

BELONGING

Robert Morris

Focus We belong to God and have been adopted into His family.

Open Have you ever been to the emergency room because of a crazy stunt that didn't go as you planned?

Read Genesis 1:26 shows us God created us with a purpose that includes believing, belonging, becoming and building. All of us were born wanting to belong, but because of sin, we feel like we don't belong (Genesis 3:7–10).

The bad news is we were *born rejected* because of sin (Isaiah 59:2; Romans 3:23). We have to be perfect to be accepted by God and have a relationship with Him—a perfect God can only accept perfection! Because of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, we *are* now made perfect. It's not by our own performance, practice or effort, but because Jesus *was* and *is* the perfect offering and He gave Himself for us (Hebrews 10:14; Hebrews 12:23).

The good news is we were *born again accepted*. We've been accepted because Jesus was rejected by God and men (Isaiah 53:3; Mark 15:34). There's no good reason for God to love us, but just like we love our family because they're ours, God loves us because we're His. We've been adopted into His family. We belong to Him (Ephesians 1:6).

- Talk**
1. In addition to receiving salvation, what's the biggest change that happened in your life when you understood you belonged to God?
 2. When you first became a believer, did you still want to “perform” for God's acceptance? Why or why not?

3. Part of belonging to God is experienced through belonging to His family, the Church. Pastor Robert invited us to “join up and get involved.” How would you describe your current level of involvement in your church:
 - a. I’d like to become more involved. I want to find my place to serve.
 - b. I’m over-committed. I spend too much time at church.
 - c. I’m right where I want to be.
4. Serving in church doesn’t save us or make us more acceptable to God, but it does help us to grow in our faith. In what ways have you grown as a result of “doing life” with other believers?
5. Can you think of someone at your work or in your neighborhood who really needs to get connected? What’s the best way for you to reach out to them?

Live Celebrate that you belong to God and His family! Spend time reflecting on and thanking God for all the gifts He has given you. Show your appreciation to someone who has mentored you or helped you grow in your faith.

Pray Thank God for adopting you into His family. Praise Him because only He is able to make you perfect. Ask Him to show you how to bring others to Him who feel like they don’t belong. Pray for the person at your work or in your neighborhood you identified in question #5 above.