

God's New Family

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 24 September 2023

Preacher: Mike Salvati

[0 : 00] Just a second. If you want, you can open up your Bibles to Mark chapter 3. We're going to be looking at Mark chapter 3, verses 31 to 35.

It's on page 997 of your pew Bible. Let me open up my own Bible. While you're opening up your Bible, have you ever noticed certain families have definitive characteristics? Interests? Rhythms? Like, some families have similar physical characteristics. Does anybody know a family with the family unibrow? Some families share an interest in politics. And so in one family, you can have people on, like, total opposite sides of the spectrum, and yet they're all passionate about politics. Some families share rhythms together. They gather once a month for a meal, or they're regularly getting together to celebrate birthdays and holidays. I don't think anybody would argue that families are not important.

[1 : 12] They are important. Your family, your biological family is where you should be experiencing deep, meaningful love, right? Accepted, protected, provided.

You're trained. Sometimes you're corrected. You're comforted. Well, this morning we're going to see Jesus do something radical. He's going to redefine His family from biological ties to theological ties.

And we're going to see that in Mark 3, 31 through 35. We're going to see a new family gathered around Jesus in His house.

This morning I want you to behold your king with His family, His new family, His theological family around Him.

Let me get you up to speed. At the beginning of Mark 3, verses 1 through 6, Jesus heals the man with a withered hand on the Sabbath day. Jesus is going to keep poking the Jewish religious establishment because He is the Lord of the Sabbath, and He will do what He wants on the Sabbath.

[2 : 29] And then in Mark 3, 7 through 12, what we start seeing is this massive crowd following Jesus. And it starts in verse 8, branching. People are coming from Tyre and Sidon, which means now Gentiles are coming to follow Jesus.

To hear of them, to see what He's doing. In verses 13 through 21, Jesus appoints His 12 apostles. But in verse 21, we see that not everybody is enthusiastic about Jesus.

His family thinks that He's out of His mind, and they go to collect Him. In verses 22 through 36, we have these scribes, the religious professionals, but they come from Jerusalem, which is kind of like Washington, D.C., to send the feds to check out what's going on in your hometown.

And so they send these scribes to see what's going on. And these scribes from Jerusalem, they accuse Jesus of casting out demons by the prince of demons, by Satan.

And Jesus says, you are blaspheming against the Holy Spirit. You are attributing to Satan what the Holy Spirit's doing. That is terribly wrong. It's unforgivable.

[3 : 43] What we do know is that the Holy Spirit gives people new life. Causes them to be born again. So what happened is that Jesus, in chapter 3, Jesus is gathering a following.

And it's becoming kind of more visible. It's taking on leadership. But in addition to a following, He's also causing a stirring of opposition.

In fact, some people don't believe who He is. In Mark 3, 31 through 35, Jesus will need to decide between His theological family and His biological family.

Have you ever been in that position before? Where you feel like you need to decide between the unbelieving blood relatives in your family and then the believing non-relatives of your church?

Have you ever felt like you've been in that position? I have. Not an easy place to be. So let me read Mark 3, 31 through 35.

[4 : 59] And His mother, Jesus' mother, and His brothers, He had brothers, came and standing outside, they sent to Him and called Him.

They were standing outside and calling for Jesus. And a crowd was sitting around Him. And they said to Him, Your mother and your brothers are outside seeking you. And Jesus answered them, Who are my mother and my brothers?

And looking about at those who sat around Him, He said, Here, here are my mother and my brothers.

For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother. May God bless the hearing of His word. I want you to behold three groups of people in this passage.

Group number one, verse 31. Behold the people standing outside. Notice who they are. Verse 31, His mother. Mary. This is the woman that miraculously conceived Jesus in her womb by the Holy Spirit.

[6 : 06] Mary gave birth to Him. And raised Him. She would see Him crucified. And she would be one of the first eyewitnesses of His resurrection. That Mary. And His brothers are there too.

And you might be like, What? Jesus had brothers? He had brothers. And sisters. Flip in your Bible in Mark, to Mark chapter 6, verse 3, 2 and 3. Jesus is back in His hometown, Nazareth.

And a prophet is not welcome in His hometown. And so He's in the synagogue, preaching on a Sabbath. And the people who heard Him are astonished. And they're saying, What did this... Wait, where did this man get these things?

What is the wisdom given to Him? How are such mighty works done by His hand? Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joseph, and Judas, and Simon, four brothers, and are not His sisters?

Here with us. At least two sisters. It's plural. And they took offense at Him. Yeah, Jesus. Jesus had brothers and sisters. Now you may be like, Whoa! What does that mean?

