

An Overview: The Grace of Our Spiritual Family (Part 1)  
Mark 3:31-35; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-15

*“My family needs the church family for its own growth and health. No single family possesses all the resources it needs to be a truly and fully Christian family. We need support, friendship, example, wise counsel, and much else from the church family. . . . Two Christian parents are not in themselves adequate to rear one child for Christ — they were never meant to be. When we are struggling or prosperous the temptation is to believe we don’t need the church.”*

*(Sinclair Ferguson — cf. 1 Corinthians 12:18-21,25-26; 1 Peter 4:10-11)*

- An Introduction to Spiritual Family:
  - There is a universal invitation to every person to be a part of Jesus’ family or body (Mark 3:34-35). When we are saved we are reconciled with God, *“Therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation”* (2 Corinthians 5:17-18). In Christ, we are also reconciled with each other, *“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin”* (1 John 1:7; cf. Ephesians 2:16).
  - The Bible goes out of its way to use familial terms to describe our relationship with each other inside of the Body of Christ, *“Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older woman as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity”* (1 Timothy 5:1). Paul describes his relationship with the Corinthians both as a father, because he led them to faith (1 Corinthians 4:15), and as a gentle, nursing mother because of his care and love for them (1 Thessalonians 2:6-8). Paul tells us that we are brothers and sisters in Christ, locally and universally, *“...but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons (and daughters), by whom we cry Abba! (complete trust without fear or anxiety) Father! The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God”* (Romans 8:15-16).
  - We are told in the Scriptures that God cares for the widows and the orphans as a loving father or a protecting husband, *“Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in His holy habitation”* (Psalm 68:5). We are also told that true religion is the body of Christ caring for widows and orphans, *“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world”* (James 1:27).
  - We are told that if we are in Christ, His love is seen in the way that we treat our families, *“But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever”* (1 Timothy 5:8). Men are to love their wives as Christ loves the church (Ephesians 5:25). Women are to submit to their husbands as the church submits to Christ (Ephesians 5:24). Children are to obey their parents as worship to the Lord (Ephesians 6:1-2). Fathers are to bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). It is the behavior of a father and husband in the home that qualifies him for ministry (1 Timothy 3:5).
  - Lastly, we are told that in following Christ, we must love Him more than any earthly relationship (Luke 14:26) and that we never ultimately lose in giving up everything in this life for the gospel of Jesus Christ (Luke 18:18-30). In the early church we see the familial love that they had for one another and we are called to practice that familial love today within the body of Christ (Acts 2:42-27).

(continued →)

**Worship:** Psalm 18 (By: Citizens)      Jesus, Thank You (By: Sovereign Grace Music)  
From Everlasting (Psalm 90) (By: Sovereign Grace Music)      **Closing Song:** Glorious Christ (By: Sovereign Grace Music)

**Service Times:** Sundays: Revelation Class 4/Prayer 4:30/Church 5:30; Tuesdays: (In-Home) Bible Study: Women 6:30/Men 6:30 & 7;

Thursdays: Prayer 6:20/Church 7

- 1 Thessalonians 2:7-15 — An example of spiritual family in action.
    - In both the physical family and the spiritual family God has given leadership. The family flourishes when people serve in their roles as “parents” and “children”. *“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning for that would be of no advantage to you” (Hebrews 13:17). “Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise), ‘that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land’ ” (Ephesians 6:1-3).*
    - Leaders as a Mother: They are gentle (patient and tenderhearted), nourishing (providing the milk and meat of the Word), affectionate (to warm with body heat), sacrificial (working hard for the well being of the children), and dependable (consistent passion and earnestness). They are a godly example of these attributes of God.
    - Leaders as a Father: They are a holy example to imitate. They set a high standard for the sake of flourishing. They desire the highest reward and joy for their children, namely, eternally. They exhort (come alongside), encourage (help through difficulty and hardship), and charge (warn of the consequences of disobedience) their children for the sake of their maturity.
    - We need zealous Christians to mature and we need to be zealous for the lost to love as we have been called to love.
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#### **Announcements:**

★**DONATIONS:** Throughout the month of May we are collecting donations for Vertical 196. They are in need of Men's Medium & Large boxer briefs, Women's Size 5-6 panties, individually wrapped snack cakes and cookies, single serve applesauce cups, fruit cups, pudding cups, Slim Jims, combination bike locks, razors, dog/cat food, Fuel only gift cards, Coffee, and Men's short/ankle socks. There is a tote in front of the back table to put your donations in.

★**FELLOWSHIP DINNER:** TONIGHT, immediately following the worship service we are having a Fellowship Dinner, provided for us by the men, as a way to serve the women in our church body. EVERYONE is invited to stay to enjoy the dinner and fellowship with us!

★**NEW MEMBERS MEETING:** If you are interested in or have any questions about church membership, we will be having a New Members Meeting on Sunday, May 29th, immediately following the worship service.