

A Complicated Family

O God, from whom all good proceeds: Grant that by your inspiration we may think those things that are right, and by your merciful guiding may do them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Look

Family is a pretty broad word. Colloquially it's used to refer to one's relatives, and often specifically to closer relatives. However the word is also used to mean genetic descendants, scientific groupings, or perhaps more colorfully to organized crime groups. In all cases though, it's meant to imply a grouping based on more than just appearances.

1. What sort of adjectives would you use to describe your family?
2. Who are some people that are a part of your "family" that would not necessarily be considered family by outsiders?
3. Are there any people you consider more important to you than your family? If so, who?

Book

Mark 3:20-35

Jesus draws a huge crowd in a house that blocks out disciples and immediate family from being near Jesus. In addition to being a clear violation of fire safety code, he's brought numerous strangers in.

1. Imagine yourself as one of Jesus' disciples. How would you feel being blocked out from being near Jesus?
2. In what way is Jesus' "divided kingdom" warning, a warning for the faithful of God?
3. How does Jesus' challenge to the traditional definition of family reinforce the message against a house divided?

Took

The definition of family today has expanded from previous generations. Even if your own family is fairly traditional, you probably know a non-traditional family. Beyond that it's not uncommon for people to refer to other groups as being "like family" because of the appreciate for a deeper level of caring and support.

1. In what was does this expanding definition of family help spread the kingdom of God?
2. How could this expansion of the definition of family cause some to feel threatened?
3. Who are some people you interact with that would be particularly challenging to treat like family?
4. What are some things you can do to help others feel more like family during this next week?