The Gospel Divides Families
Jim Newheiser


Introduction: the cost of discipleship.

A. There are various versions of the false prosperity gospel.

B. Some of the most disturbing words Jesus ever spoke were about the impact being his follower would have on our families.
   2. Your faithfulness to Christ may create conflict between you and your unbelieving family members. Luke 12:49-53
   4. Wherever the Word of God goes forth there will be division. John 7:43 9:16 10:19

C. Not every family experiences these conflicts with the same intensity.
   2. But there are also many cases of painful division. Gen. 4:1-12

II. Don’t be surprised when family members reject you because you follow Christ. Lu. 12:49-53

A. Jesus was rejected by His own people. John 1:9-11 Mark 3:31-35

B. Jesus warned that His followers would be hated and mistreated as He was.
   1. This began with righteous Abel who was murdered by his evil brother. 1 John 3:12-13
   2. The world hates us because of our loyalty to Christ. John 3:19 15:18 Mt. 10:22
   3. Our own family members who are of the world will hate us. Mt. 10:21,40 Micah 7:6 Luke 12:59-53 Ps. 27:10,2 1 John 3:1 John 15:18-25

C. God Himself has wayward children and an unfaithful bride. Isa. 1:2 Jer. 3:6
III. Don’t betray Christ for the sake of your family – Jesus comes first. 1 Sam. 2:29  Mt. 10:32-39  Luke 14:26-33

A. You can’t always prevent conflict. Rom. 12:18

B. There may be cases in which you will be forced to choose between Christ and your relatives. Deut. 33:9  Pr. 29:25
   1. Your family may pressure you to choose them above Christ. Mt. 10:32-37
   2. Some have wrongly honored their family members above God. 1 Sam. 2:12-17,22,29  2 Sam. 13:11-21  19:4-7  1 Kings 1:5-6
   3. The results in each case was disastrous. 1 Sam. 2:30-36  3:11-14  4:16-22  2 Sam. 13:28  18:14-15  1 Ki. 2:19-25

C. Don’t ever choose your family above Christ. Mt. 10:37-39  Acts 5:29
   1. Unbelieving family members can be extremely moralistic, judgmental and intolerant. John 16:1-4
   2. They will work hard to convert you.
   4. You must not love a family member more than you love Christ. Mt. 10:37-39  Luke 14:26-33

IV. Even if your family treats you like an enemy, keep loving them. Luke 6:27-36  Mt. 5:43-44  Ro. 12:20  2:4


B. Your spouse. 1 Pet. 3:1-2  1 Cor. 7:12-14

C. You don’t have to shun unbelieving immoral family members. 1 Co. 5:10

D. Their problem is not their immorality, but their lostness. 1 Co. 6:9-11

E. Maintain an attitude of grace/forbearance. Luke 22:34
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V. Jesus incorporates you into His heavenly family.

A. While we cannot ultimately rely upon our family members, we can trust the Lord to take care of us. Ps. 27:10-14, 1-9 -21 Jer. 17:5-8

B. Christ has redeemed you from the sins of your parents. 1 Pet. 1:18

C. He offers you both peace now and peace forever. Rom. 5:1 John 14:27 Isa. 11:9 43:2 Ps. 66:12

D. You will gain more than you have lost. Luke 18:28-30 8:19 Mt. 19:29 Mark 3:31-35

E. Jesus welcomes you into His family. Mt. 11:28ff Eph. 1:5 Rom. 8:14-17 Gal. 4:4-5