

## The Household of God Ephesians 2

### Introduction

- Something totally unexpected happened to our family two weeks ago
  - As I was driving through our neighborhood, I spotted what I thought was a cat run under a van.
  - I didn't think too much of the apparent cat, however, whatever it had just found shelter under my in-laws vehicle.
  - So, like any good son-in-law I walked over and informed my in-laws that there was a cat under their van.
  - I then made a further inspection of this critter under the van, only to discover that it was not a cat but a rabbit.
  - This rabbit wasn't just any rabbit, it was a domestic rabbit. The kind of rabbit that instead of running when you come close to it just burrows itself into a ball.
  - My in-laws happen to have a beagle dog. When the dog discovered that there was a rabbit in close proximity he bolted out of the house and proceeded to do whatever he could to get under the van to the rabbit.
  - The dog was restrained at the last minute, and of course the rabbit did not run away, but instead just nestled against the van tire just out of reach of the dog.
  - Dilemma: What do you do when you know that there is a bunny that can't defend itself and is not made for the wild?
    - You take her around the neighborhood to see if anyone lost their pet bunny.
    - What do you find out? No one has lost their pet bunny.
    - You then call your closest friends and ask, "Would you like a pet bunny?" And they all say "NO!"
    - And before long you are feeding the bunny, your kids are naming the bunny—Oreo, and she is the newest part of your family.
  - As unexpected as this encounter has been, one of my favorite memories that this rabbit has made in our family is that my kids decided to run laps in our backyard.
    - We have a fenced in backyard, which is perfect if you happen to have a pet bunny.
    - Oreo watches the kids run a lap around the yard, and then decides she wants to run too, so she literally jumps in line and runs laps with the kids.
    - Cutest thing I've ever seen!
- Why do I tell this story?
  - Today we are starting a new sermon series called "All In: The Family of God"
  - A family may be the most important connection we have in our lives. The love, support, and guidance of a family can get us through the most difficult times, and shape who we become.
  - Like Oreo you may have family members that aren't biological, but just as important relationships in your life

- Even if your home-life was not a good one, chances are you have found a group of people to identify with, some sort of support system that is significant to your life.
- Throughout this series we will focus on biblical examples of family.
  - The hope is that your family will be strengthened, and that you might find some practical tools to incorporate into your family life
  - BUT, the Bible does not limit family to our biological connections. Instead, family is used to describe the church.
  - It is through this extended family, the Family of God, that can add value, strength, guidance to name a few, and enable us to serve the world that God has called us to.
- Throughout this fall we are not only going to provide you with biblical preaching about family, but provide you and your family with tangible ways to connect with the Family of God. I'll explain these opportunities later in the sermon.
  - Be open to the unexpected
  - Like the example of Oreo, you may find a hidden blessing you never anticipated
  - Take steps to strengthen your family, but also to extend your family to include the Family of God.

#### What Course Are You ON?

- Ephesians 2 background
  - Paul's exhortation
    - God, our Father- notice the family connections, has predestined us for adaption as sons through Jesus Christ in accordance with his will (1:5)
    - Our inheritance, as children of God, is sealed with the Holy Spirit (1:13-14)
    - Hope and Power for our lives (1:18-19)
  - One of the biggest influences of whether faith passes on from one generation to the next is the family (social science has revealed this)
    - Parents, the values you display through faith really do make a difference
    - Church family, the kind of relationships, culture, example that you lead make a difference in whether the next generation continues to live out their faith through the church.
    - The Family of God is critically important in shaping our lives and the lives of our family!
- Ephesians 2:1-3
  - Paul describes a former life
    - A life lived in the wrong direction
      - Following the course of the world
      - Disobedience, prince of the air-Satan
      - Passions of the flesh
      - Children of Wrath



- Adult Bible study and Children's Bible study going deeper into the sermon topic
- The foundation you build for your family will determine the course your family takes.

### Created for Good Works

- **Ephesians 2:8-10**
  - It is not the works that save us, but the good works are a result of the salvation that God has graciously extended to us.
  - An outward sign of our faith in God is to participate in serving the world he has called us to.
- Is your family self-serving, or does it serve God?
  - Begins with the foundation of faith that you build and determines the course you take.
  - A higher purpose
- Opportunity with Fall Activities
  - The Gathering Event
  - Fall Festival
    - Fellowship with church family
    - Outreach to your community
- Why do you do what you do?
  - A great question for any organization, including your family
  - If you don't know why you do what you do, then you can't determine the course you are on and the foundation that you are building.
- Created for good works

### Built together for a dwelling place for God

- Explain situation between Jew and Gentile
- **Ephesians 2:18-22**
- Family beyond biological connections
  - Fellow Citizens
  - Foundation
  - Built together as a dwelling place for God
- Is the foundation you are building a place for God to dwell?
  - Everything doesn't have to be perfect
  - A foundation of faith has to be present
  - A course toward God-serving him
  - Contributing to a church family
- A lot of churches gather but is it really a place that God dwells? The same could be true of your family

### Conclusion

- Vision Statement: Making Christ the Center: Life, Relationships, Service
- Living it out

- Foundation
- Determines why we do what we do
- Together, as the Family of God