



LESSON 56

Foundations Curriculum

Who Is the Father

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Introduction

Who Is the Father

In this fifty-sixth lesson of the Foundations Curriculum, we will talk about who the Father is. Remember that we used several Foundations lessons to talk about the person of God the Son, and the person of God the Holy Spirit. We did this because there are various heretical ideas within God's church that questions the deity or Godhead of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. It was therefore necessary to clarify and give proper guidance on the subject.

The Father is not questioned — on the contrary, He is fully accepted — it is not necessary to try to prove from the Scriptures that God the Father is God! However, we still want to study something about the person of God the Father.

1) Who Is the Father? Jesus Addressed Him, Calling Him Father

As we can see in the Scriptures, Jesus, a great many times, addressed God by calling Him Father. The references appear at many points, and we do not need to cite them all here.

The only exceptions we have identified are these:

In Matthew 27:46, when Jesus was on the cross, in a sorrowful expression of His humanity, showing the anguish of the only holy and righteous Man who, at that hour, bore upon Himself the sins of the world, He felt forsaken. Because He was alone in that moment of pain, He cried out:

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

Matthew 27:46 (NKJV)

In John 20:17, expressing the glorious reality that now, as the risen Man, He was our brother, He says:

I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God!

John 20:17 (NKJV)

Jesus includes us in this passage; He shows His identification with us.

The apostles also called Him Father. Let us look at two references in which He is identified as God and Father, and in which the Trinity is also evident:

In 1 Corinthians 8:5–6, Paul says that there is one Lord, Jesus Christ:

For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.

1 Corinthians 8:5–6 (NKJV)

So, They are ONE! Hallelujah!

In the previous lesson, we cited a reference from the Old Testament where God, Jehovah, says: “I am the LORD, and there is no other!”

Notice: They are three persons, but one God!

In Ephesians 4:4–6, once again, Paul says that there is one Lord, JESUS CHRIST, and one God and FATHER of all, who works through all and is in all!

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Ephesians 4:4–6 (NKJV)

How could God the FATHER be in all, if not through God the HOLY SPIRIT? So, They are ONE! Hallelujah!

In the Old Covenant, God presents Himself to the nation of Israel as Father, but only in a figurative way:

That this is a rebellious people, Lying children, Children who will not hear the law of the LORD;

Isaiah 30:9 (NKJV)

“A son honors his father, And a servant his master. If then I am the Father, Where is My honor? And if I am a Master, Where is My reverence? Says the LORD of hosts To you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, ‘In what way have we despised Your name?’”

Malachi 1:6 (NKJV)

Only in the New Covenant, when we are united to Christ and receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and are made alive, did God the Father come to have with mankind a relationship of Father and child!

In the New Covenant we are “children and father.” This is our new condition!

How glorious it would be if all the children of God understood this and moved in this reality because of their condition as children of the Most High!

In the Old Covenant, even those saints in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt did not call God, as a Father. See examples:

Not Noah;

Not Abraham;

Not Moses;

Not David;

Not any other.

What glory, what victory in this sonship!

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:12–13 (NKJV)

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

Romans 8:14–17 (NKJV)

So then, in your next prayer, when you kneel down to worship the Father, say: "My Father... my Father who is in heaven!" This sonship, this fatherhood, was given to us. May we enjoy it.

Worship Him, full of gratitude and fear, for He is the Most High God who wanted to make you His child and, for that purpose, gave up His only Son, His Only Begotten, who is now the Firstborn!

Worship Him and enjoy this glorious reality, knowing how costly it was for Him to make us His children! Hallelujah!

2) Two Common Errors When Thinking About the Father

There are two very serious errors that some fall into when they think about the Father:

First error:

The Father is the God of the Old Covenant, severe and vengeful!

As has already been shown in previous lessons, those who think this way forget that the Triune God (the Father, the Eternal Word who is the Son, and the Holy Spirit) worked together. There was no separate working among Them. They were together from the very beginning of history.

