

# The Family

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[ 0 : 00 ] See there on the screen there, the theme for this evening's sermon, the family. Not just the family, but the family, the family that counts, the family that truly matters in the eternal context of life.

And three points then from the reading that we had, particularly verses 46 to 50. Blessed interruptions. In other words, the lesson that we see in the passage concerning what might appear just ordinary events, ordinary everyday events, but that have a special significance, a way of bringing us to see, well, that these events are under God's control, leading to our own spiritual growth and indeed the blessing of others.

Blessed interruptions and blessed relationships. Jesus speaks of what the family is, the family that Lord Jesus has brought together by his life and death.

Blessed relationships in Christ. And then finally, blessed believers, where Jesus gives us a truly wonderful description of who the Lord's people are in him.

The family. You know, there are incidents in the life of Jesus that we read in Scripture, incidents that, well, at first hand seem really quite unusual.

[ 1 : 27 ] Certainly incidents that stop you in your tracks and, you know, just call you to make you think deeply about what Jesus was actually saying. What was Jesus actually doing?

That tells us so much about him and indeed so much about ourselves. And one such incident is found here in Matthew 12.

Remember what we read there. Jesus, well, he's been teaching others. He's been teaching others about himself. He's been showing and telling of his power over evil, his power over demon possession.

And the crowd of listeners who are listening to him, they're hearing what Jesus is saying about the kind of person who's for him and the kind of person who's against him.

Then all of a sudden, it seems just out of the blue, certainly while Jesus is in full flow of his teaching, out of the blue, a man comes up to him.

[ 2 : 30 ] And this man, we don't know who he is, but this man tells Jesus that Jesus' mother and brothers are outside the house that he's teaching in. And so in the midst of Jesus and his full flowing teaching, he's interrupted.

But Jesus is going to use that interruption to give a deep truth about himself. Like deep truth about those who truly are his. And so that interruption, interruption from that unknown man, it's not a hindrance to Jesus' ministry.

But it's a further opportunity for Jesus to speak words of wisdom, for Jesus to tell of really who he is and whose we are in Christ.

And so Jesus is going to use this interruption to tell of the relationship that truly matters. And he's going to use this interruption to speak wisdom.

Wisdom about what truly defines a believer in the Lord Jesus. So let's turn first of all then to these blessed interruptions that we read there in verses 46 to 7.

[ 3 : 43 ] Because throughout the gospel, certainly throughout the gospel of Matthew, Jesus is frequently interrupted. We read of frequent interruptions in Jesus' ministry.

Now, sometimes these interruptions were carried out by disciples when they were asking Jesus questions. Other times, Jesus was interrupted by demon-possessed people crying out and confessing Jesus to be the Son of God.

Other times, it was Pharisees, these religious leaders who interrupted Jesus when they opposed his ministry. But now, this occasion, we're seeing Jesus interrupted, in the first instance, by this man who comes to speak to him.

But really interrupted by those who are his brothers, certainly his half-brothers, and his mother Mary. And just as before, just as Jesus before has used interruptions for a great purpose. So Jesus is going to use this interruption as an opportunity to teach his disciples and teach those who are listening to him, to teach them about great spiritual truths.

[ 4 : 59 ] And, of course, as we hear again this passage, as we read again this passage, of course, there has to be application. And so, we must obviously delve into the passage, understanding what is the application for you and for me.

And, of course, pray that the application will be seen in the circumstances that God places in your lives. Everyday events, everyday happenings.

And to use these everyday events. Yes, for spiritual reflection. And certainly to use these everyday events, these interruptions.

To use them to bear witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, what do we notice in the passage then? Well, let's look at the detail first of all.

Jesus is speaking, as we saw there in the earlier part that we read. He's teaching the people. But someone's outside the house. And he's saying to Jesus, your mother and your brothers, they're standing outside.

[ 6 : 06 ] They want to speak to you. In other words, Jesus' family would come to him. They obviously want him for some particular reason. But something to say to Jesus.

Now, we're not told exactly what they wanted to say to Jesus. There's no doubt that other parts of Scripture tell us that certainly in Jesus' ministry, his brothers, Mary herself at times, were really quite skeptical about Jesus' ministry.

And the very fact that Joseph isn't mentioned at this point would indicate that Joseph's no longer a lie. And so the suggestion certainly is Jesus, the eldest brother, elder brother, that, well, that he has a particular responsibility in leading the family now that the father had died.

Jesus has higher responsibilities. Jesus is on a mission. And he has that mission to bring the good news of salvation to those who are preaching to, teaching to those who are with him.

Because Jesus has a message of salvation. Because he's got a kingdom to proclaim. And he's got a family that's greater than any earthly family. Of course, he's going to care for his family.

[ 7 : 27 ] Of course, he's going to cherish his mother. You see that right up to the end. A son's love for his mother certainly never diminishes. And in Jesus' case, he'll show his love to his mother right up to the very end.

