



# The View From Here

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## TURNING THE WOLRD UPSIDE DOWN

Last Sunday afternoon, Denise and I took off to go see my youngest brother, who was back from Virginia visiting my mom at LaHarpe, KS.

We raked and baled some wheat straw, then cut and piled some brush and hedge firewood (*but didn't burn anything!*). Denise had a good time with her mom on Monday and then my mom on Tuesday morning before we headed back to Great Bend.

Denise made the comment when we got back it was good to be home; this was now our home. While it is always good to see family—and some of them would like to see us more often—the church here has become our home and family. It seems obedience and water (baptismal water) is truly thicker than blood.

Look at this passage from Matthew 12:

<sup>46</sup> *While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. <sup>47</sup> Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you."*

<sup>48</sup> *He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" <sup>49</sup> Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. <sup>50</sup> For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." [NIV]*

Was Jesus being disrespectful to his family in this scene? Was he getting back at his unbelieving and insulting brothers—all of whom made fun of his messianic claims until after his resurrection? Was he impolite to his own mother here? I don't think so. To the contrary—he was making the very significant point that relationships formed by faith are more important than our dearest natural ties. He was teaching them that to be united with Him in the pursuit of the kingdom of God is a closer

alliance than any that can be created by flesh and blood. Basically Jesus was saying: "*Obedience is thicker than blood. The person who obeys my heavenly Father's will is my brother and sister and mother*" (Matthew 12.50 MSG).

Jesus was performing a truth he had already taught. Earlier in the gospel of Matthew, he told his followers that biological families would be divided because of him. Do you remember what he said about brothers and siblings and parents and children being alienated on account of him?

*"Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. [Matthew 10.37 NIV]*

That's some strong language! But it wasn't meant to belittle what we now call the nuclear human family—but to magnify the value of extended family in Christ. He wanted to affirm the harmony of the faith community around him. He wanted to tell us just how important the concept of church as *Family of God* really is.

So long as church is a place or a series of events on certain days and at certain times—it'll continue to have minimal to

decreasing influence for changing the world. It'll continue to create unhealthy dependence by the many on the few and preserve our focus on externals as measurements of Christian life and maturity.

However—if we could rid ourselves of the debilitating effects of institutionalized religiosity (what has passed for Christianity for the last 1700 years)—and enter the experience of God's life-giving presence in Christ—everything would change. As the authentic body of Christ in the world—such a church could turn the world upside down again.

Church would not be something to "do" but would be experienced as who Christ's followers are everywhere, with everybody, all the time. Worship would no longer be a place to "go" but would be the offering of our bodies as living sacrifices. Our outreach would not be a "program" but would be touching people with acceptance, love, and nurture that honors and imitates Jesus himself!

We can do that—with the help of the Holy Spirit!

*Jack*

**TEN REASONS I BELIEVE GOD IS ABOUT TO DO SOMETHING GREAT IN OUR CHURCH!**

- #1 – Jesus said that HE would build His church...that is a promise and it is true of OUR CHURCH! (Matthew 16.18)
- #2 – Jesus said that HIS Word would not fail to produce a harvest...so if you are faithful in declaring HIS Word then something GREAT is taking place, even if you can't see it yet! (See Isaiah 55.8-13)
- #3 – You are meeting resistance...which means the enemy is mad! Stay focused on Christ...you KNEW this would happen (Ephesians 6.12, I Peter 5.8)...entrust yourself to Jesus (I Peter 2.21-25) and believe that Isaiah 54.17 is true!
- #4 – God is raising up leaders around you, ones that comprehend the meaning of Ephesians 4.11-16, who want to OWN the ministry and be participators rather than spectators.
- #5 – God started our church...and He will bring it to completion...HE'S NOT FINISHED WITH YOU YET! (Philippians 1.6)
- #6 – The church is STILL His plan, He has NOT changed His mind...and He loves our church just as much as He loves any church!
- #7 – He is leading you towards greater steps of faith...which means you are becoming more desperate for Him...and when THIS happens He shows up in amazing ways and does the unexplainable and the undeniable! (Hebrews 11.6)

#8 – Though you may feel discouraged and disheartened...you STILL believe in WHO HE IS and WHAT HE HAS CALLED YOU TO DO! You may have suffered some setbacks lately...but there is something inside of you telling you to not give up on the God who has never given up on you! You've STILL got a fire (Jeremiah 20.9) and a hope!

#9 – God has given you a vision...one that is HUGE...one that keeps you up at night. And the fear of NOT doing what HE has told you to do is beginning to trump the fear of man!

#10 – His church is coming together like never before to begin completing each other instead of competing against each other!!! When we all cheer each other on and work together...it speaks VOLUMES to a world that is desperate for Jesus!



**A BIG WELCOME  
TO THE NEWEST MEMBERS  
OF THE CCC FAMILY:**

**JUNE 12:**  
Aiden Noblitt, by baptism.

**June 26:**  
Damon Fisk, by baptism

*Be sure to welcome them and  
make the effort to get to know  
them as God brings us together in  
His family.*



**The Word of Truth**

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