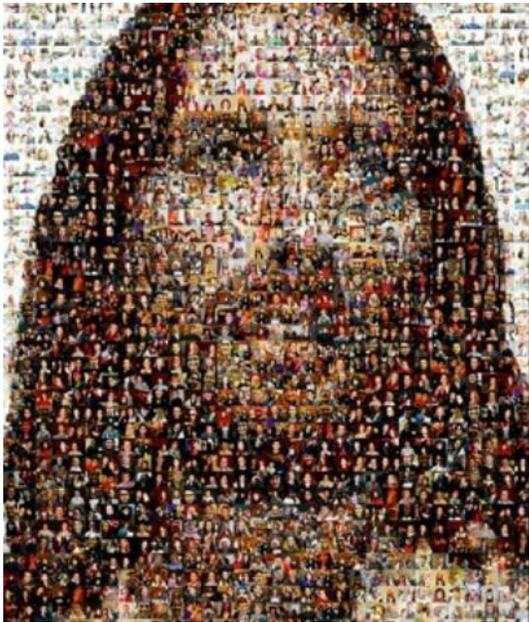


# God's Huge Family

by Pastor Mike Taylor  
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Have you ever considered how small an amount of time or distance can change the outcome of a whole host of different events? Let's take for example a runner in a 100 yard dash. The winner of the race can come in first by only a fraction of a second. I've seen winners made by less than one hundredth of a second. I remember watching Michael Phelps win his swimming race in a past Olympic contest by just that amount. The guy who came in second touched that wall one-one hundredth of a second behind him.

What about when a person takes a plane trip? If you are flying from the Midwest, say St. Louis and going to New York and flying nonstop and the pilot decides to put the plane on autopilot, do you realize that if he makes an error on the flight path of just one degree, which is a small amount, very small, that you could end up in Philadelphia which is a distance of 100 miles from your intended destination.

These two simple illustrations make a point that a "Christian" has to monitor their position in their walk with Christ at all times in relation to their final destination. What happens if a person is headed for the wrong destination? Can a person think they are headed in the right direction be deceived? Can he lose his way? Or is the path he is following the right path at all. Is He really a Christian? We can learn a lot from the passage concerning the sheep and the goat judgment given by Jesus Christ in Matthew chapter 25.

Jesus made mention of those who profess Jesus, in name only, but live and act like the rest of the world. They follow tradition; they follow their church leaders, their bishop, or the pope. They have a form of godliness, but as was written, when Jesus accused the religious authority of His day of hypocrisy and a form of godliness when He said in Matthew:

15:8 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART STAYS FAR AWAY FROM ME.

15:9 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'"

These are the ones that Jesus said He would cast out into outer darkness, as they had a form of godliness, but denied the power thereof. He will separate His true sheep from the imposters who profess in name only, but have no faith in Jesus Christ, but in their church.

The point of all this is that we should know where we are going and our final destination and that has everything to do with what we do in the here and now as men and women of free will. Although, God has a built in safety net, as we don't rely on our works to save us, as we live by faith, not by works, lest any man should boast. Yet we don't want to abuse God's grace. We want to make every effort to be going in the right direction. If we have the

right direction and destination, it makes all the difference in monitoring our spiritual condition, so that we arrive safely at our destination.

### **WHAT IS YOUR DESTINATION....DO YOU KNOW? ARE YOU SURE?**

For that we have to begin at the beginning, hopefully in an abbreviated version.

“God said; let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him: male and female, created He them” (Genesis 1:26-27).

Right from the get go man is in an exalted position. He is greatest on the recently God created earth. He’s stronger than the animals, the birds, or anything in all creation. The strong implication here is the man was created after the “God Kind” in shape and in form. All through the Bible, you can find many, many scriptures that point to one future event when Jesus Christ returns and we are changed, both the dead and the living, back into what we sprang from...God!! John the Apostle of our Lord Jesus made it clear that when Jesus returns, we shall be even as He is, when he penned in 1st John:

3:2 “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

A second implication is found in this verse, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” (Genesis 2:7) What makes man different and unique in all of creation is that man has MIND, not instinct, as do the animals. He clearly has the ability to reason, to gather information and to make decisions. Nowhere in all of creation did God take such a personal involvement with His creation, as He did with creating man. God imparted to man a spirit, a power of mind and no other aspect of creation has this distinction. Man is a creature of free will that God allowed man to either follow after Him as an obedient son, or follow what he thought was “right in his own mind”. We know from studying scripture that our first parents were deceived and their act of free will to disobey allowed sin into the world. But moving on:

As a result of man having a mind, ability to reason, possessing a spirit, man also has spirituality. He has personality. He is capable of holiness, of love, of dominion, and of responsibility. We are not born with these traits. A little baby does not possess these qualities at birth. They are developed and acquired, but they are not given.

