Notes for Functioning Like a Family (Matthew 12:46-50)

May 25, 2025

1. Family is a common biblical descriptor for the church

In this passage, Jesus is confronted while teaching and told that His mother and brothers are outside and seek to speak with Him.

The qualifier in Christ’s statement is not formal attendance with a body, but faithful action in a kingdom. Those two things are related, but they are not synonymous. My attendance and belonging with a local body of believers is important. It is part of my demonstration of my faith and my journey of growth. It recognizes God’s plan for community and discipleship through other believers. But we cannot reduce belonging to that definition.

1. A “Faith Family” is marked by the same elements as earthly families
   1. Care -John 13:35

*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

Families genuinely care about one another.

Give definition of love… Love is not always about the emotion, but is not always absent the emotion.

Story about Kate in second grade on first day of school…”let me know if anyone gives you problems!”

* 1. Communication -Ephesians 4:25,29

*“Therefore, putting away lying, ‘Leach each of you speak truth with his neighbor,’ for we are members of one another…Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification that it may impart grace to the hearers.”*

Families must communicate.

We are given boundaries and guidelines for how to do it:

And here is how I would sum up the idea between these two verses: Honesty without the goal to hurt.

We speak to educate, to edify, and to encourage.

* 1. Celebration- Romans 12:15

*“Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.”*

There is a celebratory/cheerleader aspect to family relationships.

Too often, our culture is marked by competition. We should genuinely desire good and seek to cheer on one another.

This past week with Kate… all of her awards, and my lack of jealousy.

* 1. Cooperation -Ephesians 4:16

“…from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

The passage is about spiritual gifts and a picture of the church as a unified body working together.

A family cooperates together. Maybe not perfectly. Maybe not always well. But we work together. And when we work together well, there is so much joy, peace, fulfillment, and more.

Cooperation actually builds the bonds of togetherness.

* 1. Conflict –

One common lament in my research and reading against referring to the church as family is the tendency to look at the family description as something that elicits mush feelings while dismissing the difficult realities. But lets not shy away. Families fight. Families have conflict. And the church family is no different.

We shouldn’t fight as the lost. We shouldn’t be marked by the same things. But there will be conflict.

The New Testament is full of it.

Personal. Practical. Pragmatic. Theological. Cultural. The fought over everything.

* 1. Charis -1 Peter 4:10, Colossians 3:13

Charis is the Greek word for grace. It refers to good will, loving-kindness, favour, and grace. It is often used in relation to unearned and undeserved favor or blessing.

The faith family must be marked by grace. Grace, overwhelmingly in the New Testament is used to describe God’s gift to us. But if we are meant to reflect Him, then we too must be extenders of that grace.

1. A “Faith Family’s” health is determined by the health of its members

The challenge this morning is intensely personal. I believe that we have a mental image of the kind of church that we want to attend. It is my hope that our mentality shifts to the type of church we want to be- since we are the church. And then when we have that image, when we see the picture of Christ that is meant to be reflected in His church, we must come to the realization that the image and health of the church is determined by the health and characteristics of its members.