

Welcome to New Life !

We are very pleased you are here. It is an honor to have you worshipping with us today! This information is provided to help you feel welcome and "at home."

Worship in Singing & Giving

- We leave how to worship up to you as an individual. During **singing** worship some people remain seated, some stand, others kneel, many clap, and some lift their hands. The outward expression is not the issue - it is what is in your heart that counts. Just relax and enjoy the presence of God.
- If you would like to receive personal **prayer** during worship with singing, you may go to one of the Prayer Teams located at the back of the sanctuary.
- Invitation is given for **tithes and offerings**. If you are our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute when God's tithes and offerings are received.

Worship in Sharing God's Love

Expressions of greeting and God's love are extended to all, especially to our guests.

Worship in Meditating on God's Word

Teaching from the Bible for about 35 minutes.

We encourage you to use our **staffed Nursery** [which has a private nursing room] and **Children's Churches** during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating the various rooms.

{turn page over}

Pastor Roger Wendt

August 2, 2009

THICKER THAN BLOOD "Keeping our hearts on target" Mark 3:31-35

Jesus is always trying to help strengthen our journey with Him and keep our hearts on **target**.

Mark 3:31-35 ³¹Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. ³²A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you." ³³"Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. ³⁴Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "**Here** are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵**Whoever does God's will** is my brother and sister and mother."

• In no way was Jesus denying the value or the benefits of solid family relationships -- He just wanted to stress the importance of obedience to God.

• He was saying that just as blood is thicker than water... **obedience is thicker than blood**.

Mark 3:35 MSG "**Obedience is thicker than blood**. The person who obeys God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

• Jesus' friends and family thought perhaps He was "stressing out and going over the edge."

Mark 3:21 When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "**He is out of his mind**."

1. **OBEDIENCE IS NOT AN OPTION**

• Obedience to God's will is even more important than obedience to **man**.

• A legalistic vow won't keep us obedient or on target. *Obedience will come when we desire more than anything to be close to God.*

James 4:7-8 MSG "So let God work his will in you. Yell a loud no to the Devil and watch him scamper. Say a quiet yes to God and he'll be there in no time."

• Your relationship with God is more important than any other single factor in your life.

"Our ability to have intimacy with God is directly proportional to our faith, and our faith is proportional to our obedience to Him." - John Bevere

• Obeying and doing the will of God **verifies** our love and faith. It keeps us on target.

2. **CRUTCHES ARE NOT AN OPTION**

• Crutches become substitutes for God. They will get us off target, and at best, only offer temporary relief.

• Jesus was trying to teach us that we must lean on God and Him alone. He doesn't want us to make idols out of our position, possessions -- or even our spouse or children. *Don't be deceived.*

• God will allow no competitors. Crutches are not an option

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters. **Either** you will hate the one and love the other, **or** you will be devoted to the one and despise the other."

"There can be only two basic loves, the love of God unto forgetfulness of self, or the love of self unto the forgetfulness of God." - Augustine

• God is to be second place to **none**.

John 15:16-17 "You didn't choose me, remember; **I chose you**, and put you in the world to bear fruit, fruit that won't spoil... But remember the root command: Love one another."

"You can't get second things by putting them first; you can get second things only by putting first things first." - C. S. Lewis

• Part of obedience is giving up your crutches ... the "second thing" desires of life ... and putting first things first. We need to stay on target.

3. **WE ARE ALL FAMILY HERE**

• Jesus wants you to know, that if you trust and obey Him, you are part of God's family. You have royal blood in you.

John 15:10 NCV "I have obeyed my Father's commands, and I remain in his love. In the same way, **if you obey** my commands, **you will remain in my love.**"

How are you doing at staying on target in your spiritual journey with Christ?

What crutches [second things] could be holding you back from obeying God and drawing close to Him -- hindering you from being on target to becoming more like Jesus?

- Digging Deeper - "Thicker Than Blood"

For personal or small group study

Week of August 2, 2009

QUICK REVIEW: Which point or scripture passage was the most significant to you personally in this week's message? Why?

GROUP DISCUSSION or PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Discuss a time when you got off target in trying to accomplish a task, and what caused the distraction. What were the results? How did you get back on target?
2. What is the target God desires us to have in our spiritual journey? What are some possible secondary targets that will help accomplish the main target? What does it mean to be like Jesus? [Galatians 2:20; Romans 8:29; 14:19; Matthew 6:24, 33; 7:12; 10:25]
3. Read Matthew 12:46-50 from The Message Bible if possible. What is Jesus saying about our family relationships and our relationship to God? Why did His family show up at this particular time? What do believe Christ is trying to stress in this story? How does this apply to your personal life today? How is obedience thicker than blood? [John 6:40; Ephesians 5:21-29; Luke 14:26; Mark 3:21]
4. Author Dr. Larry Crabb says, "*The central deception is that second place desires belong in first place. We believe the very well-being of who we are depends on these things being satisfied.*" Name some second place things in our culture. How does this apply to us as a society and you as a person? What application can be made regarding the way we should view and treat our family?
5. What does it mean to be a part of the family of God? As Christians, how can we gradually take on the resemblance of Christ's character, attitudes and service? What responsibilities, privileges and benefits come with being a part of God's family? List as many as you can on a piece of paper and discuss them.