The implication of this line of reasoning is made more evident in the following passage:

“Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). This chapter begins with our justification, which occurs when Jesus Christ comes into our hearts to change us into a new creature. Reading on:

“Through whom (by Jesus) also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulation knowing that tribulation produces perseverance.” (Romans 5:2-3)

Notice the process of growth in man. Tribulation, the sufferings of this present life, the trials, the pressures of being in an evil world, produces perseverance. Reading on:

“Perseverance (*produces*) character; and character (*produces*) hope. Now hope does not disappoint because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us.” (Romans 5:4-5) So it leaves one with the thought that this process is acquired and sets character in the mind. So from the beginning,

when God breathed the breath of life into man, He gave him a spirit, he gave him a mind, and the power to gain characteristics such as love, dominion, and responsibility.

Let's make a third implication. With the character that is developed will be due to man's choice of who he wants to most like. The world gives choices of being conformed to this world and the lusts thereof. But for a true Christian, it is conforming to the mind and characteristics of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

### **JESUS, THE SECOND ADAM FROM ABOVE**

All through the Old Testament there are scriptures that prove that man was made in the image of God, but beginning with the New Testament, the image of God makes a very decided shift. Jesus the second Adam, the man from Heaven, (as the Bible calls Him) or as John said "the eternal Word, is in the image of God in the flesh. Not mankind in general.

Now get this, for lack of a better word, Jesus was a prototype. He was a full, functioning form of a NEW type. This is what I mean by a shift in emphasis of what man is to become. Jesus was the first, the example of becoming the image of God. Jesus was the prototype, the goal of our redemption, our salvation and our glorification. This is the final goal of born again man.

"And have put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him" (meaning us, man). (Colossians 3:10)

This points to that the NEW man is not just in the image of God, or just a general picture of God, as man was formed to look like, but specifically to be formed into the image of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He, Jesus, becomes the goal of the redeemed man, unto salvation.

Now putting on the characteristics of this evil world requires no special skill. Just blend in, do what is popular, or go along with the crowd, and you'll take on the characteristics of this lost and dying world. It is virtually effortless. But to put on Christ requires diligence, work, prayer, communion with God, and power from His Holy Spirit. We can't do it alone. Satan would have us for lunch.

As we are being brought to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are seen in the New Testament as the created work of God. It is stated in a number of different ways, as those in Christ are a new creation. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new." (II Corinthians 5:17)

God has a desire for the work of His hands. Scripture says that we are His workmanship; He is the potter, we are the clay. We are being renewed in the spirit of our mind. We are being created through Christ Jesus unto righteousness and true holiness. "Therefore leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go onto perfection: not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, but of faith toward God." (Hebrews 6:1)

The implication is that sanctification after being justified by the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is a creative process of character building. This is a process which begins with repentance and being baptized, and ends with our glorification at His return for His saints at His second coming and beyond. It is a process of completion, a process of perfection. It is a process of being sanctified unto good works according to His commandment. It is a process of character building. Each of these is synonymous with each other.

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, (Hebrews 2:10-11)

Moving down, "In as much then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same: that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14)

Therefore in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation (*atonement*) for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.” (Hebrews 2:17-18)

Now the key for you and me in this passage is the word “author” in verse 10. In the KJV, it is translated as “captain”. It’s the word “Achegos” from Greek. It is translated variously as captain, pioneer, trailblazer, or founder/author. The ultimate meaning of various translations of this one word is that something is begun by someone, so that others may enter into it. Christ is our “achegos”. He is the trailblazer, pioneer, founder, and captain of our ship.

