



# Formed for God's Family

## Chapters 15 & 16

Notes: This Bible Study is intended to be a companion to "The Purpose Driven Life" by Rick Warren. The Scripture references in this Bible study are taken from the New King James Version.

### Chapter 15: We are children of God

#### What does 1 John 3:1 have to say about the purpose for why God created us?

1 John 3:1 - Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

God created us to a part of His family. God wants a family, and he created us to be a part of it. God intended us to be a part of His family from the very beginning...

Ephesians 1:5 - having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will

#### What does the triune nature of God tell us about the importance that God places on family relationships?

It tells us that God treasures relationships. His very nature is relational, and he identifies himself in family terms: Father, Son, and Spirit. The Trinity is God's relationship to himself.

#### Since everyone was created by God, does this make everyone a child of God?

To be a child of God, you must be born of the Spirit into His family...

Romans 8:15-16 - you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. People who do not have a born-again have no assurance that they are in the family of God...

1 Corinthians 2:14 - the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

#### Why is our spiritual family even more important than our physical family?

Our spiritual family is even more important than our physical family because it will last forever. Our families on earth are wonderful gifts from God, but they are temporary and fragile, often broken by divorce, distance, growing old,

and inevitably, death. Jesus Himself made this clear on an occasion when His physical family sought Him out...

Matthew 12:47-50 - Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You." But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

#### What do the following verses have to say about some of the benefits for being in God's family?

Romans 8:29 - For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

The family likeness

1 John 3:1 - Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

The family name

Galatians 4:6-7 - And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

The privileges of the family

Ephesians 3:11-12 - according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

Intimate family access

1 Peter 1:3-4 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

The family inheritance

Philippians 4:19 - And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

The family wealth: God's glory

Ephesians 1:18 - the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints

Romans 9:23 - that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory

Ephesians 1:7 - In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

The family wealth: God's grace

Romans 2:4 - Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

The family wealth: God's goodness

Romans 11:33 - Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

The family wealth: God's wisdom & knowledge

Ephesians 3:16 - He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

The family wealth: God's strength

Ephesians 2:4 - But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

The family wealth: God's mercy

1 Thessalonians 5:10 - who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

We will spend eternity with Christ

1 Thessalonians 4:17 - Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

John 14:3 - And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

1 John 3:2 - Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

We will have the same kind of eternal, glorified body the Jesus has right now.

Revelation 21:4 - And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.

We will be freed from all pain, death and suffering.

1 Corinthians 3:8 - Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

We will be rewarded and reassigned positions of service.

Romans 8:17 - and if children, then heirs-- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

We will share in Christ's glory.

### **What is the ordinance that Jesus gave us for identifying with His family?**

Baptism...

Matthew 28:19-20 - Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

### **Why does Jesus' Great Commission give the same prominence to baptism as it does to evangelism and discipleship?**

Baptism symbolizes God's second purpose for your life: participating in the fellowship of God's eternal family.

### **What all does baptism symbolize?**

- Baptism declares your faith and celebrates your inclusion in God's family
- Identifies you with Christ's burial and resurrection
- symbolizes your death to your old life
- announces your new life in Christ.
- It represents what happened the moment God brought you into his family:
  - 1 Corinthians 12:13 - Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into Christ's body by one Spirit, and we have all received the same Spirit.

### **Is it necessary to be baptized in order to be saved?**

No, baptism is a work, an act of obedience that we do after we are saved...

1 Peter 3:21 - the answer of a good conscience toward God

### **What is a good thing to remember to help you get over feeling unimportant, unloved, or insecure?**

Jesus considers us part of His family!...

Hebrews 2:11 - For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,

God is proud of you! The words of Jesus are unmistakable:

Matthew 12:49-50 - And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! "For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

### **How can I start treating other believers like members of my own family?**

I need to be better at opening my life up to other Christians and I need to be more proactive about encouraging other Christians at work.

## **Chapter 16: What Matters Most**

### **What is the foundation of every command God has given us?**

Life is all about love...

Galatians 5:14 - For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

### **Is it easy to love the selfless form of love that God has demonstrated?**

No, learning to love unselfishly runs counter to our selfish nature.

In Galatians 6:10, we are told that we should give special preference to fellow believers...

Galatians 6:10 - Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

### **Why does God insist that we give special love and attention to other believers?**

Fellow Christians are to receive priority in loving because God wants his family to be known for its love more than anything else. Jesus said our love for each other is our greatest witness to the world...

