

# The Ideal Family

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Date: 23 December 2018

[ 0 : 00 ] Take your Bibles and go with me to Matthew chapter 1, and I'll be honest with you, preaching Christmas messages and Easter messages and political messages or anniversary messages, whatever you call them, that's the hardest thing in the world for me to do because, you know, once you've done it so many times, it's like I always feel like this is all repeat because you've worked the same verses over and over.

I'd like to invite you to look in on a family scene. So what I did, this is actually a message translated back from Spanish, preached in Adiquipa, who knows how many years ago, 25 years ago, but what if you looked at this family, this little specimen, microcosm of the universe, and you saw a dad, a mom, and a kid, and some kids in a family, what would it look like?

And I call it the ideal family because I think the Lord, I think God picked a place for him to be born. And so I just want to examine with you real quickly, and mostly we'll talk about Jesus, but I want to examine with you real quickly this family.

Turn in your Bible, if you would, to Matthew chapter 1 and verse 19. Matthew chapter 1 and verse 19. Let's look at the dad first, Joseph. He's really a stepdad.

I think any time that it's not your child, it would be a tad different than raising your own child. Well, I have had many kids I raised, and I also have many young people I count as almost like my own family, but God picked a guy who could do that, a guy who could love other people just as much as he loved his own kid.

[ 1 : 31 ] He picked this guy, Joseph. The Bible says in Matthew chapter 1 and verse 19, then Joseph, her husband, being a just man, not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately or privily.

Father, thank you for this wonderful family. Thank you for this picture of what you're doing in our lives, and I just want to praise you this morning for who you are and what you do, and I'll give you praise for it all in Jesus' name.

Amen. I want you, if you've got your Bible open, to circle the words, just man. And I just want you to realize when they tell the story, they say, boy, he's a good man.

They say he's a just man. But when you say the word just in Bible terms, that's not something you can do on your own. He has to justify you to make you a just man.

So that means somewhere along the way, Mr. Joseph realized, I'm not good enough before God on my own. I can't relate straight to God by myself. I need a savior. I need someone.

[ 2 : 29 ] And God had saved him, and he is called in the scriptures a just man. In the same verse, he's a kind and merciful man. If you look at verse 19, he just found out his wife-to-be.

He's a spouse to her, but that's just old-timey ways of saying. He is engaged to her, and once you're engaged, I mean, you're on your way to marriage. It's like we got the wedding date set.

Everybody knows it's going to happen. He finds out she's pregnant, and he knows he didn't do it, and so he is going to be kind and merciful to her. In the Bible, it says he was not willing to make her a public example.

Well, he could have called for her stoning. He could have called for her to be put to death. He could have actually been ugly about it, but he was very kind. I think the thing that shocks me the most about him is look at verse 20, if you would.

He wasn't shocked that God spoke to him. It didn't blow his mind that God spoke to him. In verse 20, it says, Now, I don't know about you, but if God showed up in my dreams, I'm pretty sure I'd wake up scared to death.

[ 3 : 44 ] But this is a man who is in contact with God. This is a man who doesn't find it strange that God would deal with him. He's a good man that God's going to use to be the leader of this home.

By the way, I think every husband in the room could easily look at Joseph and say, That ought to be a role model for me. Number one, I need to be born again. I need to know for a fact I'm going to go to heaven. When people write me, they ought to say, Austin Gardner, a saved man.

Austin Gardner, a just man. Austin Gardner, a man who knows he's had his sins forgiven. Austin Gardner, a man who is kind and merciful. Austin Gardner, a man who hears from God, and God speaks to him, and God works in his life.

But Austin Gardner, a man, Matthew 124, who obeys God's direction in his life. I love this. I know I'm looking at every part of the verses. But look at you what it says.

Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him. I don't know how many times you come to church and hear message after message, but I would question how many times you do what you hear.

[ 4 : 42 ] I would question how many times we read the Bible and say, This is what God said do, and I am doing it. The Lord had bid him, and he stepped out to do it. He's an obedient man.

