



WEEKLY SERMON

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Message: The Family of God - #1

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Text: Romans 12:9-16

We live in an evil, uncertain, hard world. Who doesn't face personal uncertainty? You lose a job or retire. Your home needs maintenance. Where's the money going to come from? You face some uncertain physical problems. If you have children or grandchildren, as I do, you always carry each of them in your heart. So how do we manage the fear of the future? How can we find hope in God?

Here are THREE more incredible promises to give us hope for the future, both in this life and especially the next.

FOURTH: Hope In The Lord Because He Will Fulfill His Purpose For You. In Psalm 138:8 we read, "**The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth forever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.**" Have you ever wondered what your purpose in life is? Have you sometimes wondered if you might be missing God's will for your life? God promises that He has a purpose for my life and He will fulfill it! This gives me great hope!

You can have great hope in God. You can't miss God's will for your life. He absolutely *will* fulfill his purpose for you. Not even you can keep God from bringing to pass his good, rich, blessing-filled plans.

FIFTH: Hope In God Because He Will Complete What He Started. In Philippians 1:6 we read, "**Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ...**" God finishes what he starts. When God saved you he began an incredibly good work in you - to transform you into the likeness of Christ.

Everything you go through, good and bad, is controlled by his sovereign hand to conform you to Christ. He won't fail. There won't be any "unfinished" believer in heaven. God works in your life every day and at "the day of Jesus Christ" you will be like him.

Doesn't that encourage you? You have every reason to hope in God. If God has started a good, powerful work in you, then he certainly will bring it to completion.

SIXTH: Hope In Christ Jesus Because He Will Establish Your Plans. In Proverbs 16:3, we read, "**Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.**" Maybe you don't know where you're going in life. But if you seek the Lord, you have a sure hope he will establish your plans as he has promised. Let's be honest: there are many times when you can't bring your own plans to pass.

But God isn't like that. If you commit your work to the Lord, he will establish your plans. He will cause your plans to align with his plans, and then he will bring those plans to pass. You can hope in God because he is the one who will bring your plans to pass.

Here are eight additional verses on HOPE found in the Word of God.

Mark 9:23, **“And Jesus said unto him, “If thou canst believe, all things are possible for him that believeth.”**

Psalms 43:5, **“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”**

Psalms 119:114, **“Thou art my hiding place and my shield; I hope in thy word.”**

Psalms 33:18, **“Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy...”**

Job 5:15-16, **“But he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty. So the poor have hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.”**

Psalms 130:5, **“I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.”**

Psalms 119:81, **“My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.”**

Psalms 9:18, **“For the needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever.”**

Trust In God's Unfailing Love. Keep asking God to pour out his abundant goodness on you. Keep asking him to guide, instruct, and show you the way you should go. Keep looking for his goodness. Keep hoping in the living God. I believe you will see God's goodness in this life and a millionfold in heaven. Your hope for the future isn't based on you. It's based on who God is and what he has promised.

Here is a concluding thought: In Psalms 33:10-11 we read, **“The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. (11) The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.”** There are two levels of God's planning for us.

Number 1. He has a plan for the history of the world. All the current global events are unfolding under His providential eye. Even the leaders of the world's greatest nations are like grasshoppers to Him. If we look closely, we can see events moving toward the prophetic promises of Scripture.

Number 2. He has a plan for you. God is both infinite and intimate. Psalms 139:16 says, **“Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.”** God saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in His book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.”

So, don't worry about tomorrow. God has an incredible, unchanging plan for us and for our world. Someone said, **“The God who knows you best knows the best for you.”**

In His Amazing Grace
Pastor David Miklas

How to be Devoted to One Another In the Family of God

I had the privilege of being the first-born son of wonderful parents. To our family was added one daughter, my sister.

Dad and Mother were down-to-earth people. At the age of 90, Dad went to be with the Lord. At the age of 96, Mom went to be with the Lord. Prior to his death and as far back as I can remember, Dad was a deacon, Sunday School teacher, lay preacher and involved with the youth of the church. Mother was a lifelong Sunday School teacher. **They learned most of what they needed to know in the school of experience. They, like most people their age, weathered the depression and were able to keep us fed and clothed. We never lacked necessities, or the important things in life.**

My parents were devoted to each other and to us.

