

## **God's Goal: Family**

**Text: Mark 3:20–35**

**Sermon: Family**

Before God created the world, there was from eternity the concept of family. From eternity, there was already the Father and the Son. When God created Adam, he breathed the Spirit into him, and another son was created, a son with a beginning, a son in this world, yet a son who, unlike the animals, had the gift of immortality. Then God created woman who, with the man, has the potential for procreation, for creating additional family members as God wills. Though the animals were given a similar gift, only humans would generate additional children of God; only humans would procreate immortal individuals.

God thus also instituted only for humans the foundational family framework: marriage. Satan and the world are trying to change and destroy God's gift of marriage and family God is still in charge.

From God's gift of marriage comes children. Children are carried, born, and nursed with a built-in link to their mothers. They will have to live a while to be bonded to their fathers.

In the end, clearly, God's goal was to create family, and not just beings who would live as members within independent love-centered groups consisting of a father, a mother, and children. God's goal is that we, individually and collectively live as immortal members of His family.

In his creation, God's goal was to have family. God's creatures were lovingly commanded to be fruitful and multiply, have families. Humans were unique, created in God's image, a family reference (Genesis 1:26). Image includes the understanding of being one's child. We say that he or she is the spitting image of their father. For example, Adam's son Seth is described as being in Adam's image (Genesis 5:1–3). Thus, Adam and Eve were sons and daughters of God by creation (Luke 3:38). Unlike any other creature, God wanted man to be family. So, God instituted marriage a foundational family concept for humans.

Moreover, God created us to want to have families. Families are most commonly established by birth—blood relatives. Children naturally want to be in a family, to have parents. Parents (usually) want children.

But foster children, stepchildren, and biological children are all equally loved as family. Adopted children are of the same status as children of a blood relationship. Then families are also established in marriage, a union as strong as blood relations. All these family concepts are used by God to describe his relationship with humanity. As members of Peace, you are all family.

In Jesus, God ultimately became our blood relative, our brother. From eternity, Jesus had a Father, but no mother. As God's Son, he is without beginning; a mother implies a beginning. In time, the man Jesus has a mother, but no earthly father. In our text from Mark's Gospel, we get a glimpse of Jesus' earthly family mother, brothers, sisters. As true man, Jesus is our brother. But as God, Jesus is also betrothed to his people. Marriage is also a family relationship God uses to describe his relationship to his people. Christ desired to take us as his Bride.

God's goal is still to have all humanity as his family. In disobedience, man lost the image of God, man broke God's desired family. Man ceased to be children in God's family. Because of sin we went from family to enemy.

Of course, Satan had a hand in this. Because of our sinful nature man is born in Satan's domain (Ephesians 2:1–3). Sinful parents give birth to sinful children. Jesus in our text this morning was accused of involvement with Satan's family. Now due to man's fall into sin marriage and bearing children are under a curse (Genesis 3:16). It's interesting how we say man's fall into sin when in actuality we chose sin we went willingly from God's loving family. Look at the world around us.

Many, many sins are related to broken families. Betrayal, like Adam blaming Eve, adultery, fornication, divorce, unloved and unloving children, disobedience in families. But God loves us and desires that we be adopted back into his family (Galatians 4:5–7). The Son of God becomes the seed of a woman. As the Son of God, Christ is of God's family. And he becomes the new Adam to bring us back into God's family. As predicted, Jesus must crush the serpent's head.

Our text describes this as "binding the strong man." Jesus must plunder Satan's goods, taking his "children" away from him.

At Baptisms the sponsors confess that a child does “renounce the devil” and all his works and all his ways. Likewise, to restore the image of God in man, Jesus must destroy sin and death. Death belongs to Satan; Jesus takes it upon himself (Hebrews 2:14). Sin is the root of death. Eating the forbidden fruit caused death; the wages of sin continue to be death. Therefore, to restore God’s human family, Jesus had to destroy sin (1 Peter 3:18).

In Jesus, God’s goal is reached; his family in this creation is restored. Jesus did destroy sin and death and crush the power of Satan by dying and rising. Jesus now has eternal brothers, sisters, and mother (Mark 3:33–35). And now together as God’s people we are also Christ’s Bride (Ephesians 5:32). In Christ, we now again possess the image of God (2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:4). We are once again part of God’s family.

And as God’s family we do God’s will. We believe in Jesus, who did God’s will. We are now empowered to behave as family, as God’s children.

Our restoration as God's children is beyond the grasp of the world. Thus John writes: ***“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is”*** (1 John 3:1–2).

As we live out our lives in this fallen world, we struggle; we have pain. But we know that as God's children, we have eternal life. We shall indeed “be like him.” We are waiting for our glorious immortal bodies, bodies like what was intended for God's children.

Hear how Paul explains our immortal family, speaking of each of us as sons: ***“The creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.***

***For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”***

(Romans 8:19–23)

We are family in Christ, our Lord, Savior and Brother.

Amen.