He's a submitted man. And he was also humble enough to be used of God. It takes a very special man. In this story, in this story, this has got to be the hardest marriage relationship I can possibly imagine.

In chapter 1, in verse 18, they had a sexually pure relationship. It says in verse 18, this is before they get married. It said, Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise, when as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, he found out she was with child.

She's pregnant. So here, just think about this a second. You are showing restraint. You're obeying God. You're being sexually pure. You're doing what God wants you to do.

And then you wake up and find out your wife is pregnant. It's not like really being a stepdad. But it's like really being a shocked stepdad. Because she's not just pregnant. She's pregnant by the Holy Spirit.

[ 5 : 43 ] She's not, no man has been there. He has been doing the right thing. But he's humble enough that when the Lord says, Look, I'm doing something really strange here. I'm doing something really new here. I'm doing something the world had never seen here.

I'm fulfilling what the Old Testament said here. I just need you to marry her. And you just keep waiting to have your relations with her. And then if you would, go down with me to Matthew chapter 1 and verse 25. He kept waiting.

He kept waiting. And all those months until after the baby was born. In Matthew chapter 1 and verse 25, here's a young guy getting married. On a honeymoon without any relationship with his wife. A sexual relationship with his wife.

On a honeymoon of raising a child until after that baby was born. Matthew 1, 25. And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son. So he's a good guy. As a man, when I read this story here, I think about the Christmas story.

But I think, you know, you see all the Christmas plays. And Joseph's always just kind of over on the side. I always feel sorry for old Joseph. I mean, really. Of course, I feel sorry for dads as a whole. I mean, isn't this loving thing stuff? Have you ever noticed?

[ 6 : 41 ] I mean, Mama's Day is like massive. Father's Day, who knows when that is? You know? I remember I told you before. But when I was in Mexico and I was trying to learn the language, I went down and I bought all the school books for first grade, second grade, third grade.

And I started reading like a first grader. And I read through the whole curriculum, learning how to read in Spanish. I just wanted to do that. And so I started learning culture. And I came across in chapter, and every year you got to Mother's Day, there were poems about Mama.

There were stories about Mama. It was all about Mama, Mama. And so I kept thinking, I can't wait to see how these Mexicans celebrate Father's Day. And I found out how they do it. Like Americans, it wasn't in the book.

It wasn't in the book. So here's Joseph. You have that crystal story. Joseph's kind of standing over there in the corner. And there's Mary, the Virgin Mary. And there's the baby. And there's even shepherds and sheep.

But Joseph's over in the corner. But this guy's a great guy. As a husband, you ought to take a stand and say, I'm going to be leading my home like the Lord would have me do it. And you have a mother, Mary, a very special lady.

[ 7 : 44 ] Look at Luke 134. We're going to skip around to several of these passages just to look at this family. In Luke chapter 1 and verse 34, then said Mary unto the angel, how could I have a baby? How could I have a baby?

I don't have, I don't know a man. I've never had sexual relations with a man. She's sexually pure. I'm just going to stop a second and say, I know that's uncommon in today's life.

I know that no one believes that anymore. But we ought to believe it because it's in the book. Amen. And we ought to teach our children about that, that you don't have sexual relations. With anybody until you're married. And sexual relations are wrong and dirty anywhere but in marriage.

Can I get an amen right there? And that's a marriage of a man to a woman. And so Joseph was pure and Mary was pure. I won't take the time to tell you that she also handled the, she also handled the word from the Lord very well.

She wasn't shocked when the Lord spoke to her. And she was submissive to the will of God. Look at Luke chapter 1 and verse 38, if you would. Luke chapter 1 and verse 38. Look what the Bible says. And Mary said, behold the handmaid, behold the handmaid of the Lord.

[ 8 : 48 ] And she's saying, behold, I'm just a servant of the Lord. Underline this. Be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed. So she was just saying, you know what?

