

Mark 3:20-21, 31-35

We Are Family

What does it mean to be family? Does it boil down to blood relation, race, and culture. Must we look the same, think the same, believe the same things in order to be family? The answer is complicated, but for the sake of time I simply answer yes, and no. Blood relations, race, and culture certainly have bearing on who we consider family, but not exclusively. And this is especially true when it comes to the family of God. You are my brothers and sisters in Christ despite the obvious differences in skin tone, dialect, dress, food choices, etc. We are family! Amen! And what makes us family, what binds us together is our common faith in Jesus the Christ. Though we may view ourselves as siblings in Christ the question this morning is does Jesus see us in the same light? Who constitutes the family of Jesus? The answer is provided for us. **V35**, “Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.” Let’s unpack this response of Jesus by answering three questions: What is God’s will? What is it to do God’s will? Who’s in?

First question, what is God’s will? God’s will is the same for every human being. Contextually, **it is God’s will that everyone comes to repentance through belief in His Son, Jesus.** Every work we are called to corporately and individually as disciples of Christ is to bring about **this will of God.** It is not God’s will that everyone become famous, rich, influential, or for that matter poor, destitute, and/or unpopular. These are worldly temporal states. And though God may use these states in life to accomplish His will through us these states do not constitute His eternal will for any of us. Why? God’s will is eternal and these

things are temporary. Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible puts it this way, "For whosoever shall do the will of God,... By believing in Christ, receiving him as a Savior and Redeemer, and submitting to him in all his ordinances, as King of saints". The will of God is to believe in God's Son, Jesus.

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

John 6:25-29 "²⁵When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" ²⁶Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. ²⁷Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." ²⁸Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" ²⁹Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

John 1:11-13 "¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."

The will of God is to believe in His Son, and if we believe we are His children, Christ's brothers and sisters. Thus, we are family!

Second question, what is it to do God's will? Closely related to the answer of our first question, it is to live out our belief in Jesus by obedience to God's word, Christ's gospel. If we are failing to obey God's word, Christ's teaching we should question the genuineness of our confession and our relatedness. Don't be deceived. To love Jesus

is to obey Jesus and to obey Jesus is to live out our belief in Him, it is to do God's will. To do God's will is to be Jesus's sisters and brothers. Making us truly family. Church, to do God's will is to obey, that is to do, to live out God's word.

John 14:21-24 “²¹ Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” ²² Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?” ²³ Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴ Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”

Matt 7:21-25 “²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ ²⁴ “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.”

Luke 8:21 “²¹ He replied, “My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice.”

Final question, who's in? Whoever does God's will. Having clearly defined God's will then it would be appropriate to exclude the many things we believe make us children of God but does not, as we

consider whether or not we, individually, are counted among God's children, Jesus' siblings. Baptism. We should be baptized, but no. Regularly attending worship. We should, but no. Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, serving the poor. We should, but no. Loving others, we should, though I questioned whether or not we can love others biblically apart from true faith in Jesus, but no. Singing in the choir, no. Giving faithfully and generously to the cause of Christ. We should, but no. Being ordained to ministry (Pastor, Elder, Deacon). What a tremendous honor and responsibility, but no. **Listen carefully. True faith in Jesus will produce all the above, but doing all the above does not produce or guarantee true faith. Thus, they are not a guarantee of relatedness to Christ. Yes, we are family but only if we have been born again. To be born again is to have conversion of the heart (i.e. our will).**

Jer 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"

Eke 36:26-27 "²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."

Romans 10:9-13 "⁹ If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. ¹¹ As Scripture says, 'Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.' ¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, ¹³ for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"

We are family, we are Jesus' family, if. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.