

Jesus Family

Lesson 2.04

Jesus' family isn't talked about much in the Bible, but this lesson will focus on them, and how their belief in the Messiah grew throughout Jesus' life.

Please read [Jude 1:1-25](#) before starting GraspingGod.com's free Bible study lessons, #2.04

Preliminary Bible Study Questions:

- 1) Who were the brothers and sisters of Jesus?
- 2) Was John the Baptist related to Jesus?
- 3) Did Jesus' brothers believe in his teachings?

Hey, great to see you again! Thanks for stopping by for another Bible lesson. Let's discuss Jesus' family, and see how we can increase our faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Jesus Family Members

Jesus' family was made up of at least nine members and possibly ten, or more. [Matthew 13:55-56](#) states, "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" Let's list the biblically verified family members: Joseph, Mary, Jesus, and the brothers and sisters of Jesus: James, Joseph, Simon, Judas (aka Jude), and unnamed sisters. Jesus had 10-12 immediate family members. The exact number eludes us, because we don't know how many sisters enjoyed Jesus as a big brother.

Jesus' step-grandpa was named Jacob ([Matthew 1:16](#)) or Heli ([Luke 3:23](#)), and his step-great-grandpa was named Matthan ([Matthew 1:15](#)) or Matthat ([Luke 3:24](#)).

Joseph, Father of Jesus

Let's step back in time a moment, to Jesus' birth. Joseph, father of Jesus was a skilled carpenter who had great faith in God. He responded with wise decisions while his future bride, Mary, was carrying baby Jesus. Most assuredly, Joseph's first thought upon hearing that Mary was pregnant would have been to break off their engagement. However, his faith in God proved enough for strict obedience to the angel's message from the Lord ([Matthew 1:20-25](#)).

Joseph was given another dream from God, which compelled him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt to flee an edict by King Herod to kill all boys under two years of age. Joseph did well and carried out the mission obediently, thereby saving the Christ child. Jesus' family stayed intact

through perilous times, thanks to Joseph's strong family leadership.

Joseph was no doubt in charge of the physical development of Jesus, because most Jewish fathers at the time were over their boys' physical growth. Boys would play vigorous body building games, and also contribute in the workplace. Fathers also helped greatly with the memorization of the Hebrew Scriptures. Joseph proved more than capable in raising our future Savior into adulthood. We owe this great man honor for following God, and raising up our Savior into adulthood.

Mary, Mother of Jesus

Mary, mother of Jesus was a humble lady who loved the Lord. Her life and motherhood would have a tremendous influence over Jesus during his developmental years. J.Oswald Sanders wrote of her life, "Everything indicates that she was one of those rare women whose glory it is to prepare a noble life, losing themselves in it, and desiring to be glorified only in its usefulness."

Mary was there for Jesus from conception to death to the resurrection. She was with the disciples when the Holy Spirit fell in large measure upon them ([Acts 1:12-14](#)). She was a true believer in the One sent from God. A favored woman she was!

Study more here: [The Virgin Mary](#)

Brothers and Sisters Of Jesus

The brothers and sisters of Jesus get minimal biblical coverage, especially Jesus' sisters. There is enough recorded to draw the conclusion that Joseph and Mary definitely gave birth to many more children after Jesus Christ ([Matthew 1:25](#), [12:47](#); [Luke 2:7](#); [John 2:12](#); [Acts 1:14](#)). Looking at the [Matthew 12:47](#) passage, one cannot draw the conclusion of the perpetual virginity of Mary, the mother of Jesus, as some religions falsely claim.

Jesus' family had mostly not believed in who he truly was, as indicated by the tension that [Luke 8:19-21](#) shares, "Then Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they couldn't get to him because of the crowd. Someone told Jesus, 'Your mother and your brothers are outside, and they want to see you.' Jesus replied, 'My mother and my brothers are all those who hear God's word and obey it.'" [Mark 3:21](#) even adds that his family "thought he was crazy." Jesus made his point that his first responsibility is to his Kingdom family. All Christians must take special note of this statement. Upon answering the call of God, nothing can stand in the way.

By the time Jesus begins his ministry Joseph is presumed dead, and one must wonder if Mary ever shared with her remaining loved ones the "secrets" that had been stored in her heart ([Luke 2:19](#)). Jesus, remember, told her at his first miracle that his time had not yet come ([John 2:4](#)), so Jesus' true identity remained mum.

