

Remnant Life Church
September 7, 2014

**“Lessons by Paul:
The Building Blocks of Family Fellowship”**

Romans 12:9-21

Family – it is what we call ourselves. We all have family, in many different forms, growing up. Some are very strong, some are weak, while others would probably defy description.

Everyone has their own take on what a family is, how it works, and what their place in it is.

Letters from kids to God about their family:

Dear GOD, it rained for our whole vacation and is my father mad! I heard him say some things about You that people are not supposed to say, but I hope you don't hurt him anyway.

Dear GOD, my Mommy says that my father won't get into Heaven if he uses his bowling words in the house – is that true?

Dear GOD, maybe Cain and Abel would not kill each other so much if they had their own rooms. It works with my brother and me.

Dear GOD, thank you for the baby sister, but what I asked for was a puppy.

Dear GOD, did you really mean, "do unto others as they do unto you"? Because if you did, I'm going to fix my brother!

Dear GOD, I bet it is very hard for You to love all of everybody in the whole world. There are only 4 people in our family and I can never do it.

Is it possible to define a “normal” family?

READ – Romans 12:9-21

There are 24 commands given here but we will focus on just 2 this morning as we continue to build the foundation of our family through fellowship –

1. Love must be sincere

- a. Sincerity is about what is in your heart first not just what you demonstrate
- b. The heart is the seat of who we are
 - i. The core of our truth
 - ii. This is why we do not give our minds to God; give our bodies; give our emotions
 - iii. We give our heart to Him because when we do that everything else follows
- c. Achan – **Joshua 7**
 - i. Hid items as treasure from a battle
 - ii. Against God's direction

- iii. He appeared to be doing what everyone else was but his heart was sinful and his actions reflected that
- d. The actions to go with the heart are not always easy ones
 - i. Elijah asked a widow woman for a favor once in **I Kings 17:8-16**
 - ii. His request was not at the best time
 - iii. It was certainly not convenient
 - iv. She could have easily and rightly refused
 - v. But the actions of sincere love do not make themselves known through a set of set criterion – they act regardless
- e. John Wesley (with brother Charles and George Whitfield founded Methodist movement) said – *Do all the good you can; by all the means you can; in all the ways you can; in all the places you can; at all the times you can; to all the people you can; as long as you possibly can!*

2. Hate what is evil

- a. What is evil?
 - i. Is it just what we might call bad, rotten, hurtful, adverse, noxious?
 - ii. Definition: morally bad; with an intent to harm or bring injury to someone
 - iii. Intentional or what the courts call ‘with malleous aforethought.’
- b. Evil is born out of selfishness and we told not only to avoid it but actively keep it away from our lives
 - i. **I Thess 5:22** – reject every kind of evil
 - ii. Right after Paul tells them to rejoice always; pray without ceasing; and in everything give thanks (16-18)
 - iii. *During the trial of Adolf Eichmann, the mastermind of the Jewish holocaust in Nazi Germany, a Jewish man , who had just given evidence against him, was found weeping in the corridor . His friend asked him , “Why are you crying?” The man replied, “Because I realize now that he is just a man like I am.. I could have done what he did.” He had imagined some awful monster but, when he saw Eichmann right in front of him, he realized that the Nazi was just a man and the awful truth dawned on him. There are not two categories of people, good or evil. We are all sinful.*
 - iv. The truth is we are all of a sinful nature but we can choose to either embrace or reject evil
 1. While Jesus provided us the way back to the Father, we will not be reunited fully until we are remade and in heaven
 2. Until that time it is a daily denying our flesh and fighting against evil
 3. **Matt 26:41** - “*Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the **flesh** is weak.*”
 4. **Gal 5:17** - *For the **flesh** desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the **flesh**. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.*

5. *I John 2:16 - For everything in the world—the lust of the **flesh**, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.*
- v. How do we do this?
 1. Daily asking Jesus to strengthen us in the face of temptation.
 2. JUST SAY NO
 3. When we begin to make it a habit to ask God first, it will get to the point of being second nature and in the process our nature will begin to change.

Family is about unity; it is about love; it is about our coming to the place of actually hating evil.

I want Jesus to so fill our lives that the thought of an evil action against someone will literally make us physically sick.

Jesus said in *Matthew 7:12 - So in everything, do to **others** what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.*