

# STUDY NOTES

SUMMER 2019

at New City Church

[www.newcityphx.com/sermons](http://www.newcityphx.com/sermons)

The following content is based on the message "Church as a Family" on 6/9/19 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

## PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: MARK 3:31-35; LUKE 14:26

## THE METAPHOR OF FAMILY

These verses seem a little scandalous; however, we cannot lose the fact that Jesus uses family as a metaphor for his church. What is significant about church being considered a family?

1. Emphasizes our relationship to our Heavenly Father (i.e., love, care, protection, inheritance)
  2. Emphasizes our relationship to other Christians – as our "brothers and sisters"
- *Why is it difficult for us to fully understand the family metaphor that Jesus uses to describe the Church?*
  - *How does your family background influence how you feel about the Church?*

## JESUS AND STRONG GROUP CULTURE

To better understand the significance of this metaphor, it is helpful to understand the culture in which Jesus lived. The welfare of the group to which a person belonged took priority over their own individual happiness and relational satisfaction. Group came first, and the most significant group to which a person belonged was their own biological family.

- *How does this type of culture differ from what the culture in the United States emphasizes?*

The strongest and most intimate relational bond in the family was between siblings, even greater than one's marriage. So when Jesus calls his followers "brothers and sisters," he used a metaphor that everyone would have understood.

**Jesus chose the strongest group of his culture – the family – as a model for the relationships among his followers.**

- *What do you think the Church could look like if our commitment to each other was the strongest relational commitment in our lives?*

## IMPLICATIONS FOR US TODAY

What are the implications of church as a "family"? What if we ALL viewed the churching this way? What might it look like for you to see your relationships with other church members as the most important in your life? How might this concept/metaphor grow and flourish in our heads?

- 1) Our primary identity is Jesus-follower (Christian).
  - 2) Develop a group-first mindset.
  - 3) Show affection for one another.
  - 4) Commit to long-term relationships.
  - 5) Our families are here to support the church.
  - 6) Share what you have.
- *Which of these do you have the hardest time living out?*
  - *How do you need to implement these practices in your life?*
  - *Pray for each other to act more as a family like Jesus describes.*