

Speaking to the soul



Eternal family

[Jesus](pointed to his disciples and said, “Look, these are my mother and brothers. Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother!” Matthew 12:49-50

We know very little about Jesus’ family. On this occasion we hear that they had come to see him and wanted to speak with him. By this time, it seems that Joseph was dead and so Mary came with Jesus’ brothers and sisters. Jesus used

the moment to point out that the family that meant most to him was made up of those who were obedient to his Father's will. Blood relationships are important - and the Old Testament law made clear the fundamental responsibility that we all have for and to our birth families - but what matters far more is obedience to God's will.

Belonging is essential to our wellbeing. We all need the security of knowing where we belong. Many people in our society have had a disappointing experience of family life. They have felt let down and some have been rejected and even abused. But whether our experiences have been bad or good, our human families are temporary and fragile. That is why it is so important for us to become children of our eternal heavenly Father. Jesus himself knew what it was to be rejected by his own people. In his Gospel, John says that: "to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God" (John 1:12-13). Through being born again, all of us are able to enter into the family of God and know security for time and eternity.

Being a part of the family of God is miraculous in every way. It connects us with all those in history who have lived the life of faith, and it also binds us together with all those who love him throughout our world today. On many occasions I have travelled to other parts of the world and not shared a common language with the Christians I have met. In a beautiful way it hasn't seemed to matter. I have spent many, many hours sitting through times of worship in languages completely unknown to me. What has mattered is that we are family. We belong and always will do.

QUESTION

In what ways are you blessed by belonging to God's eternal family?

PRAYER

Loving heavenly Father, thank you for my brothers and sisters around the world today. Thank you for my unity with them. Amen