

Remembering Family History

When I was young, we lived some distance from my grandparents and other relatives, so we'd only get together a few times a year. When we did, the grown-ups would sit around the dining room table for long periods of conversation (which, frankly, was quite boring to us young kids at the time). After sharing recent news and updates on how everyone was doing, I don't remember conversations turning to discussions of current events. Instead, someone would start bringing up memories of the past, not necessarily "the good old days," but family history nonetheless.

I'm saddened now that no one recorded those stories, for I have questions. I wonder about my relatives, who they were and how they lived, what life was like for them in their days. But those generations are all gone, and most of that history is lost forever.

Thankfully, there are other family stories that have been preserved, though at first we may not think of them as "family history." Still, when we open the pages of the Bible and reach back to the stories of the Apostles, and the Prophets, and all the way back to the Patriarchs, we're reading family history—*our* family history. In the pages of the Holy Scriptures we have the record of who those members of our family were and, especially, of what God did for them and, through them, for us.

I guess we've come to think of the events recorded in the Scriptures as "ancient" history rather than "our" history. Yes, it did happen a long time ago, and it's a record that reaches all the way back to the beginning of time. But isn't that what makes it marvelous? In an age when so many people are exploring their ancestry and trying to figure out their origins, we already know! Granted, the connection between our great-great-grandparents and the sons of Noah is more than a little hard to trace, but we know the connection is there.

More importantly, going up one branch of that genealogical tree and coming down another, we're connected to the most important relative of all: Jesus. For we all trace back to Noah and his sons, and through Noah's son, Shem, we're all directly related to our Savior, Jesus. And as St Paul reminds us, *For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.* (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

Yes, Jesus died for all! For His ancestors and for His descendants. For you and for me. Because of Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead, all who believe in Him have forgiveness, life, and salvation. All who trust in Jesus will not perish, but will have everlasting life with God. And, because of Jesus, at the Last Day, all this Family of Faith will be gathered around the Father's Table and join in a glorious conversation that will last forever!

Now that's a part of family history worth re-reading, and remembering, and re-telling, don't you think?