

## Eye-Opening Grace

by Scotty Smith

“Don’t be afraid!” Elisha told him (Gehazi). “For there are more on our side than on theirs!” Then Elisha prayed, “O LORD, open his eyes and let him see!” The LORD opened the young man’s eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire. 2 Kings 6:16-17

Abba Father, sometimes like Elisha’s servant, we get overwhelmed. A combination of world events, personal challenges, and loved-one’s struggles overwhelm us.

We need the same eye-opening grace you gave Elisha’s servant. Let us see, feel, know you are with us and for us. Far greater is the One in us than anyone and anything against us (1 Jn. 4:4). And way more glorious is our “in-Christ-ness” than any mess, crisis, or challenge we are in right now. Your throne above us and your arms under us, your Spirit in us and your angels all around us—we’ll never be outnumbered.

Help us embrace our vulnerability and weakness as opportunities to rely on you. Mute the voice of “the accuser of the brethren,” who attacks us in our weariness with shame, fear, and wrong thinking.

Free us to run to the throne of grace regularly and to our grace-friends quickly. Thank you for the loving, praying, perspective-giving friends you have given us. Life simply cannot be well-lived alone. So Very Amen.



June 5, 2022

10:30 A.M.

## The Family of God

“Whoever does **God's will**  
is my *brother*  
and *sister*  
and *mother.*”

- Mark 3:35



# Order of Service

## Announcements

Welcome

Missions Report

Preparation for Worship

-----God's Greatness-----

Call To Worship

Hymn of Praise

“O For a Thousand(Hallelujah)”. . . . . Wesley/Hudson/Miller

Prayer of Invocation

Affirmation of Faith: Our World Belongs to God©

statement of faith for the Christian Reformed Church

Song of Praise

“How Great is Our God”. . . . . Tomlin/Reeves/Cash

Children are dismissed to Sunday School.

----- God's Renewal-----

Understanding Ourselves: Romans 6:1-4

Public Confession

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon and Comfort: Isaiah 1:18

Song of Renewal

“Holy Spirit”. . . . . Getty/Townend

-----God's Grace-----

Scripture Reading: Mark 3:31-35

Prayer

The Sermon

“The Family of God”

Song of Communion: “How Beautiful”. . . . . Twila Paris

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Prayer of Approach

Scripture Reading: Mark 14:22-25 (Optional)

Holy Communion

-----God's Blessing-----

Parting Hymn

“Make Us One”. . . . . Twila Paris

Benediction

# Notes

## Reflection

“It is well known that Pentecost reverses Babel. The people who built the tower of Babel sought to make a name, and a unity, for themselves. At Pentecost, God builds his temple, uniting people in Christ. Unity – interpretive agreement and mutual understanding – is, it would appear, something that only God can accomplish. And accomplish it he does, but not in the way we might have expected. Although on-lookers thought that the believers who received the Spirit at Pentecost were babbling (Acts 2:13), in fact they were speaking intelligibly in several languages (Acts 2:8-11). Note well: they were all saying the same thing (testifying about Jesus) in different languages. It takes a thousand tongues to say and sing our great Redeemer's praise.”

—Kevin Vanhoozer

## Upcoming Events

Obedience does not originate relationship with God (faith does that), but obedience is a sign of it.

Jesus was saying that there is a new family which is far superior to the human family, for it is eternal. Its ties are far *stronger*. It is far more *satisfying*. It is far more *demanding*. Those who are in his spiritual family are *far more dear* to him than his human family, with whom he lived for thirty years! What Jesus said here has massive importance.<sup>4</sup>

**How can we use Jesus' exceptional view of the family espoused in this passage to strengthen the lives of families today?**

To bridge the contexts, one needs to confront head-on Jesus' reevaluation of the significance of biological family ties. If we are selfishly looking for how to make our nuclear families happier and more secure, we will not find much here. If we are looking for God's grander purpose for the family, we will find good news, particularly for those who, for whatever reasons, are alone and without family.

### Final Conclusions

1. Jesus emphasizes the primacy of the family of God over the natural family without demanding the severing of any relationship with members of the natural family.
2. Jesus does challenge his followers to put his authoritative call above all loyalties to the natural family, be they themselves followers of Christ or not.
3. A follower of Christ will concentrate on the question of the will of God (Mark 3:35). God's will can be discerned by absorbing the counsel of God revealed in Scripture, by means of prayer, growth in humility, and careful conversation with other followers of Christ.
4. Following Jesus, the eternal Son of God, may lead to sharp accusations. As stated above, his natural family initially opposes him strongly (Mark 3:20–21, 31–35), as do the spiritual leaders of Israel (3:22–30).

<sup>1</sup>Osborne, G. R. (2014). *Mark* (M. L. Strauss & J. H. Walton, Eds.; p. 63). Baker Books.

<sup>2</sup>1. Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1981), p. 246.

<sup>3</sup>Hughes, R. K. (1989). *Mark: Jesus, servant and savior* (Vol. 1, pp. 96–98). Crossway Books.

<sup>4</sup>Hughes, R. K. (1989). *Mark: Jesus, servant and savior* (Vol. 1, pp. 96–98). Crossway Books.

**Friday, June 5 4:00-5:00 P.M. Men and Youth Laser Tag** at Jay Lanes Cost: \$13.00 for 3 games. Followed by a cookout at the Deichert's. Let Matt know if you are interested by June 3.