They were our parents; they loved us and cared for us. Their greatest contribution was to our spiritual heritage, by leading us to the knowledge of God and the Word of God.

Being a part of a family is something with which we can all identify. This is why Paul wrote what he did in Romans 12:10, **"Be kindly affectioned ONE TO ANOTHER with brotherly love; in honor preferring ONE ANOTHER."** Here is another way of considering this verse. **"Be devoted like a family one to another in brotherly love in HONOR preferring one another..."**

Now the word "kindly" means **"KINDRED."** The word **KINDRED** represents Christian's bound by a family tie. That's why you will often hear me refer to the congregation as the **"CHURCH FAMILY."**

The family concept gives us an even greater appreciation of what a functioning church should be like. The church is a family unit. That concept is very precious and important. I say that because:

**We are living in a day in which the family unit is in deep trouble from all sides.
We are living in a day in which the church family unit is in deep trouble from within, brought about by strife, division and confusion.**

This being true, within the church should be greater warmth, love, tenderness, concern, compassion and loyalty shown to the family of God by the people of God.

The tie that binds the hearts of true believers is indeed a blessed thing. Christian fellowship is not a matter of **LIGHT** but **LIFE**. It is the meeting of hearts made new in Jesus Christ.

The church is not a cold and impersonal institution that you just visit on Sunday. Rather the church is a family gathering:

To work together,
To pray together,
To participate together,
To care for one another,
To love one another, and
To learn together, from the Word of God.

It is easy to understand that within a church family, just like in any other family, there are going to be hard times, times of trouble, times of victory, times of disappointment, times of joy as well as times of sorrow. Oh, to be sure a church family is going to have problems

and disagreements. But it ought to be your desire that you, the people of this Church, think of yourselves as a **FAMILY** and act like a family. Thus, it is in this context as members of a family and because of your new birth experience that you develop a **KINDRED SPIRIT**.

Follow me as I read Romans 12:9-16,

“Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. (10) Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; (11) Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; (12) Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; (13) Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. (14) Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. (15) Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. (16) Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.”

In verses 9-13 is the expression of GRACE that family members are to have towards one another as a result of sharing the new birth experience.

GOD’S GRACE affects our **Character** in verse 9, **“Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.”**

GOD’S GRACE affects our **Contacts** in verse 10, **“Be kindly affectioned ONE TO ANOTHER with brotherly love; in honor preferring ONE ANOTHER.”**

GOD’S GRACE affects our **Conduct** in verse 11, **“Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;”**

GOD’S GRACE affects our **Convictions** in verse 12, **“Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;”**

GOD’S GRACE affects our **Concerns** in verse 13, **“Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.”**

Now, before we examine Romans 12:10 in greater depth, let me give you three principles concerning the family of God in a spiritual sense.

FIRST: We become a part of the family of God through the NEW BIRTH process. Not until we have come to experience the New Birth, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, are we a part of the family of God.

In John 1:12-13 we read, **“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”**

In John 3:3-7 we read, **“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”**

It was through the **NEW BIRTH** process of Faith:

that God became our **HEAVENLY FATHER**, and
that we became a part of the **FAMILY OF GOD**.

SECOND: We are placed by the SOVEREIGNTY of God not only into our earthly family, but also into our spiritual family. In our earthly family none of us chose:

**Our brothers and sisters, neither
Did we choose our parents, nor
Did we choose the kind of children we have.**

They were all given to us by the **SOVEREIGNTY** of God. It is through the family that we are now taught how to get along and accept one another. That is the same way in the family of God. I did not choose you, nor did you choose me as a brother or sister in Christ. It was God who placed us, each one of us, into His family by Faith. Now, since we are going to live together for all eternity, God wants to teach us how to get along on earth with our physical and spiritual family.

THIRD: In light of the last two statements, every born-again person ought to be a member of a Bible believing, soul-winning, fundamental local church.

