

Apprenticing Jesus || A Series Through the Gospel of Luke

A New Family

Sermon Synopsis: Following Jesus means a new allegiance, not only to him but a responsibility to His church

Luke 8:19-21 (ESV)

Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. And he was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you." But he answered them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."

Santa Barbara is all about who you know. Make a lot of friends, and zero enemies. When relationships are done right, they can give us a sense of belonging. We get that through networking, co-workers, friends, people in same stage of life. Of course, one of the tightest knit units of belonging is in the nuclear family.

So it may be a surprise to you how Jesus changes some of those loyalties

In fact, changing families is at the heart of what it means to follow Him

API!

Luke 8:19-21

Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. And he was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see you." But he answered them, "**My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.**"

Matthew 4:21-22

And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. **Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.**

Mark 10:28-30

Peter began to say to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you." Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, **there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.**

This is not to say that we should love our families.¹

We see a **shift in primary loyalty**, from nuclear family **to spiritual family in Christ.**

If only it were that easy We may miss the tug, and read passage like these with a...

Blind spot!

This Scripture passage pokes at the very heart of one of the American Church's biggest weakness: worship of self over responsibility to the group (radical individualism)

illust: Titanic

11 Oscars

\$200M budget

Award for Best Visual Effects (near perfect 1/20 scale replica)

What propelled it was a story of love

"We in America have been socialized to believe that our own dreams, goals, and personal fulfillment ought to take precedent over the well-being of any group—our church or our family, for example—to which we belong. The immediate needs of the individual are more important than the long-term health of the group."² – **Joseph Hellerman**

The New Testament world was collectivist **API!**

1. Group took priority over the individual
2. The most important group was family³

In our world, the worst thing we could do is be untrue to ourselves

The most treacherous act of disloyalty in NT world was to betray your sibling

Which is why Jesus' words in this verse are scandalous:

Jesus is calling for nothing short of putting our own agenda aside, not just for Him, but for this new church family that He is creating

How our blind spots get in the way of seeing that...

We read a personally therapeutic relationship to Jesus, and if its not working for us, we can leave our church family for greener pastures (consumerism)

Examples:

- You leave your church every time a new church pops up
- You leave your church every time it fails to meet your needs
- You leave your church when someone in it lovingly confronts you

The American Church is (often) marked more by radical individualism and consumerism than by its Christ-commissioned, Spirit-empowered calling

Caveat: the church is not perfect

But that's the beauty. Last week: **it's in the conflict that God does his greatest work**

Ephesians 2:13-16

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

But why would I want to give up everything to join...the church?

AP!

I will build my church ~Jesus (Matthew 16:18a)

he is the head of the body, the church (Colossians 1:18)

the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God (Colossians 2:19)

when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love (Ephesians 4:16)

You are members of God's family. Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. (Ephesians 2:18-22, NLT)

so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places (Ephesians 3:10)

the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18b)

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21, NLT)

Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready (Revelation 19:7)

REASON: the grace of God has chosen us to be the vessel by which Christ Jesus makes his kingdom visible to the world, precisely in spite of our blemishes.

But we have this treasure in **jars of clay, to show** that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us! (2 Cor 4:7)

This has been happening in history by those who realize the eternal purpose of God. Jesus' fledgling collective group of nobodies brought the Roman Empire to its knees. The same power that raised Christ from the dead fuels His church today.

Now what?

See how our radical individualism has reshaped millions of American Christians view of God, others, and the church, zapped our strength, and made us inward focused.

There's more to the kingdom life than the personal happiness.

1st step: **Recognizing that it's not all about you.** Recognize, not only that, but that is actually some really great news.

Get involved! Plan to commit

Step into your family.

¹ There are many passages in Scripture that show our responsibility to our biological families, for example: "But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8)

² Joseph H. Hellerman. *When The Church Was A Family: Recapturing Jesus' Vision for Authentic Christian Community.* (B&H Academic, 2009) 4

³ Ibid. 64