

# BEING A MEMBER OF GOD'S FAMILY

“I will be a Father to you,  
And you shall be My sons and daughters,  
Says the LORD Almighty.”

(2 Sam. 7:14; 2 Cor. 6:18)



# Terms for Our Relationship with Deity

- Teacher and disciple/follower
  - John 13:13; Matt. 28:19
- Shepherd and sheep
  - John 10:11-14, 27-29
- Savior and the saved
  - John 4:42; 1 John 4:14
- King and citizens
  - Eph. 2:19; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:15
- Lord/Master and servants
  - John 13:13; Col. 4:1



Each describes a different aspect

# God's "Family" (1 of 2)

## ● Father and children

- Matt. 5:48 *"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."*
- John 1:12 *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"*
- Gal. 3:26 *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."*
- Eph. 2:19b *"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but ... members of the household of God,"*



# God's "Family" (2 of 2)



## ◎ Brothers and sisters

- Mark 10:29-30 “... Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother... But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers...”
- 1 Tim. 5:1-2 “Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters,”

## ◎ Jesus as oldest brother

- Rom. 8:29 “...the firstborn among many brothers.”
- Heb. 2:11 “...he is not ashamed to call them brethren”

# Two “Levels”

## Global

- Singular
- “*household of God*”
- 1 Pet. 2:17 “*the brotherhood*”
- All the saved



## Local

- “*Brethren*” in Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, ...
- Rom. 16:16 “*churches of Christ*”
- 1 Cor. 11:18 “*when ye come together*”



# A Comparison of Families

## Physical

- ⦿ Benefits
- ⦿ Duties
- ⦿ Challenges

## Spiritual

- ⦿ Benefits
- ⦿ Duties
- ⦿ Challenges

When functioning as God would have it <sup>6</sup>

# Benefits of Physical Family

- ⦿ Necessities of life
  - Food, clothing, shelter
- ⦿ Protection
  - Parents looking out for best interests
- ⦿ Instruction
  - Language, manners, customs
- ⦿ Identity
  - Racial/ethnic, family history
- ⦿ Friendship and love
  - “Home”
- ⦿ Inheritance





# Benefits of Spiritual Family (1 of 3)

## ⦿ Necessities of spiritual life

- Eph. 1Pet. 2:2 “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word”
- Eph. 1:3-7 “... has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing ... predestined us to adoption as sons... in Him we have redemption...the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”

## ⦿ Protection

- Acts 20:28-31 “... take heed ... to all the flock... savage wolves will come in ... watch”
- 1 Pet. 5:2 “shepherd the flock...”



# Benefits of Spiritual Family (2 of 3)

## ◎ Instruction

- Heb. 5:12 “*teach...teachers*”
- 2 Tim. 4:2 “*Preach the word...*”
- 1 Tim. 3:14-15 “*I am writing these things to you so that ... you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God*”

## ◎ Identity

- Matt. 5:9 “*Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.*”
- Rom. 8:16-17 “*The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God*”
- Heb. 11-12 “Family” history

# Benefits of Spiritual Family (3 of 3)

## ◎ Friendship and love

- 1 John 3:1 “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: ....”
- Heb. 13:1 “Let brotherly love continue.”

## ◎ Inheritance

- Rom. 8:17 “and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ”
- 1 Pet. 1:3-4 “Blessed be the God ... who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope ... to an inheritance incorruptible ... reserved in heaven for you,”

# Duties in Physical Family

- ⦿ Instruct/discipline
  - Eph. 6:4 “...bring the up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”
  - Heb. 12:7-9 “chasten...correct”
- ⦿ Obey as children
  - Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20
- ⦿ Be nice to brothers/sisters
  - Gen. 37 Joseph and his brothers
- ⦿ Help out around the house
  - Matt. 21:28-31 “go work today in my vineyard”



# Duties in Spiritual Family (1 of 3)

## ⦿ Instruct/discipline

- Heb. 12:7-9 God “*chastens...corrects*”
- From preachers, elders, Bible class teachers (Eph. 4:11), older women Titus 2:4
- Gal. 6:1 “*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness*”

## ⦿ Obey as children

- Matt. 5:48 “*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*”
- 1 Pet. 1:14-15 “*as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, ...but as He... is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct*”

# Duties in Spiritual Family (2 of 3)

## ◎ Be nice to brothers/sisters

- Rom. 12:10 *“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.”*
- 1 Thess. 4:9-10 *“But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; ... But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more”*
- 1 John 4:20 *“If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?”*

# Duties in Spiritual Family (3 of 3)

## ◎ Help out around the house

- Rom. 12:4-8 *“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: ... if ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”*

# Challenges of Physical Family

- Difference in opinions, personalities, interests
- Selfishness
- Issues related to friends, music, sex, alcohol, drugs, gambling, etc.
- Favoritism, inconsistent discipline
- Squabbling, arguing, conflict





# Challenges of Spiritual Family (1 of 3)

- ⦿ Difference in opinions, personalities, interests
  - Rom. 14 “...no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.”
- ⦿ Selfishness
  - Matt. 7:12 “In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you” (NAS)
  - Phil. 2:3 “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.”

## Challenges of Spiritual Family (2 of 3)

- Issues related to friends, music, sex, alcohol, drugs, gambling, etc.
- 2 Cor. 6:14-18 *“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers...Come out from among them and be separate...Do not touch what is unclean...and shall be My sons and daughters”*
  - James 4:4 *“know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”*
- Favoritism, inconsistent discipline
  - 1 Tim. 5:21 *“I charge thee...observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.”*

# Challenges of Spiritual Family (3 of 3)

## ◎ Squabbling, arguing, conflict

- John 17:20-21 *“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us...”*
- 1 Cor. 1:10 *“Now I plead with you, brethren, ...that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”*
- 1 Cor. 6:5 *“Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren?”*

## Conclusion (1 of 2)

- Many parallels with benefits to enjoy, duties to perform, challenges to face & overcome



When functioning as God would have it -  
But it takes dedication, time, and effort

# Conclusion (2 of 2)

- Born/adopted into a physical family - same with God's spiritual family
  - Eph. 1:5 “...adoption as sons”
  - 1 Pet. 1:23 “born ... thru the word of God”
  - John 1:12 “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name”
  - John 3:5 “...born of water...”
  - Rom. 6:3 “...baptized into Christ Jesus”