This first error ignores the very many manifestations of God's goodness, mercy, and patience toward His people in the Old Covenant. And the accounts of God's love and mercy are many.

Second error:

The Father of the New Covenant is the God who revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ, and He is a tolerant and permissive Father, who never grows angry and who accepts everything because His Son has already borne our sins. A “soft-hearted daddy”!

This second error is just as serious as the first, and it ignores the fact that God does not change. His severity and justice are expressed even more gravely and clearly in the New Covenant. Remember that it is only in the New Covenant that we hear about the fire of hell (the Old Testament does not point to it). And it was precisely the Son of God, Jesus, who spoke about hell! He speaks of it in several passages of the New Testament, warning and pointing out the consequences of wrong choices.

Remember: God the Father treats us as children!

In the Bible and throughout history, the figure of a father has always been associated with respect, honor, service, and obedience on the part of children.

This modern image of the “soft-hearted daddy,” in the mold of a Santa Claus figure — a doting, indulgent father who does not correct or discipline, who accepts everything his children do and is incapable of taking a stand, incapable of forbidding anything or setting rules and boundaries, incapable of disciplining and correcting his rebellious or wayward child because “he loves him” — is a product of the twenty-first century and the close of the twentieth. It is a serious error, and it can cost dearly anyone who has no revelation of this truth.

Remember that love is patient, but it is not permissive!

Love is kind, but it is not negligent!

Love does not behave rudely, and it does not go along with improper behavior on anyone's part!

Love does not seek its own, and in the same way, it does not tolerate injustice!

Love is not easily provoked, but it is firm and it corrects!

This false understanding of the fatherhood of God has produced Christians who take the risk of what I have called “profane intimacy” — that is, “God understands me and forgives me, so I am free to live however I want, without fear.”

May God have mercy on us! And on those who think and act this way. This is a serious deception!

We can come into His presence and enjoy it! This is a privilege we have received as children. We can have intimacy with God, but that does not mean ignoring His severity and justice:

Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

Romans 11:22 (NKJV)

His immeasurable love was proven on the cross!

His goodness and patience are shown at every moment of our daily lives, but God is not indifferent to our wrongdoing! And more: every sin or failure produces consequences. And God the Father

has never spared man from bearing the responsibility and consequences of the sins he has committed.

He treats us as children (He loves us and He corrects us)!

You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:4–13 (NKJV)

And, as children that we are, we must imitate Him and seek His honor and glory in all our conduct!

To imitate Him, we need to relate to Him, to look to His Son, the Perfect Man!

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

Ephesians 5:1 (NKJV)

as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;

1 Peter 1:14–17 (NKJV)

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Matthew 5:43–48 (NKJV)

Many say, “we will never be perfect.”

That is true, because sin dwells in our flesh. As long as we are here, sin will dwell in us. But Jesus Himself challenges us (and helps us through the Holy Spirit) to be holy and perfect. So do not settle for living just any way. Pursue holiness, pursue imitating Jesus, so that people may see Christ dwelling and reigning in your life.

Content Review

In this fifty-sixth lesson of the Foundations Curriculum, we talked about the Father, noting that, in the New Covenant, we are now “children of the Father.” This is our new condition. We can enjoy the fatherhood of God, calling Him my Father. We received this through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

We also clarified two mistaken ideas that are very common among Christians: a severe God in the Old Testament; a soft-hearted Father who understands and forgives everything in the New Testament. When we look at Christian history, the Triune God has always worked together, with distinct actions.

The same God of the Old Testament (just, severe, and merciful) is the same God of the New Testament (who gave up His Son to die in our place and to make us once again partakers of His purpose). Hallelujah!

CONSIDER CAREFULLY

- 01 When do we become children of God?
- 02 What are the two mistaken ideas about the Father that we discussed?
- 03 How should we conduct ourselves as children of this Perfect Father?

*having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.*

Ephesians 2:20 (NKJV)

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