John 13:35 - By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

Since we are going to be around fellow believers for eternity, we need to start learning to love them now.

### **What is the best way to learn to love one another?**

To learn to love, we need to practice it by spending time with each other. God wants us to be in regular, close fellowship with other believers so that we can develop the skill of loving. Love cannot be learned in isolation. You have to be around people... irritating, imperfect, frustrating people.

### **Why should relationships have the highest priority in our lives?**

1. Life without love is really worthless.
2. Love will last forever.
3. We will be evaluated in our love.

### **What does 1 Corinthians 13:3 tell us about the value of love?**

1 Corinthians 13:3 - And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Good works will not be rewarded unless they are motivated by love. Even before I had become a Christian I had come to the conclusion that everything every one does is motivated by selfishness because I know what motivated me to do what I did. I was a good person in the eyes of the world but I was good for selfish reasons, to be accepted by others and to avoid the consequences of not being good. But when the Lord saved me, I discovered a better motivation for doing good, to please Him and to love others as He loved me.

### **What do the Ten Commandments have to say about the value of love?**

Four of the Ten Commandments deal with our relationship to God while the other six deal with our relationships with people. Jesus summed up the Ten Commandments as follows:

Matthew 22:37-40 - Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." "This is the first and great commandment. "And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

After learning to love God (worship), learning to love others is the second purpose of your life.

### **How do God priorities about relationships conflict with the world's perspective?**

The world's attitude is the relationships are secondary, something to be squeezed into our schedule. The world views love as a feeling, an emotion that can come and go with people falling in and out of love. The world's love is a transaction: I love you so that you'll love me back. But God demonstrated to us that true love is a sacrificial act of the will, acting in the best interests of the other person without expecting anything in return.

### **What kind of attitude about relationships are we making when we talk about "finding time for our children" or "making time for people" in our lives?**

That gives the impression that relationships are just a part of our lives along with many other things.

### **What is the great enemy of relationships in our modern world today?**

Busyness is a great enemy of relationships. When our schedules become overloaded, we start skimming relationally, cutting back on giving the time, energy, and attention that loving relationships require.

Talking about love, the Holy Spirit speaking through Paul also teaches us:

1 Corinthians 13:13 - And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

#### **Why is the greatest of these love?**

Love will last forever. Another reason God tells us to make love our top priority is that it is eternal. Faith and hope will not be necessary in eternity because we will see Christ as He is and our blessed hope will be realized.

#### **You've heard it said that you can't take it with you when you die... what is this cliché talking about?**

This saying is referring to money, things, and other worldly accomplishments. One thing you can take with you when you die is relationships to other believers.

#### **Another reason relationships should be our highest priority is that we will be evaluated on our love...**

##### **How does God measure spiritual maturity?**

God measures spiritual maturity by the quality of our relationships. The Lord will review how we treated other people, particularly those in need. Jesus said:

Matt 25:40 - And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

#### **So given that the only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love, what should we be praying every morning?**

We should pray this: "God, I don't want to waste today... help me see how I may be better at loving you and other people because that's what life is all about."

#### **How do we demonstrate what is important in our lives?**

We show what we consider important by how much time we spend on them.

#### **Why is time such a precious gift?**

Time is so precious because you only have a set amount of it. You can make more money, but you can't make more time.

When you give someone your time, you are giving them a portion of your life that you'll never get back. Your time is your life.

#### **So how do we prove that we love someone?**

We prove that we love someone by spending time with them. Talk is cheap, anyone can say they love you but if they willingly spend time with you, their actions reveal their true feelings toward you.

1 John 3:18 - My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

Whenever you give your time, you are making a sacrifice, and sacrifice is the essence of love. Jesus modeled this:

Ephesians 5:2 - And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

Love means giving up-yielding my preferences, comfort, goals, security, money, energy, or time for the benefit of someone else.

#### **When is the best time to express love?**

The best time to express love to someone is immediately whenever you have the opportunity...

Galatians 6:10 - Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

#### **Why shouldn't you put off expressing love to others whenever you have the opportunity?**

Because you don't know how long you'll have the opportunity. Circumstances change, people die, children grow up...

Ephesians 5:15-16 - See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

#### **How can I ensure that relationships are my first priority?**

I need to take more time to prepare for and be ready for encounters with others. I need to be willing to take more time for people I have an opportunity to talk with.