By now you all know that it is my conviction that every believer ought to be in the house of God for every church service. For it says in Hebrews 10:24-25, **“And consider ONE ANOTHER to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting ONE ANOTHER; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”**

It is also my conviction that every believer in the local church ought to give of their **TIME, TALENTS and TREASURES** in and through that local church.

Let me advise you not to encourage people to join the church of their choice after they are saved. That's like going into the nursery at the hospital and saying to a new born infant:

“You are now in the world. The hospital has done its job, the mother her duty. Here are several sets of parents to choose from. You go ahead and choose the one you feel is best fitted for you, and where you can be the most comfortable and relaxed.”

That's just not the way it works! Because the mother who brought that child into the world is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, and she alone is qualified to **PROVIDE FOR, CARE FOR, LOVE, NOURISH and PROTECT** that child.

Likewise, a **NEW CONVERT** needs to attend and join a church where he or she can receive **PROTECTION**, and **SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT** from the **WORD of GOD** and the **PEOPLE of GOD**. That church might not necessarily be the church of his or her choice, nor even the church of friends, family or parents, but it is the right church for the new convert.

Again notice our text verse found in Romans 12:10, **“Be kindly affectioned ONE TO ANOTHER with brotherly love; in honor preferring ONE ANOTHER.”** Let's take a closer look at the words of this text.

NUMBER 1. "Brotherly Love" is translated from the Greek word "**PHILADELPHOS**" and refers to the love that should exist between brothers and sisters within a family unit. When we apply this type of love to the functioning church, it refers to the love Christians should have for each other as **BROTHERS** and **SISTERS in CHRIST**. Remember, we are also part of a family, **THE FAMILY OF GOD**.

The term "**brothers**" from the Greek word "**ADELPHOS**" is used to refer to the Christian Family approximately **230** times throughout the New Testament, beginning in the book of Acts. The word "**brothers**" literally means "**from the same womb**." When it refers to Christians, it means "**fellow believers**," "**members of the family of God**." Therefore you and I are truly

brothers and sisters eternally related in the family of God. The church is more than the four walls of a building; it is a living, breathing family.

Now what is the proof that calls attention to our being in the family of God? John tells us in I John 3:14, "**We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren...**" Now that means **LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN IS PROOF OF OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE IN CHRIST**. Someone wrote in a poem,

To dwell with the saints in love,
That will indeed be glory.
To dwell below with the saints we know,
Well, that's a different story!

No, it's not! It ought to be the same story. We ought to love the brethren in the **FAITH** as though they were brethren in **BLOOD**. Are we not blood related in life as well as in faith?

Are we not blood related to our earthly family through our parents?
Are we not blood related through the blood of Christ shed for us?

Ephesians 1:7 expresses this relationship, "**In Christ we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins...**" Again remember that **LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN IS PROOF OF OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE IN CHRIST**.

NUMBER 2. Being bonded by a family tie. This family affection reflects the idea we have just expressed. **WE ARE TO LOVE THE BRETHREN IN THE FAITH AS THOUGH THEY WERE BROTHERS IN BLOOD.**

Another way of looking at the word "**kindly affectioned**" is to use the word **DEVOTED**. Paul's point is clear. Christians are to be just as **DEVOTED** to each other in the family of God as the individuals of a close-knit family unit ought to be **DEVOTED** to each other.

As a pastor, I am deeply concerned that the people of this Church develop a **FAMILY RELATIONSHIP**; not only **LOVING ONE ANOTHER**, but being truly **DEVOTED** to one another. The key word is **PARTICIPATION**. And **PARTICIPATION TAKES TIME**.

Our church family will grow in numbers as we go soul-winning. We must constantly reach people with the gospel, and participate with the Holy Spirit, the New Birth agent, to bring them into the family of God.

Our church family will grow in grace if you do not look only at your own individual things, but also on the things of others. Literally, we must be ready, as Paul stresses in the second part of our text verse in Romans 12:10, "**TO OUT-DO ONE ANOTHER IN SHOWING HONOR.**"

Our church family will develop as each one of us does our part. There is no place for spectators in the body of Christ. Everyone is needed and important.