Now let’s look at the exciting part. He was the trailblazer, the pioneer and the founder who began a work and blazed a trail that we might enter into His salvation. He set the pattern that we might enter in. He entered into a family once again that we might also enter that family by following Him. In this He was perfected. He was made complete by completing His work here on earth, that He could fulfill the role as our Savior and our High Priest. He was fully able to pioneer the road that leads to our salvation. Now the whole reason for all of this, why He became a man, taking on human traits, and fully sharing in our humanity was for Him to be able to bring many sons and daughters into glory by following His trail. Paul wrote of it in one of most favorite chapter. Romans 8:

8:18 “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

8:20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

8:21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Now taking all the scriptures that we just quoted, is not the implication here that since we are able to enter into which He began and share that with Him, that we are going to enter into the same kind of glory that He Himself also has? Praise God! Are you excited yet? Now just to clarify, as some have postulated, to the likes of Benny Hinn, that we will be little “gods” running around here on earth and in the realms of heavenly glory. That is not what this is meaning. But taking what was spoken by John in the verse quoted above and knowing that we will be like Jesus, as we will be the same in Spirit, in thought, in purpose, and in presence of the mind of Christ. We will be glorified, as He was glorified. We will enter into what we have been promised through His shed blood, and that is being in the family of God. We will be sons and daughters to the King of the Universe, as Jesus our Kinsman Redeemer has bought back, with His own blood that which was lost by the first Adam through sin, as sin will be eliminated from us.

Let’s look at a key word in Hebrews 2:11. The word is “sanctified”. It’s the stage that all Christians are dealing with right now. You are familiar with the word justified? That’s when we accepted the Lord’s sacrifice and confessed our sins. The next step is sanctification leading to our ultimate goal of glorification. Sanctification bridges the gap between being set right with God through the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, and entering into glory to share all eternity with Jesus Christ, and God our Father. Sanctified means to be set apart or to become holy as He is holy. To sum this part up, Jesus was the focus of our justification. We are living and enduring sanctification through life’s experiences. He is the author, the trailblazer, the pioneer, and the founder of our salvation. He has already passed this way and will lead us to glory. We are saved by the result of the work of our High Priest. We are saved by His life. “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” (Romans 5:10)

Now let’s turn to the crux of this lesson. Let’s discuss our final destination. Let’s discuss our glorification. “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.” (I Corinthians 15:20)

“But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.” (I Corinthians 15:23)

Let's ask ourselves a question. What kind of fruit does a peach tree bear? What do apples, or pears, or maybe plums produce? Apples don't produce pears on their trees, or peaches bear plums. No, as it is so, Jesus is the first fruit and He will produce Sons and Daughters to glory after His Kind. Let's look at another illustration. When a woman is to give birth to her baby, she doesn't give birth to a dog, cat, or anything else, but a human baby. Evolutionist will argue about this, but the fact is, no one that is human has given birth to anything but a human baby. It is exactly that same with us. When God, so to speak, impregnates us with His Holy Spirit (a deposit) and we are in the womb of the Heavenly Jerusalem, when we are glorified or raised from the dead at His coming we will be like He is, not something else. WE will be exactly what we have sprung from, and that was God.

God gives us natural illustration of this natural world to make His point clear so that we can understand what He is doing. He is reproducing Himself and we will be members the family of God. “But some men will say, how are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Foolish ones, what you sow, is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be; but mere grain, perhaps wheat, or some other grain.”(I Corinthians 15:35-37) Think of the line of reasoning here. You put a dead seed into the ground and when it becomes a full plant producing its own kind, but with a very different body. And so it will be with our glorification, a body that has continuity with the resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

“But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” (I Corinthians 15:38-44)

The principle here is that God has given each of us a body suitable for its part in His creation. It is only logical that God will give us suitable body for our resurrection life as sons and daughters of God. It will be glorified. It will be like God our Father and like our redeemer, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Remember when Jesus was speaking with Nicodemus and told him that “ye must be born again”...what did Jesus say? John 3:

v.7 “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

v.8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Remember Jesus, when He was resurrected could walk through walls, or appear and disappear at will. Jesus was now Spirit, but could be handled and described Himself as flesh and bone...not flesh and blood, as the life of the mortal is in the blood, and Jesus was no longer mortal, but glorified with a new resurrection body. The same body we will have.

Finally, from the scriptures we will be like Christ in every detail that relates to character, composition, and family. As to personality, He will be Himself, our Lord, King and Savior. He is our creator, by John 1:1-3. He will always have preeminence over us because of the His character and being our King and Lord. But we will have ours! He is God, but we will be part of the God family.. That just blows my mind and should yours.

Final scripture in closing: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Romans 12:1-2) If no one has a spiritual goal then they will be conformed to this lost and

dying world. It is all around us and we can absorb it like a sponge. The only right goal is to fully encourage the right preparation. Being not conformed to this world, but being conformed to Jesus Christ and consciously, consciously choosing to be like Him!