But Jesus has worked to do to bring others into his eternal family, into the eternal kingdom of God. And so Jesus is going to use that interruption concerning his mother and brothers.

He's going to use that interruption to further his teaching and his preaching. So he's not going to dismiss that interruption. He's going to use it to give a message of encouragement.

Well, encouragement to all who know him as Lord and Savior. And he does that with this question. Who is my mother? And who are my brothers?

And notice here what Jesus is doing. Notice, if you like, the first level of what Jesus is doing here. He's turning what we might call a common event. An everyday event.

[ 8 : 33 ] An interruption. And he's turning that interruption into an opportunity to teach spiritual truth. In one sense, it's a very ordinary thing to say to Jesus.

Your mother and brothers, they're outside. They want to speak to you. Jesus is turning that interruption, that everyday kind of statement. And he's going to use it as an opportunity to ask those who are listening to him.

To think on what's of far more importance with the ultimate question. Who is? What is the family of God?

Who belongs as a child of God the Father? Who belongs to the kingdom? Who belongs to that family? In other words, who is in the family of faith?

So Jesus, using this common everyday event. Using this interruption. And he's using that to focus on a very important spiritual lesson. And, of course, this is something we ought to do ourselves.

[ 9 : 40 ] If you know the Lord Jesus as saviour, you have a gift. We all have gifts. You all have particular gifts. But one gift that you've been given is to have a spiritual outlook on life.

A spiritual outlook on the world. Well, use that gift and use it more and more. Even use these ordinary everyday events. Use them as opportunities to think about spiritual issues.

Because notice how Jesus uses this opportunity. He seizes this opportunity, this interruption. And it's where he converts that opportunity into a means to make people think.

To make people think about themselves in relation to Jesus. Now, of course, this doesn't just happen. You know, it's not some kind of trick that you learn from an everyday event.

Turn it into a spiritual lesson. Because if you're going to do that in your life, then you've got to do a number of things. In that making out even these ordinary events in your life to bring them into a spiritual context.

[10:51] And you're going to have to do a number of things. And the first thing you're going to have to do is to be bathed in the Word of God. To be absolutely drenched in God's Word.

Because you can't think spiritually about life unless you're grounded in the truths of Scripture. Because you've got to live Scripture. You've got to breathe God's Word.

You've got to live, breathe, act, think God's Word. God's truth. The truth. And so you've got to love God's Word. And you've got to desire more than anything else to know God's Word.

To imbibe God's Word. To think spiritually about life. And you can't do that unless you're grounded in God's Word. That breathed out Word of God.

And let me also have to say this. If we're going to use everyday events and to bring them to a spiritual context. Then surely you're going to have to cultivate opportunities to share the Lord Jesus.

[11:55] And use opportunities that God gives you to share your faith in the Lord Jesus. And God will give you many opportunities. Many instances.

Perhaps even things that might appear on the one hand. Just ordinary everyday events. But use these opportunities to witness to the Savior.

Use them as that opportunity to speak of the Savior. To share your love for the Savior. And to let others know whose you are.

Make the most of every opportunity to consider what God's teaching you through any kind of ordinary everyday event.

Maybe a journey that you're on in your travels. Maybe through an unexpected phone call. A surprise message. Maybe some difficult providence that God's permitted you to experience.

[12:54] Use that as an opportunity to witness to the Savior. Use these opportunities to grow in grace. And to grow in sanctification.

And to rest the more in the Lord. So don't despise these opportunities. Don't despise these interruptions that God permits in your life. Because they've been given to you.

They've been given to you to grow as a Christian. And yes, even at times to lead others to the Lord Jesus Christ. For them to put their faith and trust in the living Lord Jesus.

But there's something else, again, to exercise if we're going to use these occurrences, these interruptions, these everyday events.

We're going to use them as opportunities to further the cause of the gospel. And that surely is this. To be prayerfully dependent on God.

[13:54] Ask Him to give you these opportunities. Pray that God will bless you in these opportunities. Pray that God will give you the words to say. When you're confronted with these particular instances that God gives you in your life.

And seek His mind. Seek His mind when these opportunities arise. Think His thoughts. And think Christ-honoring, Spirit-filled, God-glorifying thoughts.

As well as you lean on Him for wisdom. At these times when these opportunities arise. When these instances happen in your life.

These blessed opportunities. These blessed interruptions. When we get to the nub of the passage here. The nub of the matter.

We see that Jesus is showing us blessed relationships. Blessed relationships. Because in verses 48 and 49 that we read there.

[14:58] There's really quite a wonderful and encouraging word from the Lord Jesus. What Jesus says about the privilege of all who are in Christ. That privilege of being adopted.

Adopted as children of God. And Jesus is showing us here. Even in this short passage. He's showing us what it means to be counted in the family of God.

