



Sunday November 18, 2018
The Father's Love
Part-3 : Our Heavenly Father's True Picture

Introduction

Your revelation of God affects your relationship with God. Your relationship with God also affects your relationship with others.

Our understanding of God's love for us affects how we love God, how we love our own selves and how we love others.

Our love for God deepens as we understand how much He has first loved us.

Our objective in this series on "The Father's Love" is to know and experience the Father's Love.

This will change the way we relate to God, to ourselves and to others as well.

Review : Part-1 : Infinite God, Our Heavenly Father

Our Father In Heaven is Love.

God's love is unconditional, unlimited, infinite.

God is Relational. God loves and can be loved.

God has made us the focus of His unlimited, unconditional love

Our capacity to love and receive love is broken.

Wrong postures - wrong mindsets in relating to God: A) The Prodigal, B) The Slave, C) The Orphan, D) The Outcast, E) The Proud Elder Brother, F) The Wounded, G) The Self Critical

Part-2 : Immeasurable Love

The Immeasurable Greatness Of His Love

The Cross of Jesus Christ- An Expression of God's Immeasurable Love

The Cross Restores Our Capacity For Perfect Love

Because of His Great Love There Is Abundant Mercy And Grace

The Story of The Prodigal son

Today : Part-3 : Our Heavenly Father's True Picture

We need to have a correct picture, a true picture of God, as presented in the Word of God.

A wrong picture can cause you to take a wrong posture before God, that is we relate to God in an incorrect way. For example when we pray we are unable to pray with confidence. Our prayers are filled with 'ifs' and 'maybes'.

A wrong picture of our heavenly Father, can leave us unsure about the will of God.



A wrong picture of our heavenly Father, can leave us weak and fearful in the midst of life's challenges. We are unsure if God is happy with us or angry with us.

Some of us have grown up in homes where we have never really experienced parental love or the love of a father. We may even have had good parents, but never experienced the love of parents.

So in this chapter we present some facets of God as our Heavenly Father, in contrast to characteristics we may tend to ascribe to Him based on our personal experiences or preconceived notions.

1) An Unchanging Heavenly Father

God is an unchanging heavenly Father who can be relied on, depended on. This is in contrast to an unpredictable parent and we are unsure how they may act or react.

James 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

Our heavenly Father is 'consistent' in who He is, what He says and what He does. We can count on Him and completely rely on Him.

2) An Unfailing Heavenly Father

God is an unfailing heavenly Father who never fails us. This is in contrast to parents who let us down or even absentee parents. Parents who are 'there', but 'not there' when we need them the most.

Hebrews 13:5

Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU."

God is a heavenly Father who is always there for you. God is too good to do you wrong, too wise to make a mistake, too strong to let you down.



3) A Bountiful and Generous Father

God is a heavenly Father who is bountiful and generous. This is in contrast to miserly, stingy parent, who we are afraid to ask for anything. God is a heavenly Father who meets our every need.

Matthew 6:31-32

31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

Matthew 7:7-11

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

God is infinitely better than earthly parents. He is aware of our needs and He gives good things to His children.

James 1:5

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

God gives to all, He gives liberally and He gives without finding fault, grumbling or complaining.

Psalm 84:11

For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.

Knowing God as our bountiful, generous, heavenly Father, frees us to come boldly to the throne of grace to ask for help and provision in time of need, knowing He will grant to us what we ask.

4) A Merciful Father

God is our heavenly Father who is slow to anger and abounding in mercy. This is in contrast to parents who may be ill-tempered or short-tempered and get angry very easily.



We all make mistakes, but God is a merciful heavenly Father who forgives.

Psalm 103:8

The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

Lamentations 3:22-23

22 Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.

23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

God is a merciful heavenly Father who gives us another chance, yet again!

God our heavenly Father in His mercy also lovingly corrects and disciplines us. In all of His disciplinary dealings with us, He is still compassionate and seeks our well-being. We will discuss this in a forthcoming chapter.

5) A Redeeming Father

God our heavenly Father is a redeeming Father, who is redemptive in all He does. Even when all seems lost, He looks for ways to redeem - to recover, restore, rebuild and lift up to greater glory. This is in contrast to parents who may give an ultimatum and bring an end to their relationship with us.

Isaiah 63:16

Doubtless You are our Father, Though Abraham was ignorant of us, And Israel does not acknowledge us. You, O LORD, are our Father; Our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your name.

