



Berean Christian Fellowship

DEVOTIONAL 119.0

July 8
2016

Family Matters

“Even my close friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me” (Psalm 41:9).

Family should be a place of safety. But because of sin, it is often a place of persecution for the Believer. Sometimes in obeying God’s will as a Believer, our friends and family feel we are embarrassing them or dishonoring them (“don’t talk about that here!”; “why do you make everything difficult?”; “why can’t you just get along?”; “You aren’t being a good brother, son, spouse”; etc). They want us to bend to their expectations concerning our purpose and behavior. We may be in situations where we feel we can “do nothing right” in their eyes. We need to understand that the will of God through Jesus Christ creates division, “for I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man’s enemies will be the members of his household” (Matthew 10:35-36). God’s will will always come into conflict with man’s will, and worldly relationships can be broken.

But God didn’t leave us in brokenness. Through Jesus, He made a new family of people who profess to believe in Him and obey Him! This is why we must not forsake fellowship in the family of God! We need the support and encouragement of our spiritual family.

Yet, sometimes the worst injuries for a Believer can actually come from our spiritual relatives in the family of God! How is that possible? The devil loves nothing better than to strike deep into our “safe zones.” As David says, “for it is not an enemy who reproaches me, Then I could bear it; Nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me, Then I could hide myself from him. But it is you, a man my equal, my companion and my

familiar friend; we who had sweet fellowship together Walked in the house of God in the throng” (Psalm 55:12-14).

Yes, because true Believers do still sin, conflict can come into the Christian home and into the Church. This happens when Believers put their own interests, desires, and will ahead of God’s will. In doing this, they will inevitably come into conflict with fellow Believers seeking to follow God’s will and obey His commands. We must take great care to not persecute our brothers and sisters when their words or actions are in conflict with our will or expectations, but not God’s will as revealed in His Word: “let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him” (1 Corinthians 7:17a).

The difference between our natural families and our spiritual family is that our Brothers and Sisters in the Church claim to all be saved—bound through our mutual confession of Jesus Christ to the will of God as revealed in His Word. God’s will in His Word is what judges between us now, and the Holy Spirit in us exposes, convicts, and discerns by it. Therefore, if someone is seeking their own will instead of God’s, it will become apparent through appealing to the Word of God, which will “judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

When we feel shamed, injured, or persecuted by friends, family, or even members of our church, we need to look to Jesus Who didn’t stop obeying His heavenly Father even when it was in opposition to His family’s will, His community’s expectations, and His society’s demands. May the Lord encourage and strengthen us to stand firm in our obedience to His will in all things. May we hold ourselves accountable to His will by His Word, so that in everything we would say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that” (James 4:15b). Even so, Amen.

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