



Life Group Study Notes

“Please, get me a family. I need one.”

Ps. James Lowe - August 7, 2016

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- What is something that you liked about your family when you grew up?
- Who were you closest to in your family when you grew up?
- If you could have changed one thing about your family when you grew up, what would it be?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Has anyone told you today that they love you?

God loves you, and commands us to love one another. Jesus said that we are to love one another just as he has loved us. He loved us not only with words and emotions, but with actions. His ultimate expression of love for us was his death on the cross for our sins. This was costly love. This is the nature of the love that God calls us to have for one another.

Jesus came into this world to be our elder brother who would rescue us and bring us back to God our Father. It is as a family that God wants us to experience life. We are not merely a disparate collection of individuals. Nor are we simply God's servants or workers or soldiers. We are made to be God's family.

Our understanding of being part of God's family is heavily influenced by our experience of our own families. Some of our experiences of family might have been good and healthy, reflecting God's desire for us. But some of our experiences might not have been good at all. Therefore, to learn about God's desire for our experience of his family, it is needful that we turn to the Scriptures. In the Bible we learn about God's design and desire for both his spiritual family and for our own families.

From the beginning God designed humanity to live in families. The human family was meant to be a reflection of God's universal family. God's entire family of humans were supposed to reflect his image and enjoy relationship with him and one another (Genesis 1:26-28).

The beginning of the first family is also referred to Genesis 2.

Genesis 2:18 ESV *Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."*

The term "helper" in Hebrew (עֵזֶר, 'ezer) in this verse means more than someone who is a subordinate. Many times in Scripture God is called our helper, using the same word. He is "the one who does for us what we cannot do for ourselves, the one who meets our needs. In this context the word seems to express the idea of an 'indispensable companion.' The woman would supply what the man was lacking in the design of creation and logically it would follow that the man would supply what she was lacking..." (Gn 2:18 NET, footnote).

The phrase "fit for him" in Hebrew (כֶּנֶגְדּוֹ, kénégdo) in this verse means more than simply a partner. Literally, it means "according to the opposite of him." "Translations such as 'suitable [for],' 'matching,' 'corresponding to' all capture the idea. The man's form and nature are matched by the woman's as she reflects him and complements him. Together they correspond" (Gn 2:18 NET, footnote).

This simple verse is deep with meaning. It points to the truth that we all need one another. We were meant to be in families with a mother and a father, through whom God would express his image and fulfill his purposes in the earth. Families were meant to be places where we would know and experience love. It is here where we were to first receive and give love.

Psalms 68:5-6 ESV Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. God settles the solitary in a home; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

Even though the sin of our first human ancestors has led to all of us inheriting a sinful nature, it is still God's desire for us to be members of caring families. He does not want us to be alone.

It is in families that we learn to care for others, to serve others, to consider the interests of others higher than our own, to share with others, to forego pleasures for the benefit of others, to obey others, to sacrifice for others, and to do all of this out of love.

In a similar way, God does not want his people who are in Christ to live lives that are disconnected from each other. His will is to set each one of us in a community of faith, a spiritual family. It is in the context of spiritual family that we likewise learn to grow and love one another. It is here that we discover God our Father and Jesus our elder brother in greater ways. It is in the church that we receive direction for our lives. The church is meant to be a place of safety and protection, of blessing and encouragement, of correction and training that we may grow up in our salvation.

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related point for discussion.

- Did you have a mother and father in your home when you grew up? If so, how did their relationship benefit you? If not, was there another person who played a role like one of your parents?
- What do you want to see provided in your home that was missing in your family when you grew up?
- How could love be more practically expressed in your household?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Ask God for insight into what was good and into what was lacking in your family when you grew up.
- Ask God for his vision for your current family and what God wants to do in it and through it.
- Ask God to refresh your heart in his love for your family.