

910811AM

Christ's New Family

41.24

Mark 3:31-35

Our scripture portion to feast upon this morning introduces us to the heart of Christ's ministry.

Jesus Christ came to start a brand new family. He came to see men and women, boys and girls, grandmas and grandpas born a second time; this time from God and this time into His new family.

As I read and we study these scripture verses, may you feel more deeply your family ties to God than the Lord Jesus Christ that give purpose, meaning and worth to life.

If you are feeling old and useless or young and hopeless or middle aged and trapped, Christ has a new family and if you are in it you are special.

His Mother and Brothers Come

Now therefore, while he was yet speaking to the people and a multitude were seated around him, behold, his mother and brothers arrived. And standing outside, they sent to him, seeking to speak to him but unable to reach him for the throng. [And someone said to him, "Lo, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak to you."]

But he answering them said to the one who spoke to him, "*Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?*" And when he had looked around on those who sat about him, he stretched out his hand toward his disciples and said, "Behold my mother and my brothers! My mother and my brothers are these, who are *hearing the Word of God and doing it*. For whoever does the will of my father who is in heaven, *he is my brother, and sister, and mother.*"

In these brief verses we see first off old family ties. You see Christ taught about this new family so there was an old family and here they come to rescue Him from His "lost senses" (3:21), they are named (6:3) and they have are not believing (7:1-5). In fact this is the second time Mary appears in the ministry of

Christ (Cana, John 2, Feast) and see falls badly. She and the rest thought God's family had something to do with race, religion, blood ties. That does matter on earth, not heaven though!

NEWSMAKERS

Fighting for family, fortune

By Desda Moss
USA TODAY

A Florida teacher, who was adopted at birth and later discovered her real grandparents were millionaires, is hoping a court will rule she's entitled to a share of the family fortune.

Elizabeth Charney of Miramar, Fla., a divorced mother of two, who earns \$25,000, is waiting for a decision by the New Hampshire Supreme Court that could enable her to get part of a \$150 million trust established by her late grandfather, a multimillionaire mill and railroad owner. A decision in her favor could mean a \$1 million lump-sum payment and more than \$250,000 a year.

Charney, who works summers to pay her bills, says the money would mean not having to worry about meeting her son's tuition payments.

The New Hampshire Supreme Court has agreed to consider a lower court ruling that excluded Charney from sharing the trust. A ruling by the state's highest court is expected within a year, but Charney, 35, says she isn't holding her breath. "My life is fine the way it is. I'm not sitting on a dream. I'm living my life just as I always have and like I will if it doesn't come out in my favor."

Charney grew up Elizabeth Ann Scudder the adopted daughter of John and Nelda Scudder, two New York City schoolteachers.

She says it was a need "to pass something of myself down to my children and grandchildren" that prompted her to search for her biological parents in 1978 before the birth of her second child. She found Pierre and Evelyn Dumaine in Cumberland, Maine.

"My whole being was unlocked when I met them" she says. "Everything about me was explained – my personality, my likes and dislikes."

Charney says she developed a close relationship with her parents. But it wasn't until her father died that she learned he was

the son of multimillionaire Frederic Dumaine, who left a trust in 1920 now worth \$150 million for his children and their "legitimate" offspring. The interpretation of that term will determine the outcome of the lawsuit.

The trust's seven current beneficiaries and 11 trustees, including Charney's half-siblings, contend she shouldn't share in it because she was born out of wedlock five years before Pierre and Evelyn Dumaine were legally married.

But Dort Biggs, Charney's lawyer, says she is an intended beneficiary because her father acknowledged her as his child in his will and because the couple's subsequent marriage legitimized her birth.

To Charney, the lawsuit is about her identity. "The whole thing really has to do with me – who I am. There are people trying to deny me my heritage, my family background. That is what's really at stake."

You see, family can mean wealth or poverty but not to God!

But Christ looked around (v.34) and said no, there's a new higher relationship that has come! Of course it cost something. Jesus was accused, mocked, rejected, by His own (v.21).

And so will you – Matthew 5:11-12 – “Blessed are ye when men revile...”. Peter echoes I Peter 4:14.

TAKE HEART IF YOU'RE PAYING A PRICE FOR BEING IN CHRIST'S FAMILY; THAT'S WHAT HE PROMISED.

⇒ Beware if you're not – if you aren't paying a price to be a Christian then you aren't telling others the truth about your life because you are different than lost people or must be if you're born again.

Well, Christ noted old family ties can't get you in His new family. In fact, that's the heart of false religion; adding and subtracting from the simple new birth. Dave Hunt, a best selling Arthur and wonderful Christian, says this:

Religion Deludes With False Hope

Paul wrote: “Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.” He went on to explain why they were not saved, though they had “a zeal of God”: “For they...[seeking] to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end [goal] of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Rom. 10:1-4). Despite their zeal for God, the Jews were lost because they would not come to God on His terms.

Suppose one claims to believe that Christ died for man's sins, but that one must add good deeds, trust Mary to intercede, suffer in purgatory, belong to a certain church or keep certain rules or sacraments to be saved, or that Christ must be sacrificed again in the Mass. Is that man saved? The Bible says no. To believe that anything else is necessary for salvation is to deny that Christ paid the penalty in full, and thus is to reject the gospel. How can those who trust in a church for salvation be trusting only Christ and His finished work? Or those who agree to accept some church's interpretation of God's Word – how can it be said that they personally know God and are believing

Him?