I'm nothing special in this story. The fact is, what was happening to Joseph had to be humiliating and embarrassing. But what's happening to Mary had to be humiliating and embarrassing. And by the way, what happens to Jesus will actually be used against him when he's a grown man over the age of 30 and he's preaching.

They're going to say, at least we were born in a legitimate marriage. That's going to be said to him. It's an embarrassing time for everybody. But she says, hey, whatever God wants. Shouldn't every mother in this room say that?

Shouldn't every mother in this room say, I will keep myself clear and clean and pure sexually? Shouldn't every mother in here say, I'm going to get used to talking to God and hearing from God? And shouldn't every mother in this room say, I am submissive to the will of God for my life?

So just a couple of things about their relationship. They kept themselves sexually pure. Probably one of the things that most breaks my heart as a pastor and dealing with things is we're not worried about this sexual purity anymore.

[10:01] That's why pornography creeps in and that's why flirting in the office and cubicle couples and all that junk comes in. You know, God meant for you to have sex with one person and that's all for your entire life unless that person died.

Could I get an amen right there? God never meant for you to go look at it in anybody else's house via porn or any other situation. And God never meant for you to play around with that. They were sexually pure.

The second thing is they sought the will of God for their life. They wanted to know what God wanted them to do. I love that. Joseph and Mary, Joseph and Mary are looking to know what God wants them to do in their life.

What kind of family would you have? I call out an ideal family. What kind of family would you have if daddy got up in the morning and said, I want to know what God wants? What kind of family would you have if you had a mother that said, I want to know what God wants?

I don't want to know what I want. I don't know what my plans are, but I want to know what God wants. They did right and then they kept seeking the Lord's will. I don't have time because I want to talk to you about Jesus quite a bit this morning because he's a big part of this family, the most important part of this family.

[11:00] But you know what? They provided and protected their children, just like all parents. In Matthew chapter 2, and you don't have to look all these up, but in Matthew chapter 2 in verse 13, the angel said, you got to get the kid out of here, get him to Egypt.

They're going to try to kill him. And Joseph and his family rose up and just did whatever they had to do. And here's the last one, because I think sometimes you see only what happens in the crib scene, the manger scene.

That's all you ever see. You do know that Joseph and Mary raised an entire family together. And I know that I'm saying this to a church that already believes this, but it doesn't hurt for you to see it in the Bible.

You know, being a husband and a wife's a big deal. Having a godly husband and wife's a big deal. Being a dad and a mom, that's a big deal. Being a mother that raises a family in our society can often be looked down on and treated like you're less because you're raising a family.

But in the Bible, when this ideal family was put in place, that's just what they did. Look at Matthew chapter 13. And you ought to look this one up if you don't already know it by heart. Look at Matthew 13, 55 with me, if you would.

[12:05] Matthew chapter 13 and verse 55. The Bible says, is not this the carpenter's son? They're talking about Jesus. In the prior verses, he's been preaching and he's got such wisdom and such strength when he speaks.

And they're like, don't we know this guy? Isn't this just a regular guy? Isn't that Joseph the carpenter's boy? Isn't his mama called Mary? And doesn't he have some brothers that we know?

These would be his half brothers because they would be both. Mary was the mom, but Joseph wasn't the dad because Jesus was virgin born. His brothers, James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas.

That's his brothers. And he had sisters too. If you check out the other verse. Verse 56. And his sisters, are they not with us? That family, they raised kids together to bring glory and honor to God.

In fact, as in a few minutes, I want to show you, they served God. Even the family served God. In Luke chapter 2 and verse 41, they went up. And you know that. And when he's 12 years old, he gets lost.

[ 13 : 03 ] You know about that. But his family went up to Jerusalem every year. They made the pilgrimage. They walked to the place where they had to worship. And they said, it is worth enough. It is worth enough for me to worship and take care of things.

I'm not going to make a phone call. I am going to change the temperature in this room because my wife's got a coat on. And some of y'all are going to hate me before it's over. And nobody else is changing it, so I will. How about that? Now watch this.