What it means to be counted as part of Jesus' eternal family. In that great, the greatest relationship there ever is. Because as we read there.

As Jesus is told that His mother and brothers are outside. That they want to speak to Him. Well, the revealing question that we've already mentioned. Who is my mother?

And who are my brothers? And as He asks that question. He stretches out His hand. He points to His disciples. And He says. Here are my mother. And my brothers.

[16:00] Look at the first question again. Who is my mother? And who are my brothers? What's Jesus saying here? Well, He's basically asking this.

He's saying. You know. Who are those who truly do belong to my spiritual family? Who are those who truly are children of the Heavenly Father?

And so, as we saw, He's changing an ordinary question. A question about earthly parents and siblings. He's turning that into a spiritual question about the kingdom of God.

And bring this, you know, to yourself. He's saying this. That your connections as Christians. Your connections as believers with Him.

Your connection with Him. As a believer of the Lord Jesus. And your connection with one another. As brothers and sisters in Christ. He's saying.

[16:56] That connection or these connections. Are far more important. Than even. Human family ties. Jesus is saying here that.

For all for whom He gave. For whom He gave His life. He's saying. All are brought into His family. And he's saying. Brought into a family even closer.

Than earthly families. Now, of course, Jesus is not denigrating an earthly family. Absolutely not. But He's showing where the family truly is. For all to know that eternal blessing.

So Jesus is teaching us here. That the spiritual ties that bind believers. That bind believers in Him. Through faith in Him.

Because of the love of God in Christ. He's saying. That's the most important tie. Tie of all. What an encouraging word then. From the Lord Jesus.

[17:54] And I pray that even. Even these words that we've seen this evening. That they've lifted your heart. Lifted your heart to Him in praise. Especially at times when.

You know, each one of us. We can have times when we're so fragile in our faith. And even times when we might even feel so alone. Or lonely. Well, you're not alone.

If you're in the family of the Lord Jesus. Because Jesus has brought you. Into His eternal family. And so the words that Jesus speaks here.

About family. Or the family. Well, don't they show us His marvelous. His great love towards. Well, towards all who are brought into His family.

You who have been brought into His family. You who know Him. You're in Him. Because of His saving love. Because of His saving grace. And notice again.

[18:50] Again, something we may skip by. But just focus on what Jesus says. When He points to His disciples. Yes, He's pointing to His close companions. Saying that, you know.

They're His mother and brothers and sisters. And they'd left everything to follow Jesus. But remember who these disciples were. Earlier in Matthew's Gospel.

In fact, chapter 10. We're actually told that they were men of little faith. And even this morning. In our morning service. Remember. Didn't we notice that these disciples.

Even though they'd been with Jesus. For the entirety of Jesus' public ministry. They still focused on themselves. They wanted greatness for themselves. Rather than glory for the Lord Jesus.

And in fact. As we read at the end of Matthew's Gospel. Matthew tells us that. They deserted Jesus. And Jesus out of need. And Jesus knew that all this was going to happen.

[19:53] He knew that they would desert Him. And yet. Jesus says to these disciples. These are my mother and my brothers. And if He's saying that to His disciples.

These disciples who were with Him. For these three years of His ministry. And these disciples who failed Him so often. Will He sing these same words to you and to me? To us.

Who fail Him so often. I fail Him. You fail Him. We all fail Him so often. And yet He turns to you. And He turns to each one of us. Who know Him as Lord and Savior.

And says. You. These. Are my mother. And my brothers. And surely again. This is such an encouragement. From the very. Words of Jesus.

But Jesus. The Savior. The Lord Jesus. Thinks more highly of you. Than you can ever think of yourself. As. As being part of the kingdom of God. God.

[ 20 : 52 ] Because the Lord Jesus. In saying these words. Shows His love for His own. He loves you. With an eternal compassion. An eternal love. So we read in Hebrews 2 verse 11.

For both He. Who sanctifies. And those who are sanctified. Are all from one Father. For which reason. He's not ashamed to call them brothers.

You know. We can't even. Even. Begin to take in the blessing. Of what these words are telling us. What it means to be accepted.

Into the family. You know. To be blessed in that. To have that blessed relationship. With the Lord Jesus. And that blessed relationship. One with another. Because.

All who are in Christ. Even. Who are gathered here this evening. You know. That you're a brother. Or a sister in Christ. One with another. But you know.

[ 21 : 50 ] Think for a moment. What I deserve. What you deserve. You deserve eternal separation. None of us deserve. To be in that eternal family. For it's a family.

That you've been brought into. By the grace of the Lord Jesus. And you have that. Eternal prospect. Of the glory. Of being in that family.

Even in the glory. Of heaven itself. And in. Heaven itself. There'll be that. Endless praise. Praise to God. For that union.

