

Jesus' Family

Ponder: Who are the members of Jesus' family?

Scripture: "For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother" (Matt. 12:50, NKJV).

Everyone in the small town of Nazareth knew Jesus and His family. "Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us?" (Matt. 13:55-56a).

Yes, that was all true. And undoubtedly Jesus loved His family! Being perfectly obedient to the Law of Moses, Jesus honored His parents. But being in the nuclear family of Jesus didn't automatically make anyone right with God. John 7:5 tells us His own brothers didn't believe in Him; and from the cross Jesus entrusted the care of His mother not to His brothers, but to the apostle John (Jn. 19:26-27).

Once when Jesus was teaching a multitude of people, "His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him" (Matt. 12:46). Upon hearing this, Jesus "answered him who told Him, 'Who is My mother and who are My brothers?' And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, 'Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother'" (vv. 48-50).

In no way was Jesus disrespecting His family in the flesh! He was simply emphasizing obedience to God as a matter of greater importance than biological relationships. John the Immerser did the same thing by de-emphasizing the importance of physical descent from Abraham: "For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones" (Matt. 3:9b). Jesus, likewise, taught that fleshly descent from Abraham meant nothing unless accompanied by trusting obedience. "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39).

Even today we must avoid the temptation of trusting in physical family relationships to secure favor with God. Some are blessed with a lengthy pedigree of faithful Christian parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, etc. Be thankful for such a background, but understand clearly that being in Jesus' family requires your own faith and obedience to the Father's will.

Hymn: "We're Part Of The Family"

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for receiving us into Your family. May we ever strive to do Your will. In Jesus' name, Amen.