They go up to the temple together. They worship together as a family. They worship together as a family. They taught their kids the things of God. Look in your Bible at Luke chapter 2 and verse 39 and 40.

Luke chapter 2, 39 and 40. Look what the Bible says. It says, and when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city. I can only imagine Joseph and Mary and there's Jesus and there's all the siblings are there in the house.

And he sits down in the family and says, we're going to Jerusalem. And when we go to Jerusalem, we do things the way God wants them done. We worship God the way God wants to be worshipped. And we're going to go up there. And this is what's going to happen. We're going to be buying a little lamb.

[ 14 : 11 ] Daddy explained that to Jesus. I love that. I don't know how you don't love that. Jesus is sitting there. He is the Lamb of God. And Mary and Joseph know that, but Joseph sets his kids down and says, we're going to Jerusalem.

Because there's going to be a sacrifice made there one day. A lamb will be slain. He explained it to them and they went to there. And in verse 40 it said, and the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom.

And the grace of God was upon him. Are you teaching your kids family truths? What this ideal family does? Can you imagine family devotions? I mean, I think it's a good thing to do with your kids.

Joseph says, Jesus, come on and sit down, son. Let me get the Bible. I'm going to talk to you from the book of Isaiah a little bit. And there's the word of God himself sitting in the room. But he was always God.

He was God before Mary. He was God before Joseph. He was God before Christmas. He's always been God and he's God there. And then Joseph said, now, son, let me read to you out of Isaiah chapter 7.

[ 15 : 15 ] I don't know. That's enough to go home on right there. Now, look, if you would, at chapter 2 and verse 51, and they taught their kids to obey. Don't tell anybody I said that.

Because this is the world where you all let the kids, you obey the kids. But look, if you would, in chapter 2 and verse 51, Luke 2, 51, and he went down with them and came to Nazareth. And Jesus himself was subject to them.

He obeyed them. Underline subject. That means subject-verb relationship. That means he knew who was in charge. And he, Jesus, submitted himself.

Now, I want to take you through Jesus a little bit. Because I think there is massive misunderstanding. I don't think so in our church.

I think, though, I'd like to arm you with what the Word of God says. And if you take your Bible and look it up and write it down and take some notes, I think it might help you. Because, you know, Christmas wasn't about this little baby.

[16:14] It's just not a cute scene. It's not just about angels singing and shepherds worshiping and wise men coming with gifts. And it's turned into something it's not supposed to be. It was actually the fulfillment of tons of Old Testament Scripture.

It was the fulfillment of God sending, God himself coming. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. That's what Christmas was.

I want to show you a little bit about Christ if I can. You know that before Christmas, Jesus was already alive. God was alive. Christ was alive.

The son of God was alive. And he is co-eternal and co-existent with the Father from the beginning. John 1.1. I know.

All you old people ought to say amen. You know, if you already know stuff and you're like, I already knew that. Well, just say amen a little bit. Because there's people in the room that don't know it. And you're sitting there going, I already knew that. Well, say amen. I like what they, I like what they, in the book of Nehemiah, when they're going to do the teaching about how to preach.

[17:16] When the preacher preached, he put a whole bunch of guys sitting up there with him. And as he'd say stuff, they'd go, amen. They're like, yep, that's right. So you can say that this morning. Look if you would in John 1.1. In the beginning was the Word.

Who is this Word? And the Word was with God, and the Word was God. That's the truth. And the same was in the beginning with God. So there's Bible truth right there.

Somebody says, if you ever studied theology, you just read it. In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. In Revelation 1.8, he said, I am Alpha and Omega.

And in case you don't know what that means, he said, I'll explain it. I am the beginning and the ending. The beginning and the ending. It says the Lord. That's Jesus talking, which is, which was, and which is to come.

You ought to mark this in your Bible if you hadn't in Revelation 1.8. Because some people would question whether Jesus is God. But in Revelation 1.8, Jesus says this, I am the Alpha, the Omega, the beginning and the end.

