been dedicated to training. In South America. Training them. To teach God's word.

To those people. I believe there will be thank yous in heaven. We know nothing about. We don't even know what they're talking about. But they're thanking God. For our. We're part of something bigger than us. It's a kingdom.

[23:15] Family. And you know what else. You know what our faithfulness. Can lead to. And I want you to hear this. And I'll close. A changed family. Jesus' family didn't get it.

They couldn't understand it. He was putting himself in danger. And not doing what they thought he should do. Families often. Don't get it. When we walk with the Lord.

They don't do it. Many of us have. Lost family members. Family members that don't know the Lord. And they don't see why it's so important to us.

Others in our family claim to know the Lord. But they lack a passion for Christ. As I say sometimes about somebody. I don't want what he's got. You know. The Christianity he's got. I don't want it. When somebody.

Around them. Gets a passion for Christ. They try to dampen it. Even Christians sometimes. It's weird. But your family.

[24:13] May not want you to be closer to the Lord. Than they are. In reality. And if that's the case. I want to tell you something. Live on. For Jesus Christ.

Pray for your family. And watch God work. In you. And through you. And in them. Because. This is not the last.

Of Jesus' family. His mother Mary. Begins. To have her eyes opened. She's at the cross. When her son dies.

She watches him get tortured to death. She watches the worst kind of death that can happen. She also goes to the tomb. To take care of his body. And finds that it's empty.

And she knows he's arose. She also. Is a devout follower of Christ. In the book of Acts. She's with the apostles. When the Holy Spirit comes. And when everything changes.

[25:09] When the Holy Spirit comes. His brothers. His brothers. His brothers that he addresses in Mark chapter 3. They come around too. By the way. They're in the upper room. On the day of Pentecost.

As well with the apostles. His brother James. Would go on to be a strong Christian leader. He would speak boldly.

In the book of Acts. During the Jerusalem council. When they were trying to figure out. What to do with Gentiles. As they joined the church. How do we handle that? James spoke out about that.

James became the pastor. Of the church. Of Jerusalem. The half brother of Jesus. He writes the book that bears his name. The book of James. He served the Lord faithfully.

In leadership for the Lord. Until he was thrown off. Of the pinnacle of the temple. And when his body landed. They stoned him. Until somebody finally grabbed a club.

[26:06] And hit him in the head. And killed him. That's the brother of Jesus. He never mentioned. He was a brother. He never mentioned.

He was a servant. Tell you about another brother. His name was Jude. His given name was Judas. He changed his name. I don't blame him. But his brother's name was Jude.

He was a faithful follower. As well. He wrote the book of Jude. And in his humility. He called James. His brother. But he only identified himself.

As the servant. Of Jesus Christ. He never mentioned. He was his brother. James never mentions. He's his brother. They only address him.

As their Lord. I want to give you hope today friend. If your natural family. Is not a part of your kingdom family.

[27:06] And they're not a part of a church family. Well then let's pray. Let's pray for them. Let's share with them. Let's live it out.

Before them. So that they will know. That Christ is the answer. And that he is worth us. Giving. Our all. To him. Two stories.

One. I was a youth minister. A long long time ago. For a short time. And one of the girls. That came to our youth group. Got a passion for Christ. She went home.

Her parents didn't like it. They didn't really like her attending. They let her attend. But they said you don't need to get so serious about this. She'd go home. And she'd read her Bible at night. They didn't like that. They said stop reading your Bible. She would get a light.

And put it under her bed. And after she went. After they went to bed. She'd get down under her bed. And read her Bible. Under her bed. So they wouldn't know.

[28:02] That a light. Was on. And for those of you. Who ain't been around. Less than 20 years. We didn't have a phone to read off of then. Okay. There wasn't no phones. She was reading the Bible.

Off a lamp under her bed. I'm going to tell you something. Years. And years later. Her mom and daddy. Got faithful in church. Got right with God.

And lived for the Lord. A grandparent. Was here earlier today. And told me they had a burden. For their children. Getting in church. And they've shared that burden.

And tried to live that burden out. Before their kids. Well one of the grandkids. Said. Asked their parents. Why don't we go to church? Why don't we pray when we sit down to eat?

Why don't we do that? Last week. They were in church. They were in church. They were in church. They were in church. By a child. Let me tell you something. If you'll live for the Lord Jesus.

[29:03] And you'll pray for your family. And you'll share with your family. And you'll live it out before them. And teach them that.

God will do a work in their life. Your family can change. So I'm telling you. As long as God gives us breath. There's hope for the living. And that only hope is found.

In Christ. So listen Christian. Don't back up. Don't back up. Live faithfully for Christ. For your sake. Live faithfully for the Lord.

For Christ's sake. Live faithfully for the Lord. For this world's sake. And if you're here today. And you acknowledge. In reality preacher.

I don't know him. I've never surrendered my life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Well I want you to know. Same Savior. That walked among his family.

[30:02] And saw their life change. Later in their life. After he's gone. Is the same Lord. That can change your life as well. And if you'll surrender your life to the Lord.

Admit that you need him. Admit that there's sin in your life. And he needs to forgive you of that sin. And to cleanse you. And commit your life to follow him. And surrender him day. He'll save you. I'm thankful for that.

And if you've done that. And you're not active in a church family. Get in one. Get busy. For the Lord. It's easy to stand on the outskirts. And never commit. But God does not honor that.

When we stand at a distance. And God's not honored. When we stand at a distance. So honor him. By committing to him. Completely. Today.

Don't be on the outer skirts. Jesus was inside. His family. Was outside.

[30:57] Let's come on in. Let's be everything that God. Would have us. To be. For him.

With his leading. Following his lead. Doing it in his timing. But letting nothing in our life. Come in the way of what God wants. For our hearts and lives. With every head bowed.

And every eye closed. I want to ask you this morning. Have you ever given your life to Christ? If you haven't. I encourage you to do that today. I'll be happy to guide you in that.

We're going to stand. And we're going to sing in just a moment. And as we stand to sing. As soon as we stand up. You come down. And tell me. I want to give my life to Christ. Maybe you've never been baptized as a believer.

You know you've given your life to Christ. But you've. You've never followed him in baptism. That can be a tremendous hindrance in your life. Quite honestly. If you've never taken that first step of obedience. In your life.

[31:54] And if you need to do that. I encourage you to come. And share. I need to. I need to be baptized preacher. Never been baptized as a believer. Maybe you're here this morning.

And God's leading you to be a part of Pickens First Baptist Church. God's drawing you here. And you feel led. To be a part of here. We'll be happy to guide you in that process. Or maybe you're here.

And there's stuff that you need to deal with in prayer. Stuff that you need to commit to. Or people that you need to pray for. Burdens that you need to leave at his feet today.

When we stand and sing. I want you to sing. But more important than that. I want you to follow God. You may spend that time in prayer. You may come to this altar. If you'd like me to pray for you. I'll be happy to pray with you. Whatever God's leading you to do.

I encourage you to be obedient. And follow his will and his way. You'll never be satisfied with less. Than giving God your absolute best. So live completely for him today.

[32 : 55] Lord Jesus I love you. I thank you Lord for the love that you have for us. And I ask right now dear God. That you will lead us and guide us. And help us to have the boldness and the courage to follow you.

The faith to do exactly what you tell us to do. May you be honored in what we do right now in this time of decision. In Jesus precious name. Amen.