

WHEN FAMILY IS HARD TO LOVE

PRECEPT

Colossians 3:13-14

¹³ “Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.”

PROMISE

What happens when our harmonious and seemingly perfect family turns into a family that is hard to love? For some, it might just be a certain era in life, or it comes in waves, in certain circumstances, or for others, a permanent season of when family is hard to love. When family is hard to love, it’s a challenging and painful season of life, but love will still find its way and mend everything.

When you feel unseen, when it feels like you are not part of the family, remember that God sees you. Genesis 16:13 says, “You are the God who sees me.” He sees your worth, your sacrifices, for who you are and not for what you can do. Even when your family don’t value what you do, remain faithful, for your work will not be in vain, and God will reward you for it. Continue loving your family even when it’s hard and when they don’t appreciate you, because you are doing it for God.

When favouritism plays, it makes it difficult for siblings to love each other, divides them, and leads to unfortunate outcomes. Genesis 37:4 tells, “When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.” Don’t give any special treatments, discipline those who need to be disciplined, and show compassion and grace to those who need it. Don’t blame others for having favourites; let’s assess ourselves first because we might need to improve ourselves, so they can easily love us. God doesn’t have any favourites, so we shouldn’t either.

We sometimes can’t help but compare out of frustration. Ephesians 4:29 says, “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” Comparing is an unwholesome talk; focus on saying things that build up according to their need.

Differences weren’t designed to divide a family, but to strengthen its harmony. 1 Corinthians 12:12 notes, “Just as a body, though one, has many parts...” Learn others’ style of communication and love languages. God made each one of us different, may love be used to make our differences a compliment to others.

Learn to communicate your expectations and give grace to those who fall short. Ephesians 4:2 says, “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.” Let Jesus be the foundation of your love for your family: a love that’s forgiving, sacrificial, and unconditional. Experience the magnitude of Jesus’ love for you, and clothe yourselves with His love because love covers a multitude of sins, and that kind of love will develop a perfect harmony in your family. Even when family is hard to love, decide to love them with the love Jesus gives you.

PRACTICE

- 1. Family.** How is your family? And how are you in the family?
- 2. In action.** Think about a recent time you were struggling to love your family, and what are some of the things they did (or didn’t) do to help you love them easily? And how can we pray/encourage you regarding this?

PRAYER

I. Worship Service

- Pray that our praises be a true reflection of our love for Jesus.

II. Family

- Help us to love one another fervently.

III. Obedience

- Pray that even in our sufferings, we will continue to obey God wholeheartedly.

IV. Courage

- Pray for courage to face the unknown and faith to trust in God’s guiding hand.

V. Members

- Pray for our community to grow in relationship with God.

VI. Disciples

- Pray that we will reflect God’s love and grace as we obey in making disciples.

VII. Pastors

- May God’s favour rest upon them and may they not grow weary in well-doing.