[18:14] The one that was, the one that is, and the one that is to come. And then he says, the Almighty. You ought to underline that in your Bible. If you question who he is, he said, I am the Almighty.

You know what the Almighty is? That is the one with all power. The one above everyone with all strength. In Revelation 1.17, when John saw him, John fell down at his feet as dead.

Because you don't walk into the presence of this baby living in Nazareth and in Bethlehem and Egypt and all the places he'll go. So, I fell dead at his feet.

He laid his right hand on me and he said, fear not. But I am the first and the last. I am he that lives and was dead and I'm alive forevermore. I have the keys of death and hell.

Several of us have been and will be going very shortly to funerals. At every funeral, I think I know the guy that has the keys to all this. Every funeral I think that. I know the guy that has the keys to all of this.

[19:22] Before everything else was, he already existed. So, this baby born at Bethlehem who gets all of a sudden to be this little baby, this helpless, weak baby.

And the picture is totally not that. The Bible says in John 1.3, remember John 1.1 in the beginning was the word? In John 1.3, he said, all things were made by him.

He's the creator. The baby born at Christmastime as we celebrate it made everything. And by the way, nothing on the planet that exists was not made by him.

The Bible says in John 1.3, and without him was not anything made that was made. I just think because I hear so many people kind of belittle Jesus.

Like, you know, this one religious group says in the beginning was the word. The word was with God and the word was a God. And then I hear other people that don't believe he was always God. And so, they don't believe that he always was who he is.

[ 20 : 24 ] And so, this is one of my favorite verses. When Jesus is walking around with his disciples, there's some Jews there. And he's trying to make it clear.

Now, you need to know who I am. So, he's trying to make it clear. John 8.56, he's trying to make it clear who he is. So, in case you don't know who I am, I'm not the carpenter's son. I'm God's son.

I didn't start in Bethlehem. He says this. I love this. He says, Abraham was really happy when he saw my day. And he saw it and was glad.

Well, they knew exactly what he was saying. So, in John 8.57, they said, you're not even 50 years old. And Abraham's been gone a long time. And you've seen Abraham? And Jesus said, oh, yeah.

Before Abraham was, you've got to circle this in your Bible, I am. Now, you have to know something about God. When Moses said to God, what's your name?

[ 21 : 22 ] God said, I am. I am that I am. I am. I'm not was and I'm not will be. I am. I'm before time. I'm after time. I'm over time.

I'm above time. You pipsqueaks have a past, a present, and a future, but I don't. I always am. What a God. That's not God the Father speaking, by the way.

That's Jesus. In John 17, verse 5, Jesus is praying. He's here limiting himself because he wants to, because he can do anything he wants to do, because he's God in human flesh.

And he limits himself. And in prayer, he speaks to the Father. And the Father is omnipresent or all-present. There's not a place he's not. But in his prayer, he said, O Father, glorify me with the glory, glorify me without me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

He has limited himself, and he's a human. He's human and God. Can't understand that. He's all God. He's all human. How do you do that?

[ 22 : 33 ] You've got to be God to do that. And he says, he said, God, you know, as I'm here in this human body on this earth, death's facing me, and I'm paying for the sins of the world.

Can't wait until I'm back where I was when we were, you know, before we ever started this. Jesus believed he was God.

God believed he was God. John the Apostle believed he was God. John the Apostle's not going, yeah, I knew this guy, Jesus. He was a famous guy. Like, you know, George Washington, or you know Abraham Lincoln. You know, he was God.

In Colossians chapter 1 and verse 17, the Bible says that he is before all things. He is before all things. So this baby born at Bethlehem is God come in human flesh to save us.

He is before all things, and by him, all things consist. In fact, it is in Colossians 1.16, he says, and you should mark this in your Bible. He says, by him were all things created.

[ 23 : 37 ] You know, so in other words, the baby you see at Bethlehem, he's all the way back in the beginning. You see him here because that's when he shows up and takes on human flesh and fulfills all the promises. But he is God, and he was all the way back there in the very beginning.

