



Life Group Study Notes
“We Are Family: Jesus’ Family”
Sr. Ps. James Lowe - August 19, 2018

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- Were you closer to your father or your mother when you grew up?
- Who was your favorite uncle or aunt when you grew up? Why?
- How many siblings did you have when you grew up? What birth order were you?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Acts 2:36-47 ESV Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Peter challenged the people to align themselves with Jesus as their Lord. This was not an easy decision for the people to make in light of the fact that the authorities had recently tortured and crucified Jesus as an agitator and false prophet. There was a real threat that those who would identify themselves as followers of Jesus would be persecuted. Peter and the other disciples had already made up *their* minds. They were willing to risk everything, even their lives, because

they were convinced Jesus had risen from the dead and ascended to heaven. They believed he truly is the King of kings, and is coming again one day to raise the dead and to judge everyone who has ever lived. He will give eternal rewards to those who belong to him, and he will condemn those who have rejected him.

Will you join God's family? To stand with Christ and choose to follow him as our Lord is potentially a costly decision. We will likely have to pay some kind of significant price to follow him, if not at the beginning of our journey with him, then at some point along the way in this life. But those who join his family will not be disappointed in the Age to come. God will more than make up for anything we might suffer in this life, even if our suffering is enormous. The goodness of God and the quality of life we will one day enjoy will be so great, it will eclipse entirely whatever we might have to endure in the present life. Even now no one in heaven regrets their previous trials borne for the sake of Christ in this life.

How should we live as part of God's family? First, we must trust Jesus and turn to follow God's will in our lives. We need to be water baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit as soon as possible. We must then join ourselves with other believers to follow Jesus. We are to prioritize learning and walking in God's teaching revealed in the New Testament. We are to be devoted to fellowship with godly leaders and other Christian believers. We are to enjoy meals together, and celebrate the Lord's supper regularly. We are also to pray together on a regular basis. We are to be generous with one another, helping those who are in genuine, legitimate need. And we are to meet regularly to worship God and grow spiritually, meeting both corporately and in smaller groups. This is the description given us by Luke of the early church. Living like this, they were joyful and God was adding new people to them on a daily basis.

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the points, and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.

- Why does God want people to be joined to a church family?
- What qualities should characterize someone's church family participation?
- How would you evaluate yourself as a member of your church family?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Thank God for his gift of spiritual family, expressed in the life of the church.
- Ask God for a greater understanding of how he wants us to live as church family members.
- Ask God to show us where we fall short and how we can improve to be faithful members.