

Rev. Dan Welch Pentecost 7
7-8-18 Text- Mark 6: 1-13

When we compare the Gospel of Mark with Matthew and Luke, we notice that Mark does not have a genealogy. In a way, that's a shame, because a genealogy is important. A genealogy is a record or account of a person's ancestry. It helps you honor a person because of his or her lineage, as you trace their heritage back through the generations to ancestors who lived long ago.

In the Bible Jesus has His genealogy, His family tree, mapped out in two different places. Consider Matthew's genealogy. Matthew helps us see God at work in history, raising up the Messiah promised to all Israel through *David's* line. Or consider Luke's genealogy. Luke takes us all the way back to *Adam* and helps us see how God sent Jesus to be the Savior of *all* peoples everywhere. Matthew and Luke have genealogies, but Mark doesn't.

What Mark *does* have, though, is a genogram. A genogram (like the one(s) on the screen here) is a visual mapping of family relationships, both physical and emotional. With squares representing males and circles representing females along with

different types of lines, all of these help you to identify birth parents and birth order, marriages, divorces, remarriages, separations, adoption, and now even cohabitation. It's the emotional relationships, however, that give a genogram its color. Green identifies intimate relationships; red identifies hostile relationships; blue identifies relationships of outright abuse. You can look at a genogram and see not only your physical relationships but also the emotional components of those relationships that have shaped who you are. A genogram is basically a family life chart both as the family now exists, as it existed in the past and through speculation as it will or might exist in the future. Genograms can be especially helpful to counselors and family therapists as they seek to better understand the family situation of their clients.

Mark doesn't have a genealogy, but he does have a genogram. It appears in today's reading, and looking at this genogram we will see what it means that ***God Has Made You Part of His Family.***

Our text opens up with Mark telling us that Jesus is going home. The last time Jesus was home, it was in a situation of conflict. Jesus

was surrounded by a crowd of people so large that He wasn't even able to eat. His immediate family came to seize him by force, telling others that he was "out of his mind" (3:21). Clearly, a family therapist be drawing **red** lines here: "close but hostile relationships fostered by fear of a brain disorder," might just be the words a counselor would jot down on his or her little note pad. Jesus, however, says that all those **gathered around** Him are His family; **everyone** who does the will of God is His mother and sister and brother.

This time, Jesus comes home and enters a synagogue and preaches. In response, the people map out His genogram. They identify Jesus in terms of His family relationships. "Isn't this Mary's son?" they say, not mentioning Joseph either because he's dead or because there are rumors about the circumstances of Jesus' birth. 'Don't we know His brothers and sisters?' They look at Jesus, and they see His family, and, because they see His family, they take offense at Him, and they do not honor him. Here, you see the difference between genograms and genealogies. A genealogy invites you to honor a person because of their lineage; a

genogram is so close and personal that sometimes it's hard to see God at work. It can lead to **dishonor**.

Yet here, Jesus does the most amazing thing. In the face of opposition, Jesus takes His disciples, the people He earlier called family, and sends them out to do the work of His Father in mission. They go out with basically nothing but the Word, and yet they do the work of God. The Father sends Jesus, Jesus makes people members of God's family, and Jesus sends them out to do His Father's work.

Here we see that Jesus is not limited by family relationships. Instead, by His Word and His work, He **creates** them. He brings people into the family of God. By His life, death, and resurrection, He makes people members of His kingdom, children of His heavenly Father, and He sends them out in the Spirit to do the Father's work. This is the good news of the text: Jesus makes people part of God's family. It was good news back then, and it's good news today.

Consider your family relationships. What does **your** genogram look like? (refer to image(s) on screen) If you were asked to map out your family relationships on a large piece of

poster board and then bring them with you into church, imagine how shameful that could be. People would see the things we try to keep hidden: maybe a lifelong conflict between you and your mother; tension with your children at home; cohabitation; marriage, divorce, and remarriage; emotional or alcohol abuse.

If we were to map out the physical and emotional relationships that have formed us, we might very well be ashamed to come to church. We might imagine that people here would reject us because of where we come from and because of who we are. Unfortunately, sometimes that *can* be the case; Christians can look down on other people because of their heritage—as if God’s love for us is based on our work, on our lives, on what we bring before Him, as if our family connections somehow save us.

That’s what makes it such a blessing to have this part of God’s Word before us today. This text reminds us that we’re not saved because of who we are or because of our families. We’re saved because of Jesus and what He does for us by God’s grace.

Here we see how Jesus works. He’s not limited by our fallen families. Instead, He has the power

to make people part of the family of God. As the writer to the Hebrews says, “In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God ... should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.” (Heb 2:10). God the Father made Jesus the author of *your* salvation, and He did this when Jesus completed His work through His suffering. Jesus came into one human family, but He also entered our entire human history and took upon Himself the shame of sin that has run in our family from the fall of Adam to today. He went to the cross. There, He was stripped of His clothes and died a shameful death. Jesus bore the shame of our sin, the shame of our nakedness, the shame of our families, that He might bring the joy of being a part of God’s family to you.

Now there’s nothing that can separate you from God’s family. In Jesus, all of your sins have been forgiven. The writer to the Hebrews goes on to say, “the One Who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.” (Heb 2:11). Jesus is not ashamed to call *you* brother and sister and members of God’s family. Regardless of *your* genogram, God

the Father sent Jesus to make you a part of His family. Through Baptism into the death and resurrection of Jesus, you have become part of the family of God. Amen!

