

Series - We are the Family of God

Born into One Family *John 1:1-13, 3: 3-8, Romans 8:9-17, Galatians 4:4-7*

In the light of what is happening in the US and around the World it is time for us as followers of Christ to affirm that there that all are equal before God – we are one race – the Human Race. It is also vital that believers know that we are all one Family in Christ.

Born into One Family is the beginning of a series of four sermons where we will discover what the Bible means when it speaks of the Family of God including our birth into His family, our identity in His family, our responsibilities as family members, and the only way to live in this family.

God uses several ways to describe our relation to God as followers of Christ in the Word including Slaves to Righteousness, Friends of Christ, Wife of Christ, and even wedding guests but the most used picture we find in the Word is that of a Family with God as the Father. We must remember that this is only a picture because we cannot fully understand our relationship in Christ. We need to keep in mind certain truths.

Basic Understanding

- 1. God is God not a human. Jesus described God as a Spirit. *John 4:24 For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.*** He is eternal, holy, perfect, almighty, and love.
- 2. God's crowning creation was not just humans but family – the procreation of mankind, in essence family *Genesis 2:24 This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.***
It was His choice to relate to us as Father (sometimes as Mother) for our understanding but family was clearly His plan for our development as humans.
- 3. God is the creator of all but not the Father of all. *Malachi 2:10 Are we not all children of the same Father? Are we not all created by the same God? Then why do we betray each other, violating the covenant of our ancestors?*** Jesus said those who do not have a relationship of faith are children of the Devil *John 8:44 For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.*
The rebellious heart of man separates him from the family of God – and all have sinned.
- 4. God invites us into this family relationship through His grace. *Galatians 3:25-26 And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian. For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.***

How do we become Children of God?

John 1:10-13

Just like we become part of a family

Two possibilities -Birth and Adoption – God's Word speaks of both

Adoption is mentioned in **Galatians 4:4-7**, **Romans 8:15** and **Ephesians 1:5**

Birth into the Family

Not dependent upon

Human natural descent. We are not believers because our parents were believers

Our parents cannot believe for us – each must personally receive

Human decision alone. No one can make himself a child of God by any amount of self-determination or self-effort. I cannot decide to be royalty by my decision.

It is possible only by receiving the gift of God – new life

Human determination “*nor the husbands will*” We cannot persuade or decree anyone as a child of God. Not as humans or even as a church. Only God can do that. It is not God's will that any should perish but it is only those who believe and receive who have eternal life.

Fully dependent upon the grace of God

He gives the right, authority, power to those who

- 1. Believe Him – Believe that He is who He claims to be – the Son of God**
 - Believe that He will fulfill His promises – forgiveness and new life
 - Believe that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life
- 2. Receive Him – As the sacrifice for our sin**
 - As the Lord of our life
 - As our savior

- 3. Become Children of God** The phrase **children of God** is found 11x in 11 verses and every use describes **believers**. It is also interesting that of the two Greek terms for **children**, one is always used of Jesus (**huios**) while the other (**teknon, tekna**) is used for believers. Christians are children of God, but they are not in the same category as the Son of God, Jesus.

It is Real but spiritual rather than physical *John 3:5-8 Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit."*

It is the work of the Holy Spirit in us

Received through repentance - *"Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38*

Regenerated by the Spirit in us -

Romans 8 14-17

Awakens us to this new life *14 - For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.*

Allows us to call God "daddy" *15 - So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father".*

Affirms that we are indeed children *16 - For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children.*

Assures us of an eternal inheritance *17 - And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.*

Restored to unity in the Family

No longer strangers and foreigners *Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us. So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Ephesians 2:18-19*

No division by race, social status, or gender *There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:28*

What does it Mean to be a part of the Family of God?

1. It means have God as your Father *Romans 8:31 What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?*

2. It means being a part of the worldwide family of God. *Ephesians 5:1-2 Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.*

3. It means that God will meet your deepest needs

All Humans Need Acceptance *Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.*

All Humans Need Security *Philippians 1:6 And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.*

All Humans Need Significance *2 Corinthians 5:17-18 And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him.¹⁹ For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.*

4. It means we have an eternal inheritance

I John 3:1-3 See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don't recognize that we are God's children because they don't know him.² Dear friends, we are already God's children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is.³ And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure.

Practical Steps – Ask yourself

Do I have the assurance of the Holy Spirit that you are a child of God?

Do I view others despite race or gender as equal with you in the family of God?

Do I love the family of God and do all you can for its welfare?