

Summary

In this sermon, Pastor Addison explores the deep human longing for belonging and community, using Jesus's surprising response to His biological family in Mark 3:31-35 as the foundation. Jesus redefines family not by shared blood, but by shared mission, pointing to the church as the answer to our loneliness and desire for connection. The sermon challenges listeners to see the church not through the lens of past experiences, but through the lens of what Scripture says it should be. Building on what he calls the "ecclesiological minimum," the pastor outlines three essential marks of the church: worship, community, and mission. He calls believers to worship Jesus as the central focus of their lives, to pursue genuine community where people truly know and are known by one another, and to actively participate in the mission of helping people know and follow Jesus. Each of these three areas is presented with practical steps, encouraging every person to take the next step, no matter where they are starting from.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for bringing us together today as people who are searching for connection, purpose, and belonging. As we open Your Word and discuss what it means to be part of Your family, we ask that You would quiet our hearts and open our minds. Remove any distractions or preconceptions that might keep us from hearing what You want to say to us today. Holy Spirit, guide our conversation, draw us closer to one another, and above all, draw us closer to You. May this time together be more than just a discussion, but a step toward the community and mission You have called us to. In Jesus's name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What is your all-time favorite TV show or movie that centers around a group of friends or a family sticking together, and why does it resonate with you?

Key Verses

- Mark 3:31-35
- Mark 3:20-21
- Galatians 6:1-2
- Psalm 103:1-2

- John 3:16

Questions

- The sermon opens with the idea that we are all, in some way, looking for 'our people.' Have you ever experienced a season of loneliness even while being surrounded by others? What did that feel like?
- Jesus's response to his biological family in Mark 3:31-35 was considered scandalous in His culture. Why do you think Jesus made such a bold statement about redefining family, and what does that tell us about His priorities?
- The pastor describes the church as the answer to our longing for a 'chosen family.' How does your experience with the local church compare to that vision? Where have you seen it succeed, and where has it fallen short?
- The sermon presents a sobering picture of the average global Christian: a woman living in poverty in the Global South, with limited access to resources. How does that reality challenge the way you think about your own faith and what you consider essential to it?
- Worship was described not just as an activity, but as keeping Jesus as the main thing in our lives. Are there areas of your life where something else has quietly taken the place that belongs to Jesus? How do you recognize when that happens?
- Galatians 6:1-2 (NIV) calls us to carry one another's burdens. What makes it difficult to be truly known by others in a church community, and what would it take for you to take a step toward deeper vulnerability with someone in your group?
- The pastor says that gossip is a grievous sin because it tears down the very connections Jesus designed for us. Do you agree? How have you seen broken trust affect community in a church or small group setting?
- Of the three marks of the church (worship, community, and mission), which one do you feel most engaged in right now, and which one feels like the biggest area of growth for you personally?

Life Application

This week, choose one practical step in each of the three areas the sermon outlined. For worship, carve out at least five minutes each day to commune with Jesus, whether through reading Scripture, listening to it, or simply praying. For community, take one intentional step toward being known, whether that means joining a small group, inviting someone for coffee, or being honest with a trusted friend about something you are currently struggling with. For mission, look for one natural opportunity to share how your faith

shapes a decision you make or a value you hold. Come back next week ready to share what you did and what you noticed.

Key Takeaways

- Jesus redefines family around shared mission rather than shared blood, and He points to the church as the community that meets our deep human need for belonging and connection.
- The church has three essential marks: worship, community, and mission. A church that neglects any one of these, especially mission, is no longer fully functioning as the church Jesus envisioned.
- Our shared faith in Jesus connects us to a global family of believers across every nation, income level, and culture, and that reality should challenge us to examine whether we have allowed other identities or values to take the place that belongs to Jesus alone.
- Genuine community requires vulnerability and trust, and things like gossip are serious sins because they destroy the very connections that Jesus designed the church to foster.
- Every believer is called to ministry. Whether that means living out your faith daily, talking about it openly, or starting something new, the mission of helping people know and follow Jesus belongs to all of us, not just those in vocational ministry.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the gift of Your church and for the invitation to be part of something so much bigger than ourselves. Thank You that You have called us not just to believe in You, but to belong to one another and to be sent together on mission. As we leave this time of discussion, we ask that You would take the seeds planted today and grow them into real change in our lives. Where we have been isolated, give us the courage to step into community. Where we have made other things the center of our lives, restore You to the throne. And where we have been silent about our faith, give us the words and the boldness to speak. May this group be a small picture of the chosen family You are building across the world. We love You, and we trust You with our lives. In Your name we pray, Amen.