

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 12:46-50 | Jesus Focuses on His Family
Sunday February 18, 2024

WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 12.
- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.
- Notes are in the foyer. Take them home with you.

REVIEW:

Last Sunday, we studied a disturbing piece of Scripture as we discussed man-made morality and religion.

We learned how easy it is to turn our opinion of what is good or bad, right or wrong, into a religious exercise— of futility. *futility / uselessness / hopelessness*

Religion—Self-defined (corporate) morality. Living by our own rules and standards.

Today, people say, “Live your own truth/Do your own thing/You do You.”

That’s a religion where the unholy trinity of me, myself, and I reigns.

And it’s a religion because I’m my own standard of righteousness when I live this way.

It’s the mentality where I will not bow my knee to anyone. *I’ve got All the Answers*
↳ All my ways are right.

Morality—a system of moral conduct. (Examples: Virtues, character, integrity, ethics).

Religious people are very structured, systematic and moralistic.

The difference between man-made religion and morality is that it has no relationship with Jesus.

Rules vs. Relationship.

Rules: moralistic religiosity. I got to go to Heaven on my own terms

Relationship: Everyone has a relationship with Jesus because every knee will bow—the question is whether or not our relationship is a saving and personal.

Does Jesus know your name? Is your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life? (Matt 7:23, Rev 21:27)
Those are ~~that's an~~ important questions because morality doesn't save.

Morality can't fix our sin problem or pay our sin debt.

LW KEYPOINT:

We don't need sin managed—we need sin forgiven.

We need to ask God to forgive us for thinking we have a better way.

We need to ask God to forgive us for telling Him what to do under the guise of religion, morality, and even prayer.

^{Because} ~~and~~ there is only one God-Man, our Savior and High Priest, who can forgive—the Lord Jesus Christ.

LW KEYPOINT:

"Good people" don't go to Heaven—only forgiven sinners do.

We discussed how “good moral people” are numb to the reality of sin—because, living by their own standards, they don't think they need to be forgiven.

Exhibit A within the Gospels are the Scribes and Pharisees.

Religious people are offended when you point out that their good is not good enough.

So if someone calls you 'religious,' make sure you tell them that 'God hates religion!'

And that's why you're a child of God—which segues directly into today's passage.

INTRODUCTION:

Today, Jesus gets interrupted again.

Just as the Scribes and Pharisees interrupted Jesus and demanded a sign in verses 38-42—Jesus' family now interrupts and demands to speak to Him.

Have you ever noticed that Jesus gets interrupted a lot?

- "Tell my brother to give me my inheritance!" (Luke 12:13)
- "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the one who nursed you!" (Luke 11:27)
- The synagogue leader's little girl was dying / woman who suffered from a hemorrhage (Matt. 9:18-26)

People either want to get Jesus off mission or for Him to solve their problems.

And yet, through all the interruptions, Jesus stays on mission:

1. To teach and preach the Gospel
2. To die for sinners as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Today's interruption reveals a problem that we all have at some level.

Today, we see that Jesus had human problems—relationship problems.

Things are not well—all in the family.

There is a family feud back in Nazareth.

This strife has been brewing for probably about a year now.

As you look at your own family—and the dysfunction in it—I pray that this passage will bring some relief to the problems you're having.

Because if Jesus had problems, you can guarantee we will too.

What are these problems? How do they impact you today?

Let's find out as we learn how Jesus focuses on His family.

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 12:46—While he was still speaking with the crowds, his mother and brothers were standing outside wanting to speak to him.

Matthew 12:47— Someone told him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you."

Matthew 12:48— He replied to the one who was speaking to him, "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?"

Matthew 12:49— Stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!

Matthew 12:50— For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

These are the very words from the ^{Rational} authoritative, inerrant, inspired, and infallible Word of Almighty God.

PRAY:

I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters; I will praise you in the assembly. (Psalm 22:22)

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 12:46—*While (Jesus) was still speaking with the crowds, his mother and brothers were standing outside wanting to speak to him.*

As Jesus is teaching on morality and religiosity from last week, Jesus' family shows up.

There is no mention of Joseph, Jesus' earthly father.

In fact, Joseph isn't mentioned in Scripture after the trip to Jerusalem when Jesus was 12 (Luke 2:41–51).

So, the family shows up and causes an interruption. Why?

Mark 3:21—*When his family heard this, they set out to restrain him, because they said, "He's out of his mind."*

Wow! Jesus' own family is saying the same thing that the Scribes and Pharisees are saying!

