

Counsel to All in the Family or *It's All in the Family*
Bible Study Lesson for May 21, 2023.

In this lesson, Paul draws a line in the sand between the people of God and unbelievers.

He admonishes the congregation at Corinth, some of whom practiced idolatry, to *come out from among them, and be ye separate* (2 Cor. 6:17).

Jesus: *They are not of this world as I am not of this world.*

This lesson emphasizes the separateness of Christ's followers from the world in three areas:

1. Our natural families.
2. The Family of God.
3. The Church Family.

I. Our Natural Family.

A. Def: *a group of one or more parents united by the ties of marriage between a man and a woman and their biological or adopted children living together as a unit.*

B. From the beginning God mandated the family structure.

C. This world has twisted God's order for family to fit its own fallen nature.

D. It had already begun in the 1st century, necessitating Paul to admonish his readers to follow God's pattern.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. (Col 3:18-21)

- A. Why is it important for families to follow the structure mandated by God?

B. We see next, that natural family is modeled after, and teaches about, the family of God.

II. God's family.

A. Let me read Paul's instructions for families as it parallels God's family as the bride of His Son Jesus Christ—**Eph. 5:22-6:4**.

B. Here we find that the God's family is separated from humanity as the church—the bride of Christ.

C. The word Church used by Paul is from Greek **Ekklēsia**, (“gathering of those summoned”), as in the ancient Greek assembly of citizens in a city-state called to a meeting.

D. Church (Ekklesia) refers to the whole family of God, chosen by Christ, & called out of the world (*the called*).

E. We have a beautiful picture of Christ choosing and calling unto himself a people/His bride in Mark 3.

And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him (Mark 3:13 ESV)/

F. Just as natural families can only function when following God's pattern, so the family of God can only work when submitting to God's arrangement for His family.

He (Christ) is the head of the body, the church, Col 1:18; the head over all things to the church which is his body (Eph. 1:22, 23a).

G. Which brings us to...

III. The Church Family

A. I refer to Bay Branch as the Bay Branch Family.

B. Old Baptists address one another as Brothers and Sisters.

C. That's because members of local church ARE family.

D. A word in our lesson that describes the Biblical pattern for the church family more than any other: *Fellowship*.

E. The early church enjoyed *fellowship*.

F. This is another carefully chosen word from Greek concerning the spiritual family: *koinonia*=*mutual interests and sharing among members of the local church.*

1. As pertains to brothers & sisters. Acts 2:42, *They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship (Acts 2:42).*

2. This is what we come to as members of a local church: *you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Cor 1:9).*

G. Paul gives the sense of fellowship in Acts 2:44. *And all who believed were together and had all things in common.*

H. I've heard preachers complain about members having family reunions on Sunday.

I. Fact is our brothers and sisters in Christ, have a family reunion every Sunday in the church fellowship.

J. Those who don't love the fellowship of the Saints on the Lord's Day, would be most miserable in heaven.

Blest be the tie that binds
our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds
is like to that above.

K. Paul taught how important the fellowship is: *let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near (Heb 10:25 NLT).*

There comes a time when the only thing we have of value is being a part of the family of God. *I'm so glad I'm a part of the Family of God, I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His Blood! Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod, For I'm part of the family, the family of God.*

When Jesus comes agn, it will be to gather only the family of God. In this world's last day, it'll be All in the Family.