

Spotted as belonging

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The Carlos story

Esmerelda

For thus says the LORD,

“To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths,
And choose what pleases me, And hold fast my covenant,
To them I will give in my house and within my walls a memorial,
And a name better than that of sons and daughters;
I will give them a name that will not be forgotten... Isa 56:4–5

Jesus...

Jesus took a high view of the bio and/or legal family.

- He affirmed that we should honor our parents
- He reiterated that marriage is sacred (i.e., “what God has joined together...”).

Jesus took a comparatively low view of the biological family when family-love took too high of a priority:

- “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26).

Jesus assumed that following him meant being incorporated into a crazy, mixed up spiritual family full of people in process.

He messed with the definitions.

A little survey of some biological families in the Bible:

Cain and Abel

Jacob and Esau

Moses, Aaron, and Miriam

Rachel and Leah

Joseph and his 11 brothers + Dinah

Mary and Martha

In Bible days, people did not call God “Father” nor did they call each other “sister” or “mother” unless they were biological relatives.

WE ARE FAMILY

Paul wishes every one could be single like him

Says: Better to let self get ripped off by a believer-sibling than sue fellow Christian in court (1 Cor. 6); the word “brother” occurs 4x

Says we belong to each other

Stand and read together: **(1 Cor. 12:12-27)**

It's LONG. Paul lives in a world with little paper. But he takes the paper to say it. Emphasis.

Stop ranking priorities:

1. God
2. Bio family
3. Church (God's family)

God's ranking:

Only 1. God = includes being part of his family with implications for how we treat bio family

We must not confuse the body of Christ (people) with the organization. A person who neglects her children because she has a million "church" meetings is, indeed, neglecting every form of family.

"Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother" (Mark 3:35).

Take our children with us:

"If a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God. **If any woman who is a believer** has widows in her care, she should continue to help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need (1 Tim 5:3-4, 16).

Who is first in your life?

Who is your family?

If so, do you merely show up for a lecture, or are you caring for your siblings, your parents, the widows, and even the crazy aunt?

The parentless have parents.

A childless have children.

Karla's story.

Carlos's story: Today, more than 800 stations broadcast the voice of Carlos across North & South America, Germany, New Zealand, and Spain. (Voice of Chuck Swindoll in Spanish-speaking world). But to us he is "sonny." Parents of the groom.

The family is big and international.

The family is dysfunctional.

But the people of God have injured me...

Families do that.

Wheat and tares/sheep and goats grow together. Not everyone who claims to be a Christian is one.

We love God's family because he loves it, and it is our heart to love what he loves.

God has placed us in a family where we are spotted as belonging.

Spotted with a story
Spotted having rhythm
Spotted as belonging