



Lesson 5

Your New Relationship

Introduction: As a member of Christ's "body" in this place, you are a "child" in God's family. When you were baptized you became a "child of God by faith" (Gal. 3.26-27) and you were "born again" (John 3.3-5). This new birth gave you a new relationship with other Christians who have obeyed God in the same way, a new family, as it were, a spiritual family. That relationship is described by God in many ways. Like the facets of a prism, each figure of speech conjures up a different aspect of the same relationship. I'm a husband, father, elder...there are difference aspects of the same person. It is important to understand the value of having been "added to the church" (Acts 2.47) and use the proper language when referring to it.

NEW RELATIONSHIPS SUGGESTED

- Family** Mark 10.28-30; Gal. 6.10; Eph. 3.15
- Vine** John 15.1-6
- Body** Rom. 12.4-8; I Cor. 12.12-27; Eph. 4.16
- Building** I Cor. 3.9-10; Eph. 2.21
- Husbandry/Field** I Cor. 3.9
- Kingdom** Mat. 13.38, James 2.5

Of what do each of these figures make you think and what aspects of the relationship might be learned from these descriptive terms?

EXPERIENCE OBSERVATION:

Sometimes this new relationship causes problems with our "blood" family. They may have difficulty understanding why we feel such an obligation to, and bond with, the members and they feel hurt that our service to the Lord is affecting our relationship with them; maybe even causing conflicts in scheduling and the like. Or maybe they don't understand that you are finished with your old life and decided to do something new and better. 1 Peter 4.3-5 Effective cures for possible trouble in this area include these three **P's**: Prayer, Patience, and Practicing what you preach. By way of establishing a method of consistency in our practice, I suggest the following three concepts:

- 1) Obey **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS** from God. Col. 3.5-11
- 2) Apply **PRINCIPLES** which God established. Phil 2.1-12
- 3) Accept **RESPONSIBILITY** for your influence on others. I Cor. 8.10-13

Eph. 4.17-32

ADDED to the church, which is a...

FAMILY (member)

Galatians 6.10 first help (spiritual aid)
Ephesians 3.15 same name

VINE (branch)

John 15.4 continuous life source
John 15.5 identical fruit

BODY (member, part)

Romans 12.4-8 shared direction
I Cor. 12.12-27 shared pain
Ephesians 2.16 shared blood
Ephesians 3.6 shared promise
Col. 2.9; Eph. 4.16 shared growth
Colossians 1.18 shared head
Colossians 3.15 shared peace

BUILDING (part, block, brick)

I Cor. 3.9-10 common foundation
Ephesians 2.21 interdependent

HUSBANDRY/FIELD (laborer)

I Corinthians 3.9 fertile, tilled ground

KINGDOM (citizens, subjects)

Mt. 13.38 children
James 2.5 heirs

The church is not a club, organization, or entity apart from its integral parts—the **Christians** who comprise it.