



Key Phrase #6

GOD IS MY FATHER

“Our Father who is in Heaven ...” Matthew 6:9

The Disciples asked Jesus how to pray. Think about all the possible places Jesus, the Son of God could have started with this open invitation to teach on prayer. He could have set the focus on the Greatness of God, His Power, His Wisdom, His Purposes, or even His Love, but he immediately zeroes in on the Fatherhood of God. And not only His Father, but ours.

The Bible is clear about what our relationship with God is...He is our Father; we are His children. In fact, God is identified as our Father 265 times in scripture. Most of those are found in the New Testament because through Christ, we have a new identity as an adopted child of God (Romans 8:15). Once we enter into the family of God through salvation we have the incredible privilege to call God our “Abba”, our Daddy.

During his time on Earth, Jesus was constantly changing perceptions and breaking paradigms that people had of God. None was more eternally groundbreaking than our relationship with God as his sons and daughters. He explained that just as an earthly father would never answer his child’s request for life’s necessities with something harmful or dangerous, a Perfect Heavenly Father would only do what was best for His children (Matt 7:9-11). Jesus taught that God’s desire for intimacy sometimes requires multiple trips to the Throne of Grace to not only get our requests answered but to receive the revelation of His Love and Nature that only comes from His Presence. (Luke 11:8) Think about that reality for a moment. The God that created this universe, the one who holds all things in His hand, all powerful, ever present, all knowing has revealed Himself to us our dad.

So, what about us? What about you? How does your understanding of God as YOUR Father impact your life? Do you truly understand Him as One who knows everything about you, yet still loves you with an infinite love, a love that has done everything necessary to rescue you from a self-destructive lifestyle and to enable you to share in His blessings? Do you perceive Him as a judge who only pays attention to you when you step out of line? Or just a mildly concerned, remote observer who is really not all that interested in your life, but has set up some guidelines to make you feel better when things go wrong?

Remember that a good father doesn’t let his children do whatever they want. He sets up boundaries and rules for their safety and for their good. Our heavenly Father does the same for us and has been doing so since the beginning. However, our tendency as humans is to choose our own way over God’s because our minds tell us it will bring us happiness and satisfaction. But when we do this, instead of feeling happy and satisfied, we feel anxious and restless. When we abide by the voice of our Father’s instruction, we will have peace. Psalm 1 says that those who follow God are like a tree planted by a river, deeply rooted and flourishing, not tossed about by the wind. Instead, they have an underlying calm no matter their circumstances. That type of peace can only come from our Father. The peace our Father can give us surpasses understanding (Phil. 4:7).

The two truths that may have the most transformative power in your life are that you are God's child and God is a good Father. As a matter of fact, the Fatherhood of God is such an important reality to comprehend that it was the target of Satan's temptations of Jesus at the beginning of His ministry. Satan did not try to make Jesus think that His task was impossible because it was too big or that Jesus was not up to it. He didn't try to discourage Jesus by telling Him how much pain He would have to endure. No, Satan's attack was much more subtle and damaging than that. He tried to get Jesus to question and deny His Sonship with God. The devil's flaming arrows of doubt began with "IF you are the Son of God...". Satan knew that severing the bond of trust that Jesus had in His Father's will, purpose, calling and love would render Him ineffective and powerless. If Jesus doubted His Sonship He would never have been able to say, "I only do what I see my Father doing" (John 5:19) or "I speak these things as the Father taught me" (John 8:28).

God as our Father is a massive concept that will eventually bring about the redemption of all of Creation. Romans 8:19-22 puts it this way, "For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God...in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God." This, of course, means the end of Satan's kingdom so you can be sure that he will do everything in his power to prevent us from entering into the glory and freedom of the children of God! But God HAS promised in Jeremiah 29:13 that "You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart." His desire is certainly that you know Him as the good Father He is to you.

Discussion Outline

- Review the Key Phrase
- Take time to ponder, pray, and answer the following questions.
 - If I really believed this (key phrase) how would it change my life?
 - In what ways am I walking in this truth and in what ways do I struggle?
 - What tensions would this solve? What tensions may it create?
 - Find a Scripture or Biblical Principle that reflects this truth.
- Write down any thoughts you need to change and any steps you can take to walk in this truth?
- Pray for one another.

Additional Questions to spark some thoughts:

- **Is it easy or difficult to relate to God as your Father?**
- **Find Scriptures that portray God as Father and meditate on those attributes.**
- **What is your heart as a Father or Mother for your children? How does that shape your current relationship with God?**
- **Have you ever had thoughts that made you doubt that God was your Father? How can we overcome those thoughts?**
- **What are some specific ways that you can renew your mind to obtain a deeper and more realistic trust in the Fatherhood of God?**