[7 : 11] Well, they're half brothers and sisters. So Mary gave birth to Jesus. And then, Mary and Joseph had more children.

And if you were raised in the Catholic faith, what this is pushing against is the perpetual virginity of Mary. It's not so. Not according to the Gospel of Mark. Jesus had brothers and sisters.

Half brothers and sisters. Which brings about humanity to Jesus. It's kind of like, Whoa! Could you imagine being raised in a household with Jesus as your brother? Like, trying to get on His nerves would be impossible.

But that's not the point. Here's the point. These people standing outside of Jesus' house, because this is Jesus' house that He's at, they're His blood relatives.

And typically, your blood relatives are in your house with you. But they're outside. I mean, these are the people that He's shared a lot of life with, a lot of history with, but they are outside.

[8 : 18] That's where they are. Not inside with Jesus. Outside, apart from Jesus. So who? Blood relatives. Where? Outside. Notice what they're doing.

They're standing. You might be like, Okay, that's fine. They're standing. But what's going on here in this passage is a contrast.

And this is going to be contrasted to sitting. The opposite of standing is sitting. And what we're about to see in a minute is that sitting is the humble posture of a disciple.

So, we have blood relatives on the outside standing apart from Jesus. And why are they there? Why has His mother and His brothers come?

Well, would you look up to chapter 3, verse 20 and 21. And Jesus went home to His house in Capernaum. This is where He healed the paralytic. And the crowd gathered again so that they could not even eat.

[9 : 19] And when His family heard it, they went out to seize Him, for they were saying, He's out of His mind. His mother and His brothers aren't there to follow Him and to sit at His feet.

His mother and His brothers are there to bring Him home. Hey, Jesus. You've gone a little too far. It's time to come home.

They're not there to do God's will. Now, you may be thinking, whoa, hold on a second. Mary's there? Doing that?

How do you explain that? Well, it would be the same way I would explain John the Baptist sending some of his disciples to Jesus and asking Jesus, are you the Christ?

I think this is a moment of wavering in Mary. And we can all relate with that. So, who? Blood relatives of Jesus.

[10:21] Where? Outside? What are they doing? They're standing. Why are they there? They're there to take Jesus away, not to follow Him. Does anyone in the room have non-Christian family members who think that you are out of your mind because you believe that Jesus is alive and you're following Him?

I do. I have relatives who think I'm really crazy. You're in good company. Your King knows exactly how you feel.

He knows the heartache. So, behold the people standing outside. Jesus' biological family. Now, let's behold the people sitting inside.

32. And a crowd was sitting around Him and they said, your mother and your brothers are outside seeking you. So, here's another group of people in this passage and it's in contrast to the people, the biological family of Jesus.

Who are they? Well, it's a crowd. It's unnamed. It's unnumbered. But they're in Jesus' house. They're inside with Jesus. Jesus. Now, I kind of want to know who these people are.

[11:39] But I think it's safe to say we do some hypothesizing. Jesus has just appointed His 12 apostles. So, I think it's pretty safe to say that the 12 apostles are in the house with Him.

And if you actually look back at Mark chapter 3, starting in verses 16 through 19, you have the naming of the 12 apostles. There are two names.

I just want to draw your attention to. First, is the name in verse 18, Matthew. Do you know who Matthew was? A.K.A. Levi? Chapter 2, verse 14, Jesus calls him to follow Him.

Do you know what He did for a living? He was a tax collector. You might think, well, that's kind of like IRS. It's worse. What He did was this.

Matthew was Jewish and he was hired by the Roman occupiers to collect a tax from His fellow Jews in order to pay the Romans. And He would make He would make a lot of jingle off that.

[12:42] And so, He would have been perceived by His fellow Jews as a traitor. Here's what makes this interesting. It's the last name in verse 18.

Simon the Zealot. Do you know what Zealots did? Zealots passionately hated the Roman occupiers.

So do you know what this means? In Jesus' 12 apostles, we have a guy that's seen as a Jewish traitor and we have a guy who hated Roman occupiers. How about that?

Having dinner with those guys together. Two ends of the political spectrum. This was a diverse crowd. Who else?

I'm guessing there were women, Mary Magdalene, Salome, maybe people from Tyre and Sidon, some Gentiles there. We had country folk there. We had city folk there. It's a diverse crowd. I think this is the sample congregation of Daniel chapter 7 verses 13 and 14 where the Ancient of Days gives the Son of Man an everlasting and indestructible kingdom of people from every nation, every tongue.

