

# The Church is God's Family

## Why Church? - Part 2

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Part of Why Church?

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**The church as an institution is flawed and often wracked with sin, and *yet it still exists* and is *growing*, which tells us something very important - the Church is God's idea, created by Jesus, empowered by his Spirit, to draw all people to Himself and transform them increasingly into the image and likeness of Jesus.**

**The Bible shows us that the church *is* God's family!**

*So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

—Genesis 1:27 (NLT)

**Jesus made it clear that he understood God to be *his Father*, just as God affirmed Jesus to be His Son.**

*And when [Jesus] came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."*

—Mark 1:10-11 (ESV)

*God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God.*

—Ephesians 2:8 (NLT)

**God is Creator of all, but He is not Father of all because sin severed everyone's connection with God.**

*Jesus: Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.*

—Matthew 6:9 (ESV)

**Jesus makes clear that it is through him that God is now our Father - it's only through Jesus.**

*Jesus: ... I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

—John 14:6 (ESV)

**The Bible uses the language of adoption to talk about how the believer receives God as their Father.**

*But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father." Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.*

—Galatians 4:4-7 (NLT)

**If God is *Jesus'* Father, and God is *our* Father, then we have the *same* Father, and so, we are therefore brothers and sisters of Christ.**

*So now Jesus and the ones he makes holy have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters.*

—Hebrews 2:11 (NLT)

*For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.*

—Romans 8:29 (NLT)

**As “firstborn,” that means Jesus, God’s Son, has gone ahead of us to show us the way, to experience it first, including death but also resurrection, with the promise that all of us who follow Him will likewise receive what he’s received.**

**Since Christians are brothers and sisters *with Christ* and children of God, then Christians are also brothers and sisters *with each other*.**

*As Jesus was speaking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. Someone told Jesus, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, and they want to speak to you.” Jesus asked, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” Then he pointed to his disciples and said, “Look, these are my mother and brothers. Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother!”*

—Matthew 12:46-50 (NLT)

**Jesus wanted to show that the greater priority for the Kingdom of God and forever may often be our spiritual family versus our birth family.**

*See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his*

*children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don't recognize that we are God's children because they don't know him.*

—1 John 3:1 (NLT)

## **BLESSINGS IN THE FAMILY OF GOD**

### **1. We're part of an incredible and diverse family that prepares us for eternity.**

*For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

—Galatians 3:26-28 (NLT)

### **2. We have the gift of the Spirit of God, who affirms in us that we are God's children.**

*So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children.*

—Romans 8:15-16 (NLT)

### **3. We have a family to practice loving God and loving our neighbor.**

***Jesus:** ... "You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: "Love your neighbor as yourself."*

—Matthew 22:37-39 (NLT)

### **4. We have a family to serve others.**

***Jesus:** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

—Mark 10:45 (NLT)

**5. We have a family to care for each other.**

*And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need.*

—Acts 2:44-45 (NLT)

**6. We have a family to support and encourage each other.**

*Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.*

—Hebrews 10:24-25 (NLT)

**The church as God's family is His primary instrument to love people and save the world.**

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**Next Week:** Why Church? - Part 3: *The Church is Missional*