

ALL IN THE FAMILY (OF GOD)
#1: Blood is Thicker Than Water
January 13-15, 2007

¹⁰For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. ¹¹Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (which is done in the body by human hands)—¹²remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. ¹⁹Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²²And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 2:10-22 TNIV

Introduction: We often say that "blood is thicker than water," by which we mean that ties of family are stronger than all others. After all, such bonds are a matter of self-preservation, of perpetuating our own kind, a form of self-love. God's Word does teach us that the nuclear family is important, but it also extends our definition of family to include all of God's people. In order to form the best nuclear families, we must first understand our ties to the family of God through the blood of Jesus Christ.

- I. Fashioned for Family
 - A. We are God's "handiwork," fashioned from the beginning of time in Christ to serve with the family of God. (v.10)
 - B. When God is our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ is our redemptive Brother, all divisions that might otherwise separate us are removed. (vv.11-15a)
 - C. God's purpose is to create one new family that is corporately saved by His grace and submitted to His will. (vv.15b-16)
 - D. It is impossible to be at peace with God without being in fellowship with His family. (v.17)
- II. Father of the Family
 - A. Through the cross of Jesus Christ, every believer has equal access to Father God: "the ground is level at the foot of the cross." (v.18)
 - B. If God is truly our Father, then every follower of Jesus Christ is our brother or sister; we are all members of one household. (v.19)
 - C. We have grafted into a new family tree and built into a new household that is built upon the foundation of believers who have gone before us. (v.20a)
 - D. Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone of God's new household, the sure anchor upon which the family of faith is built. (v.20b)
- III. Function of the Family
 - A. The purpose of God's family is to promote peace, beginning with restored relationships between God and human beings in Christ. (vv.13-17)
 - B. The purpose of God's family is access to God. (v.18)
 - C. The purpose of God's family is to make brothers and sisters of strangers and foreigners. (v.19)
 - D. The purpose of God's family is to rise as a holy temple to the Lord in a secular culture. (v.21)
 - E. The purpose of God's family is to be the "dwelling place" (incarnation) of God's Spirit. (v.22)

Conclusion: The blood of Christ really is "thicker than water," and this is God's plan. He has created a new family in order to redeem a lost a broken world and reconcile people to Himself. We are God's family in Christ!