

The Church: One Big Happy Family? Hebrews 2:5 – 15
Jesus is not ashamed to call us his brothers and sisters. (Heb. 2:11 TNIV)

The saying, “*He’s my brother, so only I can hit him*” expresses some of the mixed feelings we may have about our own families. On one hand, we have an innate emotional need to belong to a family, which is one of the most vital and indispensable social units on earth. Therefore, it’s only natural that family bonds can produce in us a fierce love and loyalty. But on the other hand, growing up in such close physical and emotional proximity to each other means that we can really get to know our families – warts and all. Therefore, it’s easy to become critical of people that we know so well.

When we put our faith in Jesus Christ and receive the Holy Spirit we become members of another family called the Church. This is the great extended family of God made up of brothers and sisters from every nation, tribe, and language on planet earth. It is God’s will that this family works toward becoming unified by learning and practicing God’s perfect love toward one another. Given the nature of sinful and fallible humanity, this is a tall order. Therefore, we need to begin by looking at our church family from the perspective of Jesus Christ. What does Jesus see when he looks at his brothers and sisters in the family of God?

1. Read Hebrews 2:5 – 9. Why does the writer of Hebrews emphasise the fact that, although angels are greater than humans, Jesus chose to come and live among us as a man, and not an angel?
2. See Luke 3:23 – 38 and John 1:12 – 13. What two natures does Jesus share with us as his human brothers and sisters?
3. How has Jesus’ suffering as a man enabled him to help us? (Hebrews 2:9 – 10, 14 - 15)
4. See Hebrews 2:11 – 13. What does it mean that, “*Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family*”? So *Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters*”? (Hebrews 2:11 TNIV)

Reflect: God looked down from heaven and saw how terribly sinful and dysfunctional his earthly family had become (e.g. Genesis 6:5 – 6). However, instead of condemning us, he sent his holy Son into our world to suffer for us in order to make us holy like him (Hebrews 2:14). How does seeing the Church through Christ’s eyes challenge you to look upon God’s family differently? (E.g. See Jesus statement in Mark 3:31 – 35)

Take time to pray for your church family: Both your local church and the universal Church.