Keep in mind that these religious men are making plans on how to kill Jesus.

So Jesus' family heard "some things"—and these things were so disturbing that they walked from Nazareth to Capernaum—which took about ten hours. = Prescott Valley

"Hear some things"
So what did they hear?

Even though they didn't have social media, you can bet that word traveled fast about Jesus!

They heard everything we've been studying for the past two months in chapter 12.

They heard that Jesus was disrupting all the deeply held Jewish traditions. (Matt 12:1-8).

They heard that Jesus was playing *Dr. House* on the healing the sick and casting out demons Sabbath Day. (Matt 12:1-15).

They heard that the Scribes and Pharisees called Jesus 'Beelzebul!' (Matt 12:22-32)

And then Jesus called the Scribes and Pharisees a 'brood of vipers!' (Matt. 12:34)

So the family is hearing all these things—and choose to make a B Line from Nazareth to Capernaum.

Because they Jesus has lost his mind and is possessed by Beelzebul.

What else are they to think?

Consider all the gossip and things taken out of context.

BTW, nobody calls the Scribes and Pharisees names and gets away with it.

That type of name-calling will get you killed.

they think
Jesus has gone off the deep end! He's lost his marbles! He's gone, loco!

Jesus is mentally unstable!

How could any sane man claim to be greater than Jonah? Or King Solomon?

Unless... Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah!

Isn't that what Matthew, our gospel writer, has been telling us all along?

But the family doesn't believe it.

Matthew 12:47— Someone told him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you."

If you have the ESV, verse 47 is a footnote.

And that's a mistake by the publishers—here's why.

Matthew 12:46—While he was still speaking with the crowds, his mother and brothers were standing outside wanting to speak to him.

Jesus is busy teaching His disciples. There's also a crowd listening—so he's busy.

He's on mission. Jesus is doing what He came from Heaven to do—and his family interrupts.

But Jesus ignores the request in verse 46.

Today, it would be like a Bible teacher teaching his students, and he gets a call or text on his phone.

What's he going to do? He ignores it. Why? He's busy.

Secondly, notice this--

Matthew 12:46— his mother and brothers were standing outside wanting to speak to him.

Matthew 12:47— "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside."

Verse 47 is important because it shows how incessant and entitled Jesus' family is, yet they're on the outside.

Isn't that interesting?

Jesus' family—of all people—are a group of outsiders.

That's a significant spatial and theological position.

They are outside because they are not followers of Jesus.

They are not disciples—in fact, they're hostile to the Gospel message.

Even Mary, as faithful as she was thirty years ago, much like John the Baptist in prison, struggles to understand what Jesus is doing.

Jesus' family doesn't believe, which means they don't understand.

We see the hostility between the family and Jesus in other passages of Scripture.

John 7:2—^(NLT) ~~But soon it was time for~~ the Jewish Festival of Shelters, (Feast of Booths/Tabernacles)

John 7:3— and Jesus' brothers said to him, (James) "Leave here and go to Judea, where your followers can see your miracles!"

John 7:4— (Judas, not Iscariot) You can't become famous if you hide like this! (Simon) If you can do such wonderful things, show yourself to the world!"

John 7:5— For even his brothers didn't believe in him.

It's important to know that Jesus' family eventually came to believe— but it wasn't until after the resurrection.

So think about this tension that Jesus had with His family during the entirety of His ministry.

This conflict lasted for a year, maybe even two.

But here's the good news.

Shortly after Jesus ascended back to Heaven where He came from...

Acts 1:12—Then they (all of Jesus' Disciples) returned to Jerusalem...

Acts 1:14— They all were continually united in prayer, along with the women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

Pause—for those of you who have been praying for your unbelieving spouse, children, or grandchildren—I hope you find this passage comforting.

It's not up to you to convert anyone—that's an impossible task.

Please don't burden yourself with that weight and responsibility.

It's your job to meet your family where they are—to love and pray for them—and then step back and allow God to be God.

Because when we don't get in God's way—look what happens:

Not only did Jesus' brother, James, believe and become a disciple of Jesus—

But he also became the pastor of the church in Jerusalem.

James also wrote the epistle that bears his name.

So, we are to love our family, pray for them, and watch God work in their lives.

KEYPOINT 1:

Give your family time.

If you have a family member who doesn't believe right now—give them time.

Jesus is the Savior; you are not.

Have you ever noticed that we make lousy saviors?

Things go south real fast when we start to press or use guilt—and we start to become Bible thumpers.

Those means never work.

We use the Bible to lift up, encourage, love, and provide hope—not press or beat down.

