

Intro: Have you ever really thought about how peculiar some of Jesus' sayings are?

Jn 3:3 (Nicodemus) – "Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God"

Jn 4:14 (Woman at the well) – "Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst"

Mt 26:26 (Communion) – "Take, eat; this is my body...Drink all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant..."

Mark 3:31-34 – Jesus is radically changing the idea of family. Family was everything for the ancient Israelites. So much so that in parts of Israelite history, families would war with one another. Here Jesus brings about a radical paradigm shift.

- Not just for people of antiquity, but for us today

One commentator states: "This shocking question shows Jesus self-understanding and the radical nature of biblical faith that can only be described in terms of a new birth, a new family."

Affects us differently than the original audience

O: Highly offensive – to turn your back on family for essentially strangers

U: Many of us don't have such close ties to family (distance) or we have a love/hate relationship with family, so we intentionally separate from blood-relatives. Because we tend not to be so close to family, when we read of family in the Bible, we assume the Bible means our own cultural ideas and experiences.

As we hold our blood-family at an arm's length, we also hold God's family away at an arm's length. That's not what Jesus ever intended. – This idea of family was carried throughout the NT canon.

All possible because when we come to trust/follow Jesus, we receive a new identity.

2 Cor. 5:17 – "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

Baptism so significant – picture of death to the old ways of life – new life, new identity

Gal. 4:3-7 – "When we were children, we were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as

sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' so you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God."

Your family used to be fear, darkness, oppression, sin and destruction – God's enemy

Now in God's family with Jesus and others who are in Christ

Sounds quite similar to Jesus' words in Mk. 3:33-35 – "Whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother"

Idea of family scares us – Family is messy, not easy, most of us are about easy

- Easiest, fastest, most enjoyable – all about me

Antithetical to the Gospel – To the Good News

- Jesus, fully God/fully man (hypostatic union), lived a perfect and sinless life (opposite of us)
- Was crucified by sinful man, according to God's plan. Died a horrific death – sins of those who would believe placed on his shoulders – took the punishment we deserve (great exchange – Luther)
- Rose 3 days later
- He lives today, and offers us forgiveness and a restored relationship with God and with others – new identity, new family

What does it look like to be family?

1. Love one another

- a. Seems like a simple concept, but amazed at how much of the NT is devoted to this.
- b. 1 Jn –love one another – huge chunk (2 and 3 Jn also)
 - i. 1 Jn. 7-8 "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love." – harrowing words
- c. Not easy – David Levin – "Family are the hardest to love"

- i. We know them, they know us – push buttons
 - ii. My kids push each other's buttons, but always ask for one another. Want to spend time together
 - iii. Marriage – don't always feel like loving
 - d. Not always fun, not always easy – Jesus is the perfect example
2. Diverse but unified
- a. Husband and Wife – Mk 10:8 – the two will become one flesh
 - b. Jn 17:21 “That they will be one as I am in you and you are in me”
 - c. Socio-economic, cultural, racial boundaries – one of the beauties of God's family
 - i. Israelites were so concerned with their own unique family tradition they neglected to recognize God's desire for everyone
 - d. People here who would not cross paths outside of the church
3. Struggle but reconcile
- a. Filled with sinners – stumbling to the cross
 - i. Here looking for a perfect family, perfect church, or to get along with everyone you're in for a rough time
 - b. Marriage – don't always get along – fight over the dumbest things: toothpaste
 - i. (just like in church) – heard people get upset at not wearing a jacket at age
 - c. Reconciliation – the whole point of the Gospel
 - i. Everything is about reconciliation – Jesus set the perfect example of this
 - 1. At one time we were God's enemies, then Jesus paid our penalty so we could be reconciled
 - d. Will get into fights, but not supposed to stay divided
 - e. What usually starts fights? Pride, sin – old identity as slaves to sin but our new identity is that of God's family – reconciled and united with Christ

Saturate: Family
Text: Mark 3:35

When we understand our new identities, our actions cannot help but change. Too many people simply focus on actions and neglect to think about their identity.

What we believe about who God is, as revealed through what he does, leads to what we believe about who we are, which impacts what we do.

- Act out of our identity – no mission or vision statement
- Radiant identity statement – We are a family of servant missionaries learning to be and make disciples.

Over the next 3 weeks, we will look at our identity – family, servant, missionary

Question to ponder – What would it look like if we took the notion of being brothers and sisters seriously?

One way we are going to respond is by receiving communion, where we remember Christ's sacrifice so we could be reconciled with God and adopted into his family.