[John 7:5](#) confirms that some of Jesus' family had reservations about him, "For even his brothers did not believe in him." The same was true for Jesus' disciples, as well, so don't be too judgmental with his family members. We would have acted the same, if not worse. It was early, not much was known, but there was so much more for Jesus' family to see.

John the Baptist

John the Baptist was Jesus' first cousin, and was born immediately before Christ. He prepared the way for his cousin, Jesus, by calling the nation of Israel to repentance. Luke shares this critical teaching by John the Baptist, "Everyone was expecting the Messiah to come soon, and they were eager to know whether John might be the Messiah. John answered their questions by saying, "I baptize you with water; but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am — so much greater that I'm not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" ([Luke 3:15-16](#)). John gave his life for his cousin's mission ([Luke 9:9](#)).

Jesus' Family Believed After the Resurrection

After Jesus' death and resurrection, things greatly changed. At least James, and probably the other brothers, had witnessed Jesus' resurrection. The Bible states that James became a believer at that time. Mary, mother of Jesus, and all the brothers of Jesus waited for the Holy Spirit to fall on them in Jerusalem after Christ's ascension ([Acts 1:12-14](#)). They were with other believers, including the disciples. The Holy Spirit soon fell upon the group and filled them with the power of God ([Acts 2:1-4](#)).

The apostle Paul later reports that Jesus' brothers were married and that they were going on mission to build the church ([1 Corinthians 9:5](#)). Knowing that Jesus' brothers became believers because of seeing the risen Christ should inspire us all. They were once doubters, but were given faith, which led them to repentance and belief in Jesus.

Jesus' brothers, James and Jude (aka Judas), both penned letters which eventually became books of the Bible. It's great to know God placed Jesus in a wonderful, God-fearing family. Jesus' family was used in marvelous ways to raise up our Savior. They were then used to build the young Christian church, which was being prepared for you and me.

Grasp This!

The family bonds that developed through the early life of Jesus proved to advance the gospel after Jesus' death. Even though there was an early reluctance for Jesus' family to believe who he was (the Messiah, and Son of God), they later trusted in their brother for eternal life. I can almost

hear Mary finally telling his brothers and sisters all that had transpired at Jesus' birth.

Our families are all important to us. Jesus places us in our families with purpose - there are no surprises. God uses the family to nurture and complete us.

Families also allow us to be bold with one another, about the truths of the gospel. Have you shared your faith with your family? Do they know you've died to your old self? Have they heard that Christ now reigns in your life ([Galatians 2:20](#)). You are where you are, because God specially placed you there. Let him use you to advance his awesome Kingdom.

Don't forget this important biblical truth. The ultimate family you can belong to is Jesus' family. He is the head of the church ([Colossians 1:18](#)), and once you make him your Lord, you belong to his church. After we believe in God with saving faith, we are adopted into Jesus' family. Our brothers and sisters are those who are already Spirit-filled disciples of Jesus Christ. Let's keep all things in perspective, and know that we are called with a higher calling, and that is to glorify God above all else. Trust him today.

Bible Study Questions:

- 1) Why do you think the closest people in Jesus' family (other than Mary) didn't believe in him until after his resurrection?
- 2) Upon the study of Jesus' family do you believe getting raised in a lower income family is beneficial spiritually?
- 3) Why are our earthly families important to us?

Inspirational Bible Verses:

I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for his body, the church. God has given me the responsibility of serving his church by proclaiming his entire message to you. This message was kept secret for centuries and generations past, but now it has been revealed to God's people. For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing his glory. [Colossians 1:24-27](#)

At that time Jesus prayed this prayer: "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way! "My Father has entrusted everything to me. No one truly knows the Son except the Father, and no one truly knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." [Matthew 11:25-30](#)

Faith Quotes!

Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood,

truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the fathers has been handed down to us. The Definition of the Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D)

Prayers of Thanksgiving:

Dear Lord Jesus,
Please hear my prayer today
I thank you for coming to earth
because it means so many things
You revealed God to us
What more could we ask?
You lived a perfect life
as an example we can follow
Holiness also qualified you to be our Lamb
You came to sit in the throne of David
and rule forever and ever
The devil was your target, too
he saw his future and it is just
You're now interceding for us on high
keeping us close to our Heavenly Father
You'll soon judge us, O Jesus
Prepare thy mercy seat with your grace
O Lord, your love must overtake our pride
Never let the river of life stop flowing.
Amen