Lastly, your family's faith is on the ^{SALVATION} Lord's timeframe, which means the Lord is usually testing your patience simultaneously.

+ **Matthew 12:48**— He replied, "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?"

Check this—even after a second urgent request from His family, Jesus ignores it.

Jewish families in the first century were much closer than our American families today.

So Jesus' response is surprising, if not insulting, to many people.

Jesus continues teaching and, as the Master Teacher—now uses His family's distraction as part of the lesson!

+ **Matthew 12:48**— "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?"

I'm guessing that's not as harsh as it sounds.

It's a whole lot better than "*Get behind me, Satan!*" (Matt. 16:23).

Here's the deal— both Jesus' family and Peter do not have their minds set not “on the things of God...” (Matthew 16:23b)

They are not “seeking first the Kingdom of God.” (Matt 6:33).

Why? Because we're all control freaks.

Both the family, and Peter, on separate occasions, were on rescue missions to save Jesus.

Oh, the irony! They want to save the Savior!

Two things:

First, Jesus is not disrespecting his family members.

Secondly, Jesus was not renouncing His family either.

Jesus loved His family even more than they loved Him.

So what's going on?

The rabbis of Jesus' time considered their students as family.

So Jesus' question doesn't come from a ~~lack of respect~~ but from his emphasis on His mission.

However, Jesus does mildly rebuke His family for overstepping.

Jesus was about His Father's business. (Luke 2:49).

Believe it or not, Jesus will not give ~~preferential~~ ^{special} treatment to His family.

Human kinship does not take priority over spiritual kinship.

KPHZ

Jesus is asking the question, “Who is my spiritual family?”

+ **Matthew 12:49**— *Stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers!”*

Jesus answers His own question.

Can’t you feel the emotion when Jesus stretches out His hands and points to the people He loves and cares for!

Don’t miss this—Jesus loves His disciples.

Relationships matter most to Jesus—even the one with Judas Iscariot.

Jesus honors his family perfectly, but don’t miss His point.

Blood is thicker than water, but there is something even thicker—faith.

That is, the faith that unites us as a spiritual family which is called, ‘the church.’ (Matt 16:18).

Jesus will not drift from His mission to please his biological family.

We see the importance of placing Jesus above everyone and everything else throughout the Gospels.

+ **Matthew 8:21**— *“Lord,” another of his (fringe) disciples said, “first let me go bury my father.”*

+ **Matthew 8:22**— *But Jesus told him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”*

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Matthew 10:34— Don't assume that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

Matthew 10:35— For I came to turn
a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

[Micah 7:6]

Matthew 10:36— and a man's enemies will be the members of his household.,

Matthew 10:37— The one who loves a father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; the one who loves a son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Matthew 10:38— And whoever doesn't take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Luke 14:26— "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, and even his own life—he cannot be my disciple.

Dear friends, Jesus is not joking.

He's not telling a parable.

Jesus teaches a very unpopular reality that remains popular to this day.

It's a tough pill to swallow—and here's the pill.

If you're a disciple of Jesus—the love of God must come first.

Jesus shares His throne w/ no one.

The love of your Brothers and Sisters in Christ (the Church) second.

And the love of your non-believing family, third.

Jesus emphasizes our priorities, & reorders them. → WAY of Jesus vs WAY of the world

Why in that order?

Because Christ died for the church.

As his family. Biblical def of love is commitment. Jesus prioritized the church. And we spend time w those we say we love.

There are only two things that are eternally glorious:

- 1. Jesus Christ
- 2. His bride—the church.

Family



Hebrews 2:11— For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters,



Hebrews 2:12— saying: I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters;

The apostle Paul reiterates this sacred kinship of a spiritual family united in Christ Jesus.



Galatians 6:9— Let us not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don't give up.



Galatians 6:10— Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us work for the good of all, especially for those who belong to the household of faith.

Priority is the church family.

Many of you have great families.

Many of you have large families.

But many of you don't—like Amy and me.

Neither one of us has a Godly family structure around us—

So whether you like it or not, you're our family!

I pray that you consider your church as a part of your family.

I pray that you see those sitting around you not as people who go to your church— but rather as your **Brothers and Sisters** in Christ.

When we change our mindset from a congregation to a family, things begin to change within the culture of a church.

Prayerfully, we offer more grace.

Prayerfully, we forgive and forgive faster.

Prayerfully, we keep our mouths shut when there is no reason to give an opinion.

We are a family—far from perfect.
But we are a family—warts and all.