When we were born, we didn't have a choice as to who our parents were, our surroundings, or our inherited traits. We were a slave born into bondage to Satan the devil. But when God intervened and by His Holy Spirit called each one of us to repentance, then God began to reveal Himself to us. He freed us from that bondage to Satan, so that we could consciously choose, by an act of free will, to be transformed into the image of His Son and we leave this world and its pleasures behind. As I've said, we don't know what we shall be, or look like, or the power or authority that will be given us. It is all in God's sovereign will and power. He can bestow blessing, honor and glory to whomever He chooses. He can and will make us Kings and Priest to God and we WILL rule upon this earth to the glory and honor of Jesus Christ our Lord, and Almighty God our Father. It's promised to us, His Body the Church, the Saints of the Living God through mercy and grace by the sacrifice of our Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross. It will come to pass, and my friend, it may be sooner than anyone can even imagine.

### **WILL YOU BE IN THAT FAMILY??**

If you're reading this and have a background within the true Church of the Living God, then what I've written will be well known by you as you have believed your Bible, but the reason for this study and the person I am reaching out to, the person this is directed to, is the person with the clean slate concerning their relationship with Jesus Christ and God our Father. Meaning they have had none and are searching. Maybe you are that person now reading this article and the Holy Spirit is using these words to put a need, a hunger, and a conviction about the way your life has been up to this point. Do you feel like you're on a dead end road? Does life seem to be without joy or purpose? What I'm going to do is ask you to answer some simple questions right now, in your heart and be honest with yourself.

Are you struggling to find an answer to that empty feeling you have inside? Have you depended on drugs, or alcohol to numb the feeling of hopelessness that has paralyzed you? Has the world got you painted into a corner with no hope?

Is your life full of disappointment and pain? Or have you known the name of Jesus because of your denomination, but never have made a profession of faith in Jesus, the Son of God? Call upon the name of Jesus in true remorse for how your life is been up to this point. Believe what the Bible says, that Jesus died for your sins, my sins, the sins of this entire world. He was nailed to a cruel wooden instrument of Roman death; He was buried for three days and nights, and rose on the third day, which was the sign of Him being the Messiah. He sits now at the right hand of the Father making intercession during our prayers. And He's coming again...soon. His Holy Spirit will guide you into a deeper, more satisfying relationship with the King of the Universe, than you ever received from an empty, hollow relationship with the god of this world, Satan the devil. Do it now, while it is still available.

Maybe you have never been good at prayer, or speaking to someone you can't see. But He can see you. He can fill you right now. What it takes for you to see Him. See Him in your mind's eye, and in your heart with a faith as small as the grain of a mustard seed. What it takes is for you to be sorry for your mistakes, your sins, and know that you cannot enter into a life of joy and happiness in what people call "heaven" on your own. It's impossible, as God will not allow a mere mortal into His presence with unforgiven sin in their life. It's take a sacrifice, a Holy Sacrifice that will satisfy the requirement to forgive and it takes blood of a perfect sacrifice to complete that forgiveness. That is where Jesus comes in. He is what was required. He was the ONLY sinless mortal who ever lived. You see, God knew that man could not, would not be able to save himself, so God in His mercy became a man. He left glory on high to be born into our world for one purpose...to DIE for you and for me, as that perfect sacrifice. Repeat this simple prayer right now believing in your heart and a humble, contrite spirit.

Jesus, I call upon you, and ask that you free me of this world and its evil. I ask you to come into my heart. Forgive me of the sins I have committed. Make me a new creature to be conformed to your image. I believe that you died and rose again for the salvation of the world, and for me. I confess my sins and believe in the only begotten Son

of God, Jesus Christ, who is sitting at your right hand on your throne. I believe He is coming back soon, and I want to make a commitment to purify myself, just as He is pure. Amen.

“Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies Himself, just as He is pure.” (1John 3:3)

If you made that prayer honestly, earnestly, then believe now that Christ came into your heart and you will feel a burden lifted from your shoulders. Let each one of us purify him/her self so that we may be glorified to be sons and daughters of God within His God Family. For we shall be part of the huge family of God if we believe on the only begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ.

If there is anything that I can pray with you, or if you have a need,  
please email me at [www.realteam1999@sbcglobal.net](mailto:www.realteam1999@sbcglobal.net).

***This is Pastor Mike Taylor, wishing you well, till we meet at Jesus feet.***