

Episode: God and His Family No. 04

Narrator: Apostle Paul

Primary Scriptures: John 3:1-15; Acts 2-5

Story Summary: Becoming a child of God

Location: Israel

Time: First Century

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Acts 2:38

John 3:1 starts the story of Nicodemus coming to see Jesus. Nicodemus says that Jesus is a teacher who has come from God." Jesus begins a discourse making it plain that he has a different relationship with God and is not just a teacher or prophet who has come from God. Jesus replies, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again...no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit."

Throughout his teachings, Jesus obliquely refers to himself as the Son of God, and often spoke of God as "my Father." Jesus's implication that he had an intimate child-father relationship with God was grounds for blasphemy according to the religious leaders.

It appears the early Christians viewed the process of entering the family of God as including the steps of believing in Jesus as the Son of God, repenting, being baptized, and receiving the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost, Peter told the potential new believers, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38)

John wrote, "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands." (1 John 5:1-3) Being a child of God includes both the process of being born as a child of God, and growing into maturity through obedience and loving other children of God.

Being a child of God is a special privilege. John wrote "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" We get to be called children of God because of his love, not because of anything we have earned.

The children of God are known because they are righteous. In 1 John 3:7-10, John wrote, "Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning...No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning because they have been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are."