And all things were created that are in heaven and earth and principalities, all that were created by him. And then it says, for him. You should outline that.

He's the creator. But we weren't made for us. We were made for him. Can I get an amen there? You know why we worship him this morning? Because he made us for himself.

You know why we're here? Because we're not here for ourselves. We're here for him. It's not about God doing me a favor. It's about me realizing he made me, and he made me for himself. The big word we learn, and I'm sure everybody in the room knows it, just my job to remind us, is incarnation.

That's the big word we use. And all it means is being put in flesh. God becoming flesh. John 1.14 says, and the word. That's in John 1.1 where it said, in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.

[ 24 : 44 ] And everything that was made was made by the word. And then in verse 14 said, that word was made flesh. That's what happened at Christmas a couple thousand years ago. That's what happened at the picture we have of a nativity scene.

That when you look at that little baby, you're not seeing a baby. You're seeing God putting on human flesh. John 1.14, the word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

And we beheld his glory. The glory is of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. When you saw him, you saw all the glory of the Father. Philippians chapter 2, and I know I go to Philippians chapter 2 probably more than you would think I ought to.

But in Philippians chapter 2, he had the form of God, didn't think it was wrong to even think of himself as equal with God. But he made himself of no reputation. Like the young lady sung about just a minute ago.

There wasn't a big show put on for him. He came not as who he is. He came as a servant. Made in the likeness of men.

[ 25 : 47 ] Made like a man. This child is God. I don't say was God. Because you can't use the word was with him. I can use it with everybody else.

I can talk about Mary was and Joseph was and the brothers was. But whenever you talk about Jesus, it has to go present tense. In John 10, 30, he said, I and my Father, we're one.

In John 10, 30, 80, he said, but if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works that you may know and believe that the Father's in me. And I in him.

Jesus said, the Father's in me. Jesus said, the Father is in me. When you saw Jesus, you were seeing the Father. In John 12, verse 44, he said, he that believes on me is not really believing on me, but on him that sent me.

That's John 12, verse 44. And he that sees me sees him that sent me. One of the most beautiful stories in the Bible is in John 14. I don't want to read all this because I've got so much scripture to read to you, but in John 14, basically, Thomas says to Jesus, Look, you've told us a lot of things.

[ 26 : 56 ] You said that we don't have to be worried. You said you've got everything taken care of. But could you just show us the Father? And Jesus looks at Thomas and says, show you the Father. When you look at me, you are looking at the Father.

Boy, this is audacious. This is big. This is big stuff. Jesus said, I am the Father. He has seen me, has seen the Father.

In John 16, 15, he said, all that the Father has is mine. That Father God has nothing that's not mine because I am God. I am God. Colossians 1, 15.

Maybe you could look that up. I know I'm going through a lot. You can look them up later. In Colossians 1, 15, he said that Jesus is the image of the invisible God. In Colossians 1, 19, he said that all the fullness of God dwelt in Jesus.



Now, here's a wild thought for you. All of God who made all of this, who stands outside of time and eternity, was limited and placed it into probably a five-foot-five Jewish guy. You saw Jesus walking.

[ 28 : 00 ] You saw all of God. You saw Jesus walking. You saw all of God. Colossians 2, 9 says, in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. It is a Bible truth all through the Bible that Jesus is God.

And the one that we worship is not some petty human who got killed by accident. It is a God loving us, sending his son to die on the cross for him.

Paul said to Timothy, he's writing a letter to Timothy, his young preacher boy, and he said, in 1 Timothy 3, 16, he says, without controversy, no arguing about this. The great mystery of all mysteries, the great mystery of godliness is God was manifest in the flesh.

Why don't you underline that? God was manifest in the flesh. So we come here today, and Hebrews chapter 1 and verse 3 calls him the express image of his person, by the way.

But we come today, and we're worshipping Jesus. We're worshipping Jesus. Now, if I go back to where I started the story, you've got to admit, now it is really a wild story.