Many who claim to “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ” have attached their own meaning to the seemingly Biblical words they use. Thus are manufactured the many false gospels, which usually include false concepts of “Christ.” The **Science of Mind** cult, for example, teaches: “We do not deny the divinity of Jesus, but rather we affirm the divinity of all people...” They call Jesus a Savior, but add: “Any world teacher [Buddha, Muhammad, Freud, et al] who helps mankind to be free from material, intellectual, or emotional bondage is a spiritual savior.”

Condoning Counterfeit Gospels

Mormonism teaches that “God (who has another “God” over him and so on endlessly) was once a sinful man redeemed by a “Christ” on another planet. The “Christ” of our planet (Satan’s half-brother in a pre-earth spirit world) was conceived when “the God of this world” came to earth in his physical body and had sex with Mary. Mormonism’s “Christ” was not God who became man, but a spirit entity who came to earth to get a physical body so he could become a “God,” a metamorphosis which is the ambition of every Mormon male (females become goddesses). To a Mormon, eternal life is not a free gift of God’s grace, but must be earned and culminates in becoming a “God,” who manufactures another world with another Adam and Eve, another Satan and fall, another Jesus and so on ad infinitum, ad absurdum.

SO, THERE ARE NEW FAMILY TIES NOT BASED ON THE OLD.

Jesus looked round about upon the twelve; upon those men who were with Him. Think what He saw. All the subsequent story will reveal it. He saw one man who mastered by fear and saved by cowardice, would swear in the darkness of the night that he did not know anything about Him; and He saw ten others who in the ultimate hours of His agony would run away. But He saw men who in the deepest fact of their lives – that very realm of motive – were consecrated to God and to Him.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

[Mark 3:19b-35]

He saw all the possibilities of failure and knew how they were all to work out. But He found that central fact, the motive; He invaded that realm which none other

could invade, and He said, Behold My brethren, born for My adversity. Behold My sisters, born for all sweet confidences and sympathy. Behold My mother, born for all comfort and solace. “For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.”

WELL, THE OLD FAMILY TIES CHRIST LOVES AND CALLS TO NEW TIES WHICH ARE BASED ON TRUTH [v.35].

There is but one condition for admission to this position of peculiar intimacy with the Christ; we must know and participate, as He did, in the will of God. It is a constant New Testament stress that mere knowledge of the doctrine, even with intellectual assent and appraisal of its truth, is inadequate. Such knowledge in fact only condemns us (Lk. xii. 48). Such intellectual assent ultimately leads to our self-deception and downfall, as the illustration of the two houses, one built upon the rock and one built upon the sand, makes clear (see Lk. vi. 47-49). Luke 8:21 makes the two steps quite plain; it is those who listen to the word of God and carry it out who receive this blessing. This is the difference between intellectual assent and true faith: and the distinction is made by asking whether or not knowledge is accompanied by obedience (Jas. ii. 21-24). Knowledge of God is not abstract and intellectual; it is personal, moral and empirical. It is not static but dynamic, since He is the living God. It is thus not an intellectual discovery, as other knowledge is, but a transforming and life giving spiritual experience, brought to us, as to Peter, by the illumination of the Spirit of God (Mt. xvi. 17). (Cole Tyndale)

WELL, HAVE YOU LEFT THE OLD TIES FOR THE NEW?

Wiersbe said –

14:26). Certainly it is God’s will that we care for our families and provide for them (see I Tim. 5:9), but we must not permit even our dearest loved ones to influence us away from the will of God. When you consider the importance of the family in the Jewish society, you can imagine how radical Christ’s words must have sounded to those who heard them.

How does one enter the family of God?

By means of a new birth, a spiritual birth from above (John 3:1-7; I Peter 1:22-25). When the sinner trusts Jesus Christ as Saviour, he experiences this new birth and enters into God’s family. He shares God’s divine nature (2 Peter 1:3-4) and can call god “Father” (Rom. 8:15-16). This spiritual birth is not something that we accomplish for ourselves, nor can others do it

for us (John 21:11-13). It is God's work of grace; all we can do is believe and receive (Eph. 2:8-9).

⇒ Titus: "In all your teaching show the strictest regard for truth, and [for]...the seriousness of the matters you are dealing with. Your speech should be [so] logical...that your opponent may feel ashamed..." (Titus 2:7-8, Phillips).

One of the greatest needs in the church today is for training in sound apologetics, not only to counter atheism, which is the real "faith" of very few, but false religions, which have ensnared so many more. Why do young people so often "lose their faith" or get caught up in cults when they go off to college or university? Those who "lose" it never had genuine faith – didn't know *why* and *in whom* they believed – or it would have stood every test.

What we really believe not only determines our eternal destiny but our conduct here and now. Thus God's Truth guards us from evil.

⇒ Parents often worry that their children will be persuaded by their peers to abandon their "faith" and to indulge in evil. "Peer pressure" in school, however, can only destroy a "faith" that was itself the product of "peer pressure" in church or family and lacked sound reason. It may have been pressure from parents, spouse or friends to "believe" in order to gain their approval. Or pressure from pastor or preacher to "go forward" in order to be accepted into the group and enjoy the benefits of belonging. Or it could have been the call to "come to Jesus" for the wrong reasons: perhaps for healing and prosperity instead of cleansing from sin.

CHRIST'S NEW FAMILY

1. Do you feel more deeply your new family ties to God than Christ? Does that fill you with meaning, purpose and worth? If not, we want to show you how to enter the family.
2. Do you believe more strongly the simple truths of the new birth? Are you paying the price of being identified with Christ?
3. Are you ready to do whatever your Father and Heaven wants? Then if so, you understand Christ's new family!