



"And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." 1 John 4: 21

**Sunday – June 24, 2023**

## **To Know Christ...**

Do you have any siblings? Even a half-brother or half-sister? I have wondered if Jesus' half-siblings were even aware that Joseph was not Jesus' biological father, but maybe they did, we just don't know. Apparently, the others in Nazareth did not know: **"Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? <sup>56</sup> And His sisters, are they not all with us?"** (Matthew 13:55-56a) Can you imagine having Jesus as your oldest brother? What would your attitude be towards Him as you grew up? Rivalry? Beloved and dear? Distant or close? In a way it is hard to imagine, isn't it? Relationships change over time.

There is no doubt that Jesus had at least 6 siblings (4 brothers & at least 2 sisters). Jesus was the first of at least 7 children in the household of Joseph & Mary (we also know the Holy Spirit came over Mary to fulfill the Isaiah 7:14 prophecy, **"...a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel,"** and that son was Jesus; Matthew 1:22-23; Luke 1:34-35).

What if your attitude toward your oldest "perfect" brother was one of rivalry, thinking He was crazy?

...and then He died.

What if your attitude toward your oldest "perfect" brother was one of deep love and respect?

...and then He died.

Jesus' brothers were part of the group of 120 who were devoted to prayer while awaiting Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit to the apostles in Jerusalem (after Jesus' resurrection & ascension). **"These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along**

**with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.**” (Acts 1:14) They responded! If you are in Christ, He ***is*** our oldest brother. What is your attitude toward Him? Do you respond to Him or think His teachings are senseless? (Mark 3:21) Do you comprehend how deeply and tenderly He cares for you as His sibling? He died for us, the younger brother or sister, to honor our Heavenly Father. Oh, the LOVE of Family! We have received it, but do we give it equally as well?

- Carey Terry