For more on this see the free APC Publication: "The Redemptive Heart of God"

6) An Accepting Father

God our heavenly Father is an accepting Father. He accepts us, He delights in us and look at us with eyes of love. This is in contrast to a parent who always looks down at us, thinks low of us, see us unfit, unworthy, is always suspicious and un-accepting of us.

Ephesians 1:4-6

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,



**5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.**

Because we know we are so loved and accepted in His sight we enter into His presence with reverence, yet joyfully and freely, knowing we are always welcome there. He is a heavenly Father who enjoys us and wants us to enjoy Him.

We are accepted the way we are - and what He has made us to be in Christ. We do not have to 'achieve' in order to be accepted or appreciated. We are accepted. All sense of rejection is gone!

7) A Father of Abundant Grace

God is a heavenly Father full of grace who lavishes on us even what we do not deserve, simply because He is favorable and kind towards us. This is in contrast to a task-master parent for whom everything has to be rightfully earned and we only get what we deserve.

Task-master parents with high expectations can make us feel we are never good enough, and leave us feeling like failures. We receive approval only if we pass their expectations.

If we do not have this understanding of God's grace, we tend to relate to God based on our works - things we do for God, in ministry, at church, etc. The more we 'do', the more we feel we are accepted of God. We seek for recognition and applause for everything we do and base our identity on this - because we do not understand grace.

When we understand God as a Father of abundant grace, we are also gracious to others, because we value the grace of God extended to us.

Ephesians 2:7

that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Romans 5:17

For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)



8) An Empowering Father

God is our heavenly Father who empowers us. He looks at the best in us and enables us to be the best He designed us to be. He trusts us with His resources and His assignments for Kingdom work. This is in contrast to a parent who distrusts us, thinks we are incapable, unreliable and will not amount to anything.

Our Heavenly Father thinks good thoughts about us and has good plans for us (Jeremiah 29:11).

Luke 12:32

"Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Colossians 1:12

giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

9) An Infinite Father

God is our heavenly Father who is beyond measure and who does beyond measure in us, through us and for us. This is in contrast to earthly parents who are limited in what they can do, what they can provide and who they can be to us.

He never grows old (Psalm 102:26)

He never grows tired or weary (Isaiah 40:28)

He never runs out of wisdom (Isaiah 40:28)

Ephesians 3:20

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

He is both "father" and "mother". So if you'd like to say that there is the "mother heart" of the Father God, a heart that is caring, nurturing, and affectionate.

Isaiah 49:14-16

14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me."

15 "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.

16 See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.



Rejecting Self-Deceptions And Satan's Lies

The wrong picture we have painted about God is really self-deception. We deceive ourselves about who God is.

The devil also lies to us and wants us to hold a wrong picture of God.

Consider some of the opposite perceptions that some of us may have about God:

- 1) An unpredictable God instead of an Unchanging Heavenly Father.
- 2) An unreliable God instead of an Unfailing Heavenly Father.
- 3) A stingy God who need to be somehow convinced into giving to us, instead of a Bountiful and Generous Father.
- 4) A God waiting to judge us with fire and brimstone instead of a Merciful Father.
- 5) A God who keep account of every wrong we have done, holding our past against us instead of a Redeeming Father.
- 6) A condemning God instead of an Accepting Father.
- 7) A God who is hard to satisfy requires everything to be earned, instead of a Father of Abundant Grace.
- 8) A God who does not want us to partner with Him, instead of an Empowering Father.
- 9) A God who is limited in what He does for us, instead of an Infinite Father.

MINISTRY TIME
SALVATION CALL



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Sunday November 18, 2018
The Father's Love
Part-3 : Our Heavenly Father's True Picture

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at apcwo.org/sermons. Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture passages: *Matthew 7:7-11; James 1:17*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

1) Which of these aspects of our Heavenly Father's true picture, seem very relevant to you today and why?

- i. An Unchanging Heavenly Father*
- ii. An Unfailing Heavenly Father*
- iii. A Bountiful and Generous Father*
- iv. A Merciful Father*
- v. A Redeeming Father*
- vi. An Accepting Father*
- vii. A Father of Abundant Grace*
- viii. An Empowering Father*
- ix. An Infinite Father*



2) *How has your understanding and therefore your relationship with your Heavenly Father changed in view of these aspects that we have addressed?*

If time permits, each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

- 1, *families to be protected and strengthened*
- 2, *a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.*
- 3, *for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.*

Close by thanking God together.



USEFUL RESOURCES



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

CHURCHES: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

WORLD MISSIONS: <https://apcworldmissions.org>