[ 29 : 06 ] Joseph says, hey, Jesus, come on in here and sit down. Time for me to talk to you about what it says in Isaiah and Jeremiah. I can just imagine. I don't know. It's almost like in my mind that Jesus had a smile on his face and said, teach me, Joseph.

I don't know if you can see it at all. I mean, he's God. He's God. And in just a few years after the story here, he will allow them to kill him, to beat him, to mock him, and to kill him.

And maybe very few on the planet knew what was happening that day. But what was happening was God was dying for my sin. And God was dying for your sin.

And that ought to get you an amen. You want to Calvary? At Christmas, I didn't mean to make a scene. I forgot to turn my microphone off. When John said he knew how to give gifts, but I was just thinking, I'm fixing to say that.

So amen. Man, what a giver, what a lover is our God. But I want you to know something. You've been putting a wrong emphasis on Mary and Joseph.

[ 30 : 14 ] Well, you've been putting it on Mary. You don't put it on Joseph very much. He kind of gets left off to the side of all of us. What happens with the other children? Joseph and Mary had more than one baby.

Joseph will only raise Jesus, and it's not really his son, but he'll raise other kids that we have, brothers and sisters, to Jesus. And here's what the story tells us. Everybody in the Bible knew this, and popular religions made you not know this.

But in John 7, verse 3, Jesus' brothers and sisters said to him, get out of here. Get out of here. You claim to be all this stuff, but if you really are, why are you hiding?

Why are you doing it? That's verse 4. For there's no man that does anything in secret that doesn't seek it to be known openly. And then the Bible says in verse 5, even his brothers didn't believe in him.

They were raised with him. They saw him. They sat at the table with him. They got so familiar with him, they didn't know who he was. They thought of him as their brother.

[ 31 : 17 ] They thought of him as one of them, but he never was one of them. But the beauty of the story is that before it's over, they're involved in the ministry. Check out, if you would, in Acts chapter 1 and verse 8.

In Acts chapter 1, in the upper room, Jesus has now died and been buried and rose again. He has ascended into heaven 40 days after all of that, and 10 days after that on the day of Pentecost, the power of the Holy Spirit is going to come on them.

And in the upper room, praying with one accord and prayer and supplication with the women was Mary, the mother of Jesus, and his brothers and sisters were there.

You need to underline that. In Acts chapter 1 and verse 14, they're like, wow, now things make sense. Now all dad taught us Joseph, who seems to be dead by now.

All he taught us. Now that trip to Jerusalem makes sense. In Galatians chapter 1 and verse 19, we find out that James, the Lord's brother, was a leader in the church.

[ 32 : 16 ] And in 1 Corinthians chapter 9 and verse 5, we find out that they were traveling preachers like Paul. So while Paul's walking around teaching about it, in 1 Corinthians 9 and 5, it says, Have we not power, authority, ability to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as the other apostles and the Lord's brothers?

So the whole family's out serving Jesus. And one of his brothers was used to write a book of the Bible, James. I want you to know it's an ideal family. What makes it an ideal family is Joseph was saved.

By the good grace of God and what Jesus did on the cross. What makes it a great family is Mary was saved by the good grace. She even sees Jesus and calls him her Savior.

In Luke chapter 2, I don't have time to go into all that with you. What makes it a great story is that Jesus saved his own brothers and sisters and they could be in the ministry. What makes it a great story is the whole story revolves around one person.

And that person is God in human flesh. And this week is our week to celebrate his birth. And we will mostly go out and think only about ourselves.

[ 33 : 20 ] I'm not talking about you. I'm talking about human beings. But we'll go out. We won't think about him. But it's really the story of God loving you. And you and I that are saved in this room, we're saved because we realize one day Jesus died for us.

And he was God dying for us. And if you're here and you're not trusting Christ, he loves you. It's a great gift. Jesus died for you.

And you can be saved. Jesus wasn't the little baby at Bethlehem. He was the eternal God from eternity past, taking on human flesh and dying.

He says he's the only one that could ever fix all we messed up. And we can be saved for what Jesus is on the cross for us. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.