We must recognize that when we touch the lives of other men and women for Christ, we are touching Christ Himself. Remember what the Lord said in Matthew 25, "**inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto me.**"

The Apostle Paul expresses throughout his epistles how we should be devoted one to another in the body of Christ. For example;

The family will be devoted as we SERVE one another. In Galatians 5:13 we read, "**For brethren...by love SERVE one another.**" We should be thinking, "**Ask not what we can get, but what we can give.**" We should not "**be looking at how the church can help us, but at how we can be of service to others.**"

The family will be devoted as we BEAR-WITH one another. In Ephesians 4:2 we read, **“With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, FORBEARING one another in love;”** We will graciously help others who are weak in the faith, helping them to grow in the Lord. That means we bear with them, even with their sometimes-irritating qualities, and not criticize them.

The family will be devoted as we carry each other's BURDENS. In Galatians 6:2 we read, **“BEAR ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”** We are to help bear the burdens of others. We are to be able to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.

The family will be devoted as we ENCOURAGE one another. In I Thessalonians 5:11 we read, **“Wherefore comfort (the idea here is to encourage) yourselves together, and edify one another even as also ye do.”** You know, it's amazing how some Christians have the **"GIFT OF DISCOURAGEMENT."** They seem to always have something negative to say about other Christians. However, it's amazing what you can do with words. **“Pleasant words are like a "honey comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.”**

The family will be devoted as we SUBMIT one to another in the body of Christ. In Ephesians 5:21 we read, **“SUBMITTING yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”**

The family will be devoted as we FORGIVE one another. In Ephesians 4:32 we read, **“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgive you.”**

The family will be devoted as we are HONEST with one another in the body of Christ. In Colossians 3:9 we read, **“Lie not one to another...”**

Showing affection and love to one another in the Body of Christ, and treating them as brothers and sisters in Christ **does not happen automatically.** We must constantly work at developing a **“Kindred Spirit”** within the body of Christ.

In I Peter 1:22 we read, **“...see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently...”**

In I Peter 3:8-9 we read, **“Finally be ye of one mind, having compassion one to another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called that ye should inherit a blessing.”**

NUMBER 3. “In HONOR preferring one another.” Now returning to Romans 12:10, notice again the last phrase, **“In HONOR preferring one another.”** The purpose of any good accompanist is their ability to make the performer **"look and sound good."**

The volume in their playing is **"just right"** so as not to compete with the vocalist. The **frills and ripples** which flow beautifully and naturally always enhance the other's presentation rather than detract from it. They should be able to **accentuate** when necessary to assist the performer in hitting the difficult notes or even to cover up a person's mistakes.

That's the kind of character Paul is trying to get across to us in the phrase **"In Honor preferring one another."** Every one of us as a Christian should strive to make other believers **"LOOK AND SOUND GOOD."** Every one of us should rejoice:

When others **achieve,**
When others are **honored,**
When others are **successful.**

When this happens, the body of Christ will function beautifully and grow to maturity in Christ.

We must come to the place where we **look not every man on his own things but also on the things of others.** We must see that we have been saved by the redeeming love of Christ and out of that love be ready to **"OUTDO ONE ANOTHER IN SHOWING HONOR."**

Let's do something practical to illustrate what we have shared in this message.

If you will read the 16th chapter of Romans and many of the last passages in the letters of Paul, you will find Him expressing His thanks to many who blessed and helped him.

In the family of God, for whom are you THANKFUL? Right now, please think of someone to whom you can say thank you. Perhaps you could say, **"You have blessed me by _____ and I just want to say THANK YOU!"**

Perhaps you might also remember this timely song. May its truth along with what has been shared in this message begin to set into your thinking and into your heart!

**You will notice we say brother and sister round here.
It's because we've a family and these folks are so dear.
When one has a heartache we all share the tears,
And rejoice in each victory in the family so near.**

**I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God.
I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by the blood.
Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,
For I'm part of the family, the family of God.**

If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon **"How to be Devoted to One Another in the Family of God"** then right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, **"...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..."**

Romans 10:13, **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."**

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: **"I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation."**

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior let me know? Please send an e-mail to, pdmikBBM@aol.com and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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