

CORE

CORE VALUES: FAMILY - REDEFINED, NOT REJECTED

OPENING PRAYER

Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal God's heart for both our biological families and our church family.

OPENING QUESTION_(OPTIONAL)

If someone asked you to describe your family in one word, what would it be?
Share why.



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WORD

Mark 3:31–35 (ESV)

31 And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him.

32 And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you."

33 And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?"

34 And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!

35 For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."

MAIN REFLECTION POINTS (REFINED)

At first reading, these words can sound surprisingly harsh.

Did Jesus just reject His own mother?

Not at all.

Mark records this moment to show that Jesus is expanding the definition of family — not replacing one family with another.

Throughout Scripture we see that Jesus deeply loved His earthly family.

As a twelve-year-old in the Temple, He established that His Father's purposes would always come first (Luke 2:48–49).

At Cana, He lovingly maintained healthy boundaries while still responding to His mother's request (John 2:1–11).

At the cross, during His greatest suffering, He ensured His mother would be cared for by entrusting her to John (John 19:25–27).

Mark 3 sits between those moments.

Jesus isn't diminishing biological family.

He's inviting everyone into a larger family—the family of God.

This would have been revolutionary in the first century.

In a culture where family identity determined everything, Jesus declares that God's family is now formed by obedience to the Father rather than shared ancestry.

The Kingdom of God is open to everyone.

MAIN REFLECTION POINTS (cont...)

Five Kingdom Principles

1. Jesus honours biological family without making it ultimate.

Scripture consistently teaches us to honour father and mother (Exodus 20:12).

Jesus Himself lived under His parents' authority (Luke 2:51).

Yet He also teaches that every human relationship finds its proper place under God's Kingdom.

Family is important.

Jesus is supreme.

2. Spiritual family is not a replacement—it is the fulfilment.

When Jesus says,

"Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother,"

He isn't shrinking His family.

He's enlarging it.

The Church becomes God's household (Ephesians 2:19).

People from every nation, culture and background become brothers and sisters in Christ.

Tim Chester writes,

"The church is not an event to attend but a family to belong to."

3. Healthy biological families prepare us for spiritual family.

Our homes should become places where disciples are formed.

Children learn forgiveness.

Parents model servant leadership.

Grace is practised.

Hospitality is normal.

Healthy homes don't compete with the Church.

They prepare people to thrive within it.

MAIN REFLECTION POINTS (cont...)

4. Family must never become an idol.

Western culture often tells us that our immediate family should become the centre of our world.

Jesus lovingly challenges this.

He reminds us that our greatest identity isn't our surname.

It is our adoption as sons and daughters of God.

John Piper writes,

"Family is a wonderful gift, but it is not God. It exists for His glory."

Likewise, ministry should never come at the expense of our family.

John 19 reminds us that Jesus never sacrificed His mother on the altar of His mission.

Instead, He disciplined His family into God's mission.

The goal isn't choosing between church and family.

The goal is helping our family become fully engaged in God's Kingdom.

5. Family on Mission

Jesus never gathered disciples simply to create community.

He formed a family with a mission.

When Jesus looked around the room and said,

"Here are my mother and my brothers!" (Mark 3:34)

He wasn't simply describing relationships.

He was identifying the people who would carry His Kingdom into the world.

Throughout the New Testament, God's family always has a purpose.

- We worship together.
- We disciple one another.
- We care for one another.
- We reach those who are still outside God's family.

Healthy families don't simply enjoy one another—they invite others to the table.

Our homes become places of hospitality.

Our Lifegroups become places of belonging.

Our church becomes a place where strangers become brothers and sisters.

MAIN REFLECTION POINTS (cont...)

As Michael Frost writes,

"The church doesn't have a mission. God's mission has a Church."

Likewise, Christopher J.H. Wright reminds us,

"It is not so much the case that God has a mission for His Church in the world, but that God has a Church for His mission in the world."

This means our biological families are never the destination.

Neither is our church community.

Together, they become God's missionary family, demonstrating His Kingdom wherever He sends us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What surprises you most about Jesus' words in Mark 3?

How has your understanding changed after considering the other passages?

2. Why do you think Jesus chose this moment to redefine family?

What would His original audience have found so confronting?

3. How can our biological families become a model of healthy spiritual family rather than competitors with it?

What practical habits help make this possible?

4. Where do you think Australian culture tends to drift? making ministry more important than family? making family more important than God's Kingdom? becoming increasingly isolated from spiritual family?

How do we live differently?

5. Imagine Every Nation Brisbane becoming known as a genuine spiritual family.

What would visitors experience that would be different from simply attending a church service?

How can our Lifegroup become a picture of that Kingdom family?

6. Jesus created a spiritual family that was sent into the world together.

How can your household and your Lifegroup become more intentionally "**Family on Mission**" rather than simply "**Family Together**"? What is one practical way your group could bless your neighbourhood, workplace, university or community this month?

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

This Week's Challenge

This week, choose **one act of belonging** and **one act of mission**.

Belonging

- Share a meal with another family or individual from church.
- Encourage someone who may feel overlooked.
- Pray together as a household.
- Reconcile with someone where possible.

Mission

- Invite someone outside the church into your home.
- Serve your local community as a family.
- Include someone new in your Lifegroup.
- Pray for one person who doesn't yet know Jesus and intentionally invest in them this week.
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CLOSING PRAYER

Pray together for three things.

Our Homes

That our biological families would become places where Jesus is honoured, disciples are formed and the Gospel is lived.

Our Church Family

That Every Nation Brisbane would increasingly become a true spiritual family where every generation, culture and life stage finds belonging.

Our Mission

That God would help us hold our families with open hands—loving them deeply while inviting them to participate in His greater Kingdom family.