

THE FAMILY OF GOD

Summer Institute

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AAM

I thought I would take tonight the family of God. I think that's a good place to end the institute. So I'd invite you to turn to Eph.3:14-15. "For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom His whole family in heaven and earth derives its name." (That's in the NIV.) Probably many of you have read that verse many times and in the KJV, and therefore noticed and perhaps were even startled at the difference between it and the reading in NIV. KJV reads, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ of whom the whole family of heaven and earth is named."

There are many who spend a great deal of time discussing whether a word is correct because of variations in our MSS. Notice KJV says "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." While NIV simply says, The Father. That's a rather striking difference. I know people who would think it was tremendously important that we decide which is correct. "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" is a phrase which occurs many times, in NT. In this case it's very natural to think of it being there. I've heard it all my life. But it makes a difference with the thought of it. If you say, "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" you don't know whether it means it's named after the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, or it's named after Jesus Christ!

You don't know which it means. The way it is in the NIV it would seem quite definite it refers to the Father. As I say there are those who would think the difference is tremendously important. Personally my attitude is this: God has given us His Word in order to give us truths He wants us to have. I believe that this Book is inerrant. That doesn't mean it is made up of magical words, and that it's tremendously important you get the exact sound of these words.

By saying it is inerrant I mean that God has caused human beings to write down words, some of which he dictated. These are comparatively few but some undoubtedly. The majority of which He directed them in writing. He led them as they thought. He directed their whole minds, he directed their whole attitudes. He prepared them to be individuals to express the ideas he wanted expressed or who would observe the things He wanted observed and would describe them accurately. But the result is that what they wrote in these 66 books gives God's message for us.

It gave it as it was in the hands of the original writers. It gives it as you find it in any sizeable group of MSS today. Therefore when you find that some of the earliest MSS differ from many of the later MSS, my attitude is to see what the truth is that is to be found in both. If certain words are missing in one which are in the other, do these words introduce something that we don't find in the Scripture? Or is it simply a question of whether they belong in this particular place? You see God gave us His Word in order to give us ideas. When we say it's inerrant we