**Eyesight – Week 2 – Family**

**May 18-19, 2019**

Alright guys…it’s time for us to break out our glasses to make sure we have good EYESIGHT. Yeah, you guys definitely look much better now! Today, we are in week two of our series and each week has one specific focus with our THP:

**God, help me to see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the way You see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

Families are awesome, aren’t they?! We all have family… the good parts AND the bad parts… and the reality is, we’re a part of our family… whether we like it or not! We may share our family’s last name. We look or act like some of our family members. Sometimes we go on family vacations, have family meals, play sports/games as a family. However, we ALSO argue with our families. We might yell at our families. We may even dislike them from time to time. Deep down, they’re still our family and we love them, don’t we?

I would love to tell you a little bit about my family…

**(Leaders Note: Share a few personal photos of your family…maybe share about your own experiences with your family growing up and currently. You can include good and/or bad.)**

Here’s the reality…we are faced with many choices in life. However, one of the choices that we do NOT get to make is our family. The family (biological family) is the one that we have whether we like it or not. I really wanted to spend one week of this series challenging us to look at our family differently. Very differently.

**So, here is our THP for this week: God, help me to see MY FAMILY the way You see MY FAMILY.**

The Bible is very focused on the family. We see a husband and wife, Adam and Eve, as the first two humans on the planet. They have two children, Cain and Abel; two sons; two brothers. The rest of the Bible is full of stories about different families…families of different sizes, different challenges, some with kids, some with no kids…the Bible has A LOT to say about the family.

Obviously, there are two parts of YOUR immediate family: parents and siblings. Let’s look at parents and what the Bible has to say about them. Ephesians 6:1-3 – *“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise—“so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy a long life on the earth.”*

Now, you’ll notice the phrase “honor your father and mother.” This is actually one of the Ten Commandments. They were given to Moses to share with the Israelite people and they were supposed to follow these commandments to show the world that they belonged to God and they worshiped Him. I believe the same thing exists today. As Christians, we should be leading the way and setting the example for our peers in how we treat our parents. I believe that whole-heartedly. I understand that it is difficult sometimes to honor your parents, but quite simply, this is one of God’s commandments and one that comes with a promise in verse 3: *“so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”*

Honoring your parents is oftentimes an extension of or where you learn how to honor God. There are things that our parents tell us to do that are hard or that we don’t want to do. However, we need to honor them! Well, guess what…it’s no different than with God!

I believe the SAME goes for honoring and respecting your siblings! Yes, even them! I’m sure some of you think that God doesn’t include them but He does ☺ In all seriousness, honoring, respecting, and loving people is sometimes very difficult!

Colossians 3:12-14 says: *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”*

This is why it’s important to see your family the way God sees them…the heart of Jesus’ message is one of love, grace, and forgiveness. **Honestly, the hardest people to show love, grace, and forgiveness to are usually the ones we love the most.** God has uniquely placed you in your family so that as a team (that’s what a family is!), you can live out the gospel of Jesus Christ and show others what a family centered on Christ can look like!

In a room this size, I know that there are many of you who come from a great family situation. You have a two-parent household, a roof over your head, plenty of food to eat, and your family loves and supports you. You might have heard this before, but I want to say it to you again anyway…DO NOT TAKE THIS FOR GRANTED!

There are others of you in this room who come from hard or challenging family situations. Maybe you come from a divorced family. Maybe you don’t even know or have a relationship with your dad or mom. Some of you may have the appearance of a loving family “from the outside looking in,” but in reality, it is not a loving environment or one that is centered on God.

If you’re in a tough situation at home and you would like to talk to someone about that, we have plenty of adult and high school leaders who would love to listen and talk with you after the service today. Don’t hold those things inside and allow them to eat away at you and make you more bitter, angry, or resentful.

**Listen…in order to see your family the way God sees them…you need to remember how God sees EVERY person: with unconditional love, endless second chances, and always forgiving them.**

I want you to commit to praying that prayer every day this next week: **God, help me to see my family the way You see my family.** Set a reminder in your phone. Pick a partner and text them each day to remind each other to pray for your family and for yourself. Families can be one of the most supportive and amazing structures in your life.

Here’s my last part of encouragement: I want us to feel like a family here at Northview! In fact, if you are a Christian and have accepted Jesus Christ’s salvation into your life, YOU ARE A PART OF GOD’S FAMILY! The people sitting next to you are your brothers and sisters! I am a part of your family and you’re a part of mine. Isn’t that awesome?! No matter what our actual families are like, we can have confidence that our Christian brothers and sisters can be like family to us.

**God wants to use you to make a difference in your family. The real difference starts happening when you let go of your EYESIGHT and seeing them however you feel like seeing them. Your life will truly be changed if you see them the way God sees them. Let’s pray.**