Matthew 12:50— For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

Note the "whoever."

Jesus is not breaking family ties— instead, He's loosening them.

Jesus is not dissolving natural family bonds but is showing the church's strength.

It doesn't matter what color you are or what gender you are.

It doesn't matter how young or old.

It doesn't matter how much money you have or don't have.

It doesn't matter how much education you have or don't have.

It doesn't matter what church or denomination you're a member of.

Jesus doesn't care if your father was the high priest or the Grand Poobah.

Whoever means whoever! = No matter who.

Your resume is of no concern to Jesus.

Look at Jesus' disciples!

Talk about Someone who practices what He preaches.

Jesus called a Tax collector and a Roman Zealot to be Apostles

APART of His family.

Only by God's grace did Simon not kill Matthew.

Good news—no one who believes is excluded from the family.

On the flip side, it also means that those who refuse to believe will not be included in God's family either.

+ **Matthew 12:50**— For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.

Notice that the 'whoever' must do something.

Scripture makes it crystal clear that people don't have the capacity to "choose God."

We don't choose God when it's convenient for us.

There's no such thing as a sinner's prayer in Scripture.

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Family

1 Thessalonians 1:4—For we know brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you,

We don't choose God—we believe God—and once we believe God we are to do something.

Matthew 12:50— ... *does the will of my Father in heaven*

We do not *become* the Brothers and Sisters in Christ by obedience/works/good deeds.

Instead, we prove ourselves faithful as the Brothers and Sisters in Christ by our obedience.

obedience doesn't get us into Heaven — it ~~proves~~ demonstrates the radical change in our lives.
↳ we obey God because we WANT TO not because we HAVE TO.

Where do we find the Father's will?

Answer: The Bible

Romans 12:2— Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

* BAPTISMS *

PREACH:

We didn't choose our biological family, did we? The Lord did.

Did you

What about our spiritual family—the church?

Do you pick your church, or does the Lord pick His church for you?

1 Corinthians 12:18— God has arranged each one of the parts in the body just as he wanted.

"Melos" = member

What's that mean?

1 Corinthians chapter 12 is a beautiful picture of how vital you are to the church and how important the church is to you.

I'm not the smartest guy in the world, but 1 Corinthians chapter 12 comes right before 1 Corinthians chapter 13—known as the 'love' chapter—and is usually taken out of context in wedding ceremonies.

1 Corinthians 12 is about commitment and membership.

In other words, you didn't choose River Bible Church, River Bible Church chose you by God's choice.

And if God has chosen His church for you, what's that mean?

It means that, by God's grace, God has given you spiritual gifts to build up His church and the Verde Valley.

Do you know your spiritual gifts?

Have you been trained on how to use those spiritual gifts?

That's what the local church is for!

The church is here to worship God, train you, encourage you, and build you up so that you can use your gifts as God leads you.

The church is not here to serve the pastor's agenda or pet projects.

Examples:

The primary objective of a church is not to be a food pantry—but to feed you spiritually so that you can take that spiritual food and distribute it as you distribute physical food.

The primary objective of a church is not to build houses—but to teach you how to build your life on The Rock/The Firm Foundation—so that you can show people why you're building houses or going on missions trips, etc.

→ not a political tool to further someone's agenda
The primary objective of a church is to worship God and fulfill the Great Commission.

→ The church is here to help you finish life well.

Secondly, understanding how and why Jesus *Focuses on His Family* calls us to repent of our sin of not making His church a priority in our lives.

Cyprian, a third century pastor in North Africa said,

+ “No one can have God as Father who does not have the church as Mother.”

We all have a bad case of the normals when it comes to our priorities.

It's normal for people to pack up and head across the country to take a new job.

It's mandatory to look at homes where the new job is.

It's completely acceptable to make sure the schools are good schools in the area for the kids to attend.

But what about the church?

“Oh, we'll do some church shopping when we get there.”

Tragically, our jobs and our immediate families take precedence over our spiritual families—the church.

And we need to ask for God's forgiveness.

What would the world say to you if you were offered a job halfway across the country—and the first thing you started to pray for was a church.

- How would the world respond?
- How do you respond after hearing today's passage?
- How would Jesus respond?

*prioritizing
committing*

One final question—what is preventing you from immersing yourself into following Jesus and truly committing to His spiritual family—the church?

That's a great question to take to the Lord this week.

(Rev 1) ?

PRAYER

BAPTISMS

BENEDICTION

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice. Become mature, be encouraged, be of the same mind, be at peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Cor. 13:11)

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