**Tuesday, June 7 6:00 PM to Dusk (includes Supper)**  
Summer Youth/Young Adult Bible Study at the Deichert's

**Sunday, June 12 10:30 A. M. Graduate Recognition Sunday**

**Sunday, June 19 6:15-7:15 P.M. House of Prayer**  
GCC Prayer Gathering —1300 High St.

**Monday, June 20—Wednesday, June 22 Jim Thorpe Camping Trip** for Youth and Young Adults: grade 6—age 30.  
See Deana for more information.

Bring in your Redner's receipts. For every \$5000 in receipts, Grace Covenant Youth Group receives \$50.00 back from Redner's. Please give them to Barb Knarr.

### Crossing Cultures International David and Mindy Nelson



**PRAISE THE LORD JESUS** for hearing your prayers and answering them according to His will. **PRAISE THE LORD JESUS** for supplying the needed financial support for the CCI national workers to carry on and expand this ministry in their countries.

### DiscipleMakers: Tim and Holly Holden

- Praise for a successful Women's Conference.
- Pray that the recently completed Core Values Video will energize students to reach others on their campus.

### CRU: Steve and Kristin Scholl

- Pray for the family of Jason Spieker, who died in a tragic accident last month. He is survived by a wife and two young daughters.
- Pray Maddie and Jonathan as they transition to their new home.
- Pray for breakthrough in marriages and families as they experience God's power to heal even the most impossible situations.

## Prayer/Praise. . . . . June 5, 2022

- Pray for Mike Row, who is having surgery on June 6<sup>th</sup> to remove kidney stones. Pray for a successful procedure and God’s healing for Mike.
- Praise that Denny Bartchak is in remission from lung and bladder cancer.
- Praise that Austin, the stepson of Lorraine Blanski’s niece, is doing well one year after his accident. Pray for continued healing and God’s strength for Austin as he navigates his new life using his prosthetics.
- Pray for Koreen Mace and her sister, Gwen, and their families. Their father passed away on May 30th. Pray for God’s peace and comfort for Koreen, Gwen, and their families and those who may not know the Lord.
- Pray for Anthony and Janet Conte, parents of Mandi Yensan’s friend, Christine. Anthony is in the hospital with fluid buildup around his heart and needs a new valve. Pray for Anthony’s surgery to be scheduled soon.
- Pray for Leah, daughter of John Kurtyka, cousin of Lorraine Blanski. Please continue to pray for Leah, who is struggling with drug addiction and is away at an 8-month drug rehabilitation program. Pray for God’s strength, peace, and comfort for Leah.
- Pray for Terry Cecchetelli’s grandnephew, Liam, who is 1-year old and has a rare disease called PDHA-1. He will need a feeding tube. Pray for God’s wisdom for Liam’s doctors and strength and comfort for Liam’s and Terry’s families.
- Pray for Steve Simons neighbor, Mrs. McCabe, who has dementia. Pray for God’s strength for the McCabe family during this difficult time.
- Praise that Dalton Weider, father of Lulu Bocci’s friend, Mary, is now in rehab learning to talk, walk, and move his muscles. Pray for his progress and his family as they support him.
- Pray for Igor Parfeniouk, a North Coventry police officer with Matt Deichert. Pray for Igor’s sister and her family, as they are still living in Ukraine.
- Praise that Dawn Rhoads, Igor’s mother-in-law, who had her 4<sup>th</sup> cancer treatment on April 25<sup>th</sup>, is doing much better. Pray for continued healing for Dawn.
- Praise that Delores, the mother of Donna Jenkins’ niece, Shelly, is home from the hospital and doing better.
- Praise that Lynn Rhoads, a friend of Donna Jenkins, is home and doing much better.
- Praise that Donna Jenkins’ friend, Debbie Breyer, is home from the nursing home. Pray for Debbie’s husband, who is in the hospital with undetermined issues. Pray for God’s healing.
- Pray for Nic Collins. The new school is not being launched as their director stepped down. Pray that Nic receives an internship with the church.
- Pray for Donna Jenkins’ nephew, Evan James, who has a very rare disease, CDA. Praise that Evan can be off the breathing machine for the hours he is awake. Pray for God’s healing for Evan and for his family and wisdom for his doctors.
- Pray for Justine Schumaker, mother of Renee Schumaker. Pray for healing for Justine through her chemotherapy treatment

## Message

### “The Family of God”

*Mark 3:31–35 (ESV)*

*And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. <sup>32</sup>And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you.” <sup>33</sup>And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” <sup>34</sup>And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! <sup>35</sup>For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”*

### The Setting

At the periphery of the surging throng, standing by nervously, was Jesus’ family. “Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, ‘Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you’” (vv. 31, 32).

### His Family is Looking for Him

It is impossible to know whether Jesus was aware of the specific purpose behind the insistent call of his family. Their request is in reality an attempt to turn Jesus away from his God-given mission.<sup>1</sup>

### They certainly were not ready for his startling reply:

“‘Who are my mother and my brothers?’ he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him [Here the idea is that he gave them a searching look.<sup>2</sup> Matthew adds that he gestured with his hand, 12:49] and said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother’” (vv. 34, 35).<sup>3</sup>

### What then did Jesus mean by his shocking answer?

He did not mean that he was severing family ties. What he did mean was that there is a deeper kinship than flesh and blood, a spiritual kinship which is characterized by obedience to the Father.

**For this reason he said, “Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”**