[13:56] I think this is a sample of that. It's an unusual assembly of people and you can believe it. They had a variety of different backgrounds and you can bet a variety of different baggage.

Did you notice where they are? Not outside apart from Jesus. They are inside with Jesus. At one point they would have been outside from Jesus but now they're inside with Jesus. Did you notice what they're doing?

They're sitting. They're sitting around Jesus. They are interacting with Jesus. Hey Jesus, do you know your mom and your brothers are outside?

There's relationship there. There's this contrast between the outside people and the inside people. Why are they there? Why is this crowd sitting at Jesus' feet?

It's the same reason Mary in Luke 10:37 sat at Jesus' feet. She chose the better way. She was learning from Jesus.

[15:01] I mean, he was the greatest teacher, rabbi ever. So they're sitting at his feet which is this humble posture of a disciple, a learner.

He's the rabbi. They're the learners. They're saying give us more. Teach us. So behold the crowd. Unrelated to Jesus but inside his house sitting around him and at his feet learning from him.

So do you all see the contrast? Verse 31, Jesus' blood family outside. Verse 32, this crowd sitting inside at his feet. Who will Jesus choose?

His family's there, biological families. Hey, Jesus, come with us. Who's he going to choose? The third group of people I want you to see, well, it's not a group.

It's your king. Behold your king. In verses 30 through 35, who will he decide between his biological family or this crowd sitting around him?

[16:18] Let's not forget who this is. In chapter 1, we learn that Jesus is the son of God. That God the Father himself said so.

Remember at the baptism of Jesus, the heavens open up, the spirit descends, and then there's this voice. This is my beloved son with whom I'm well pleased. That's God the Father, the ancient of days, saying of Jesus, you're my son and I delight in you.

What that means is that Jesus, the son of God, is totally God and totally man. That's who is in the house here.

but it's not just the son of God. Chapter 2, we learn that he's the son of man. A king with whom the ancient of days, God the Father, would give an eternal and indestructible kingdom made up of peoples and nations and languages.

A diverse crowd, if you will. It's this Jesus, the son of God and the son of man who has been put into a position of having to decide between those outside and those inside.

[17:32] And so what do you think he's going to do? He's going to teach. Jesus, remember, is a rabbi. He's a teacher.

And he sees the teaching moment and takes it. And so what we're about to see him do is classic rabbinical teaching technique. He's going to ask a question then answer it.

So the question is in verse 33. Remember what's happened. His blood, his biological family is outside. Hey, where's Jesus? His crowd on the inside and around him saying, Jesus, hey, your mother and your brothers, they're outside.

They want you to come. And then to which Jesus says, to the people inside, who are my mother and my brothers? Now, if you were there, you would know, you would know instinctively that Jesus is getting at something bigger than genetics.

You would know that. What Jesus is doing is challenging the common idea about family. The common idea of being bound by biological blood and birth.

[18:48] He's challenging that. Anybody hear the expression blood is thicker than water? That means family first. We put an emphasis on who our birth parents are.

And what Jesus is doing is he's raising the possibility of a different kind of family with different kinds of bonds that prioritize it over a biological family.

That's what Jesus is doing. So there's the question. Who are my mothers and my brothers? And then in verse 34 and 35, he gives an answer.

But I think that there's this like dramatic moment. In verse 34. So he asks the question, who are my mother and my brothers? And he says, and looking about at those who sat around him, this is what I think he's doing right there.

I think he's making eye contact with everyone in the house. Who are my mother and my brothers? Pause.

[19:51] Looking into the eyes of everybody around him. And then he says, with hand motions, here, here are my mother, my brothers, while making eye contact with everyone in the house.

Here is my family. Here are my people. What he's doing here is, he's saying, we're united by a different blood, a different birth, for a different purpose.

The different blood, of course, is not biological. It's the blood of Jesus. A different birth, of course, is the birth of the Spirit of God.

Born again. And the purpose is, verse 35, for whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.

He's just redefined who his family is. Radical. Not those folks outside. Not the lady that gave me birth. Not my brothers.

[21:10] Y'all. Blood-bought. Spirit-born. Doers of God the Father's will. You're my family.

The definitive family trait of the family of God. Is to do our Father's will. To do the will of God.

That's the definitive trait of who we are. We're blood-bought. Born of the Spirit. And our aim is to do the will of God our Father. Jesus is saying, those in my family, obey my Father.

Because Jesus' Father is our Father. Behold your King. He has just spoken a definitive word on what characterizes his family.

