



SPIRITUAL FAMILY

MATTHEW 12:46-50

PART 1 - SPIRITUAL FAMILY

I personally believe this is one of the greatest challenges the church of Jesus Christ has and will face. The transition from physical family, natural bloodline being and having a first placed position in our hearts, to spiritual family, the body of Christ, those of the Spirit, having a first placed position in our hearts, accomplishing God's will together as a fully functioning people.

Who do we look to when it comes to defining who spiritual family is? We look to no other but God Himself. God Himself is to define who His family is and not our feelings or thoughts or beliefs. This is why Solomon taught us not to lean on our own understanding, but to trust in Him and His words of life.

I suggest to us there is a tension which exists in Scripture when it comes to defining spiritual family. We see in John 1:12-13, John saying those who receive and believe in Him, He has given the right to become children of God, while in Matthew 12:46-50 we see Jesus saying it's way more than that. He says those who do the will of His Father, are His brother, sister and mother.

John 1:12-13 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Matthew 12:46-50 While He was still speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him. Someone said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You." But Jesus answered the one who was telling Him and said, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! **For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother.**"

The key to this is in the wording of John. In receiving and believing in Him we are given the right to 'become' children of God. Did we hear that? We are given the right to BECOME children of God.

We are to grow as children of God, becoming mature sons of God, who are transformed, empowered and led by the Spirit.

Romans 8 says it's those who are led by the Spirit who are sons of God. Romans defines those who are sons of God as those who are led by the Spirit of God. God defines this, not us. It also says that the anxious longing of creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

Sons of God do the will of God, because just like the Son of God did His Father's will, sons of the Father will also do their Father's will, as they are one with the Son and Father. This is what Jesus is referring to



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here in Matthew 12. He is clearly identifying the difference between the natural and the spiritual. Jesus defines it for us so there is no guessing or having to figure it out. All we have to do is hear, receive, accept and believe His words.

I can imagine Mary and Jesus' brothers and sisters being highly offended by these comments. How do you think you would have reacted or responded to these words? Imagine your own child telling you that their true family are those who do their Father's will and this may not be you, their physical bloodline.

For one to do the will of one's Heavenly Father, one must know His will. This is very different from asking "what is Your will for MY life?" We need to say "Father what is Your will?" Children of God know the Father's will and they go about living it out.

Ephesians 1:8-9 ...In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him.

The will of God is a mystery, hence it needs to be revealed to us all by God Himself. Maybe this is why so many ask "what is Your will for my life?", or just don't know what the will of God is and get easily offended when they are held to an account for prioritising physical family, physical bloodline over spiritual family and the accomplishing of the Father's will as a body or family.

We may be able to give an intellectual or intelligent answer to the question, "what is God's will?", just like the teacher answered Jesus' question about what the greatest commandment was, but unless our lives are a living demonstration of the reality of our answer, we still do not know what God's will actually is.

QUESTIONS

1. How do you think Mary and Jesus' brothers would have felt after hearing what He said about who His family was and why?
2. If Jesus is only speaking His Father's truth, then why would there be any room for offence or any offence being taken?
3. Being Jesus' mother, brother or sister means doing the will of God. What does this mean for those who are doing the will of self?
4. Why is revelation the only way to truly knowing the will of God, and not just being able to give a standard stock answer in words like, loving God and loving others, or entering into sanctification?
5. Why is thinking you are genuinely doing the will of God when you are not, so dangerous to your own relationship with Him and those you walk with?
6. How many of us know the mystery of God's will because He has made it known in and to us through revelation?