

## ***Family Edition – We’ve Got Mail!***

**Intro:** You might have noticed the extra kids among us today. It’s 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday. Families matter here – whether or not they have children. Today, we celebrate our God who gave us the gift of family.

### **I. First Section**

- A.** You’ve got mail! We open up this book from God and what do we find?
  - 1. Genesis lists generations of families in chapter 4... and again in 5... and again in 11. Chapter 10 consists entirely of listing the nations – which at this time were extensions of the family.
  - 2. People are discussed in terms of their family.
  - 3. When someone in someone’s family was disobedient, it caused problems for the whole family and, then, the whole nation or area (Eli’s children, David’s children)
- B.** The first age of the Bible is called the Patriarchal Age. God spoke to the families through their fathers. God organized the family so that the oldest members got the most respect. They were actively involved in passing on the wisdom they had gained from their years on earth.
  - 1. God chose the family of Jacob and Joseph to save His people and keep them together in a time of war...
  - 2. And a time of waiting.
- C.** The second age of the Bible is called the Mosaical Age. God still worked through families, even though the law came through Moses.
  - 1. Organized into tribes. Family was still very important.
  - 2. Priesthood, war, farming, all were passed down by the father to the son.
- D.** In Malachi, the last book of the Old Covenant, we see God being so angry with His people that He bid them farewell for a time. For 400 years there would be no prophet among them. Why? What had they done? They had wronged Him before and He had kept with them, sending them prophets. It might have been the

breakdown of the family that caused God such anger and heartache.

1. God starts it with a family analogy. 1:6
  2. He tells them that their family will suffer because of their disobedience. 2:3
  3. They had been told to keep their families in the faith, but they had married outside of it. (v.12)
  4. Read 2:13-16. (domestic violence and unfaithfulness)
  5. And it is put starkly in the last verse of the book – 4:6.
- E. We are dedicated to bringing our children to God. We are dedicated to keeping our families focused on God.

## **II. The New Testament**

- A. Opens with begats. Why would you do that? Don't you know that will discourage readers? Evidently, it was to encourage readers and give them a foundation for their faith. God was trying to send us a message (and not just a proof text). Jesus came from the right family, and he had relatives!
- B. In Matthew 18 we should be like children, learn from them.
1. In chapter 19, He endorses marriage and tells his disciples to let the little children come to him. (arrange your life to do this)
- C. Children are to be loved, taught, and protected. Oaths are still to be honored in the New Testament.
1. 1 Tim. 5:8 – if one doesn't provide for his family, he is worse than an infidel. Wow.
  2. 1 Peter 3:7 – when husbands and wives don't treat each other well, it will keep their prayers from being heard in heaven.
- D. There is, however, a significant change in the NT. Now, the family consists of all believers. Mom, Dad and the kids are a very important part of this, but all are welcomed in.
1. "given to hospitality."
  2. Acts 2 as normative.
  3. The Table is a family tradition that re-centers us, re-establishes us as a family.