**Mothers and Brothers**

***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.” (Mark 3:31-35, ESV)*

 God’s family are those who obey Jesus Christ. Greetings dear family of Christ, as we talk today about a foundational topic which many have misunderstood. We just experienced little Rafael’s baptism and we prayed that he will bear witness to the faith into which he was dedicated and immersed as an infant. Notice the stress of the baptism ceremony – to express the faith, to tell others of our obedience to Christ’s word, which is the proof of one’s Christianity. The issue of the identity of God’s family members is extremely important for us because many are misunderstanding the picture that Christ is painting about His family, which is the Father’s family. Therefore, today we’re going to speak with that goal in mind – to solidify the truth within ourselves that God’s family is made up of those who obey Jesus. Let’s meditate on this out loud for a few minutes…

 Being part of Jesus’ family comes from being obedient to Him and not from any other reason. Getting into the Scripture for today, Jesus had just performed a miracle on a Sabbath when He had healed the man with the withered hand – and resistance immediately showed up in response. Then, he had gone to the sea, and had sat on a boat to preach more comfortably and continued to heal people and drive demons away from the afflicted. After that, he had gone up a mountain with his disciples and called the twelve that were going to be Apostles, giving them authority to do ministry, even though there was pressure coming against Him to dial down His activities to conform to the established ministry style and content. Then he had gone home, and his relatives had shown up and tried to coerce Him to go home, because they though he had become mentally ill. It is exactly in that context that He had explained that calling God’s works satanic was direct blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and considered an unforgivable sin. Then, and more specifically, His brothers and mother came, and tried to send people to get Him to stop and go to them. Jesus used that moment not only to answer His immediate family’s request, but also to speak to His genuine and spiritual family.

Jesus said, “*Whoever does God’s will, that is my brother, sister and mother.”* He said that to those sitting around Him, who were learning from Him. In other words, God’s family was not dependent on blood relations. God’s people are connected to each other through Jesus, God the Father, and the Spirit. Plus, no blood relationship can ever disturb that spiritual family tie.

Sometimes we can become so close with our church members that we feel a brotherly or sisterly connection with them. However, and unfortunately, sometimes our own family members are more distant with us because we sit at Jesus’ feet, and they call to us to come to them and their life from the outside of church-life.

Today, it is important for us to clarify just who are the members of God’s family. There are many today that consider their title as Christians as the thing that makes them a part of God’s family. Here, however, Jesus is very clear in his language: whoever is sitting at His feet learning, whoever is hearing, reading, and meditating, and following Him, and whoever remains close to Jesus and always humbles themselves before His feet, that is the one who is part of Jesus’ family, God’s family. Whoever obeys Jesus and learns from Him is a member of God’s family.

Therefore, let us examine ourselves to see if we are truly living out the life of a member of God’s family, and I invite all who are only connected to Christ by name to become genuine followers and obeyers of Christ.

 God’s family are those who obey Jesus Christ. The Lord bless you all; Amen.