Obedience to the will of the Father. Now, I started this sermon by talking about different families sharing different kind of characteristics. You know, the unbiblical and politics.

[22 : 19] Some families are foodie families. Other families are musician families. Some families are packer families. Some families are bear families. According to Jesus, the definitive, non-negotiable characteristic of His family is doing the will of our Heavenly Father.

Does this sound familiar? Our Father who art in Heaven. Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done.

On earth, in our lives, as it is in Heaven. You see, Jesus has already decided who His people are. Not those outside, standing.

Those inside, sitting around Him. Now, could you imagine if you were there and you heard Jesus say this and He made eye contact with you?

You heard Him say that? Here are my mother and my brothers and He's looking at you. That's exactly the point. You mean, you're more committed to me than your own mom and brothers?

[23 : 35] That's exactly the point. This is the new family of God. So this morning, Christian, as a blood-bought, spirit-born, doer of God's Word, you need to hear what Jesus is saying to you.

Here are my mother and my brothers and my sisters. You all. By His grace, you are part of His kingdom.

You are part of His family. You're beloved. You're a member. You have a new father. God the Father who loves you dearly.

And you have a new family, the church. So now let's bring this to bear. Just as our King prioritized His new family over His old family, so must we.

We must prioritize our church, our new family in Christ, blood-bought, spirit-born, doers of the Father's will.

[24 : 52] Just as He prioritized us, we prioritize us. We have been united by His blood.

We've been united by the Spirit's birth. We've been united now in a purpose to do the will of God our Father. So the question now becomes, right, what does that look like?

How do you go about prioritizing the new family of God? Let me try to apply this in a couple different ways. The first way is to think differently about one another.

The classic thing that we do is when we see each other, we focus on our external appearance. We need to think biblically about one another.

We need to see each other fully for who we are in light of God's Word. Now let me ask you a question. Do you think Jesus, do you think He thought less of His mother and His brothers standing outside?

[26 : 05] I don't think so. He just knew they weren't inside. I don't think He thought less of them, but He definitely thought differently of those inside sitting around Him.

So this morning, I want you to hear this. I'm not calling you based on God's Word. I'm not calling you to think less of your non-Christian parents, to think less of your non-Christian siblings, to think less of your non-Christian children.

That's not how we apply this. To be honest with you, if you have non-Christian parents, there's heartache there. If you have non-Christian siblings, there's heartache there.

If you have non-Christian children, there's heartache there. You spend a lot of time praying for your non-Christian children.

It's one of the biggest burdens you carry. So we're not to think less of the non-Christians of our lives, or love them less. That's not the application of this.

[27 : 15] What we do need to do is prioritize the family of faith more. That's the application. And it begins with thinking differently about one another. And I've already given you some categories to be thinking about each other.

Just imagine this. Let's say you walk into the sanctuary and you bump into a brother in the Lord and three things come through your head. Oh, blood-bought, spirit-born, doer of the will of God.

Whoa, hey! That'd be cool. You bump into a sister at festival. The categories that come through your mind is, man, she is my blood-bought sister, spirit-born sister, and she too is doing the will of our Father.

You know what's going to happen? We will esteem each other more highly. We will consider others better than ourselves.

We will hold each other in higher regard because we're seeing each other as God sees one another. We share the greatest thing in common.

[28 : 25] Any image bearer can. We have been united by the triune God and brought into His family. Blood-bought, spirit-born, doers of the will of our Father.

So the first application is let's not focus on externals as much as remembering who our brothers and sisters are in Christ.

Another way to prioritize one another the family of God, God, well, the picture is right here in the passage.

We gather together. We come together. We see it right there in verse 32. And a crowd was sitting around Him. A diverse crowd united together around Jesus.

Every Sunday at 10 a.m., we're living out Mark 3.32. A crowd gathered around Jesus. That's this. That's who we are.

[29 : 34] That's what we're doing. It's happening almost 2,000 years later when this was written. In a very different place.

But it's happening. A crowd of diverse people gathered together around Jesus. Brothers and sisters, we gather together on a Sunday morning because of Jesus.

Because of His blood. Because we've been born of the Spirit to do God's will. We gather to behold Jesus. We gather in order to live for Jesus.

The reason for our gathering is Jesus. Together following Jesus. That's who we are. That's what we do. And in 3.32, we see God's new family gather together around Jesus too.

That becomes something that we can now say, okay, that's what God wants for us. This is His will for us. Good things happen when God's family gets together.