That you know. In the Lord Jesus Christ. Because you've been adopted. Into. The family. I mean. Do you really. Do you stop.

As you ought. As I ought. Really to. To contemplate. To meditate. On. What being adopted. Into that family means. You know. Even just one. Little time.

[ 22 : 45 ] Of just. Turning aside. From. Everything. And just focusing. On that being in the family. Of God. Well that moment itself. Will take your breath away.

Just how much. God loves you. In Christ. See Jesus. Here. He addressed his disciples. As. As family. These fragile.

Weak. Often pathetic. Individuals. Just like. Ourselves. And yet. He's saying to them. As he says to you. You're my family.

You're my mother. You're my sisters. You're my brothers. And. The same words. That he's speaking. To his disciples. He's speaking.

Me. And to you. And all our frailty. And all our weaknesses. And all our. So often. Faithless. Faithless. Faithless. Faithless. But notice.

[ 23 : 41 ] Finally. Notice. What Jesus. Tells about. Being blessed. Believers. Who. Who we are in Christ. Verse 50.

For whoever does the will of my father in heaven. Is my brother. And sister. And mother. For. Because. Because those who are in the family.

The family that matter. Those who are in the family of the saviour. Well. They're defined. They're spoken of in a way that. Well. Links every Christian to Jesus.

To him. To. And to. Not just to. As a world. To Jesus. The son of God. But to. To God. God the father. By the enabling. Of course. Of the Holy Spirit.

That's that union in Christ. That union. That unites Christians. That union. Is that. Is the most secure relationship. Of all. And Jesus.

[ 24 : 35 ] Notice. Jesus. Defines. That relationship. With him. In terms of action. He's saying that. You know. All who belong. To his family.

Are those who do the will. Of. Of the father in heaven. Let me put it like this. A Christian. Somebody. Who does.

Do the will. Of God the father. If you're a disciple. Of the Lord Jesus. If you're a follower of him. If you're a. If it were. Jesus.

Brother or sister. You're going to do the will. Of God the father. And. That surely tells us. How important it is. To know. To know what God's will is.

And to know. How to. As it were. Do. That will. And so. Well. What is the will of God? What's the will of God the father? Surely. The will of God the father.

[ 25 : 32 ] For you. Is to live a life. Of obedience. A live a life. Of holy obedience. Is to live. That will. The will of the father. For you.

Is to live your life. Devoted to him. And. For that. To be your heart's desire. To do what God commands you. To do in his word. God. That's what the psalmist.

Expressed in. In Psalm 40. When. The psalm writer. Said. That to do your will. I take delight. Why? Because. The law of God. Was in the psalmist's heart. And so.

The will of God. Involves. As we said. Right at the start. Being bathed in his word. Abiding. In. In. In the truth of God's word. Knowing.

God's will. Knowing. The will of God the father. Well it's. It's discerning. Through that spiritual wisdom. That God gives you. It's discerning. What God requires of you. In your life of obedience.

[ 26 : 30 ] So that. How you live. And. What you show in your life. Is evidence. Of your saving faith. Surely it's the response.

Of children. To loving father. Who want to honor him. And to. To respect him. And for the Christian. To do the will of the father.

It's going to involve. Renewing your mind. So to discover. The will of God. For you. And as we said. It's to be. Utterly drenched.

In the word of God. So that you'll know. God's will. And you'll practice. That will. And you'll do the will. Of your heavenly father. And do that will. Within the family of God.

That family. That God's blessed you. With and in. That family. In which. You're placed. To serve him. Family that God gives you.

[ 27 : 25 ] So that you give your life. To him. Through that family. So you're going to serve God. Alongside a. Yes. A brother. Or sister. In Christ. But above all. To serve God.

Through. Coming alongside. Your elder brother. The Lord Jesus. There's no greater place. To be. There's no. Greater family. To rejoice in.

Than the family. That God has given you. By his grace. The family. The family. The family. The family of the Lord Jesus. And in that family.

You'll know. And do know. That true security. That true. Perfect love. And the loving saviour. The Lord Jesus. Amen.

Amen. Our heavenly father. We. Truly. Marvel. At the family. That you have so blessed.

[ 28 : 21 ] Your people with. Your children with. And we marvel. That the Lord Jesus. Should. Say to any of us. You are. My brother. My sister. My mother.

We marvel. Lord. At that grace. That undeserved grace. And yet. Grace given. To undeserved sinners. Such as ourselves. And so Lord.

We give you thanks. And praise. For all who are found. In that family. The family. But Lord. We pray for those. Who as yet. Are not in the family. We ask Lord.

Your mercy upon them. Our own brothers. Sisters. Our own siblings. Family members. We pray for them Lord. That they will come.

And be brought into. That eternal family. So hear us Lord. We pray. As we continue. In worship. Before you now. We pray these things. In Jesus name.

[ 29 : 17 ] Amen.