[30 : 38] God things happen when God's family gets together. So, here's how I want you to think about our Sunday morning gatherings. Think of them as a family reunion once a week.

Sunday at 10 a.m. A family reunion of brothers and sisters in Christ coming together around Jesus to hear Him speak, to worship Him, to sit at His feet, to wait for what comes next.

You know what the question becomes? The question becomes this. how many Sundays is enough? How many Sundays is enough to gather together? I mean, is one Sunday a month enough? Is two Sundays enough for us to gather?

Would that be God's will for us? I think the real question is this. How important is it for God's family to gather?

[31 : 44] That's the question. And what we see throughout the Bible is it's extremely important. This is gathering around our King, our Lord, together. Let me try to spell this out for you.

I actually did this at a wedding recently and thought, man, I want to do that on a Sunday morning. If you meet once a month, gather with God's family once a month, if you prioritize it at once a month, do you know how many times a year you gather with God's people?

Twelve. Do you know how many times you gather with God's people over 50 years? 600. Now that might sound like a lot, but over 50 years, there's a lot more things that are going to be formative in your life than the gathering with your church.

How about two times a month? 24 times a year? Over 50 years, that's 1,200 gatherings over that span. Better than 600. But how about if you're aiming at every Sunday?

Let's just say 50 Sundays a year. Over 50 years, that's 2,500 gatherings with your family of faith. Now let me ask you this question.

[33 : 04] what will be more formative? What will be more spiritual healthy for you, for your biological family, and for your theologically family?

What would be healthier over that span? Of course, the more frequent the better. Good things happen.

God things happen when God's people get together. So here's what I'm going to urge you. Don't settle for minimal. Aim at maximum.

Let's aim high, not settle for low. Let's seek to gather together because we have been united by the greatest thing possible, the triune God.

We're blood bought, spirit born, seeking to do God's will together. Let's aim for every Sunday because we're a family. want to be together.

[34 : 07] There's a classic mistake that Christians make. It's thinking that church is for me. I go to church for me. And yes, in one level you do. But do you also know that you go to church for your

family?

For us? Here's some obstacles. Children's sports have encroached upon Sunday morning. We all know it. Parents, it's an opportunity to train your kids.

To help them understand priorities and important things. What's more important? Getting to your kids games or getting to church? What will form them over time?

It's not if you're forming your kids, it's how you're forming your kids. Maybe you have a work issue. You can't get to our Sunday morning gathering regularly because of a work commitment.

Well, maybe you need to ask your manager, hey, can I take Sundays off so I can be at church with my family of faith? And if it's like, no, maybe you should be saying, maybe I should be looking for another job.

[35 : 12] It's that important. Maybe you're kind of like, well, I'll tell you what, I've got a house full of kids and trying to get them in the minivan and they get to the church building and then get them into places and then they get off their schedule, they miss their naps, it is so inconvenient.

It is. The question is, is it worth it to gather together as a family of faith? Yes, it is. And form them over time.

How about just a classic selfishness? Sunday morning is me time. It's my opportunity to sleep in. I only get one morning a week to sleep in. Sunday morning is it.

It's the one time I can catch up on doing some things around the house. How about you move me time to we time?

We the church. Your family's gathering. Come gather with us. If you would open up your Bible to Hebrews chapter 10 verse 24 and 25.

[36 : 22] It's on page 1194 of your pew Bible. We read this. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.

Well, how do you do that? Well, we're told how not to do that. What gets in the way of that? 25. Not neglecting to meet together as the habit of son.

You see, not gathering frequently gets in the way of stirring one another up to love and good deeds. But encouraging one another by gathering together. together. And all the more as you see the day drawing near.

We prioritize one another as God's family by gathering together as often as we can. Good things happen when God's people come together.

Good things happen. He forms us. Maybe you are not in God's family yet. But the first thing you need to do is come to Jesus.

[37 : 30] Repent and believe the gospel. Claim him as your Lord and Savior. And then you get to be welcomed into the family of the blood bought. The family of the spirit born.

The family of those doing the Father's will. Who love to gather together as often as we can. In conclusion, Mark 3, 31-35.

we behold our king. And he is standing in the middle of his new family. Jesus has radically, radically redefined his family.

He doesn't think of his family primarily as a biological family. He's thinking more about this group as his theological family.

United by his blood. United by the birthing of the spirit. United by doing God's will. Here are my mother and brothers and sisters.

[38 : 39] Amen. Lord Jesus, would you do a work in us where your will be done. Would you add to our number like minded brothers and sisters who want to gather and who want to live for you.

Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Amen.

Amen.