

Sunday, June 20, 2010
Father's Day

Every one of us wants or wanted a great relationship with our father. That relationship has much to do with our personal development. Jesus was no exception. When Jesus was about thirty years old he launched his public ministry by getting baptized by his cousin John. When he came up out of the water the heavens opened and the Spirit of God came upon him in the form of a dove and a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16,17) Jesus had to be so excited about hearing those words. His father was pleased with him. There's something special about the affirmation of a father. It is empowering.

While Jesus was the son of God, he had to leave his heavenly estate and become a man born of a woman and raised in a traditional home. His relationship with his Heavenly Father was one of faith just like ours. He lived his life just like us and had to pray and trust in the God he could not see. Hebrews 11:6 tells us that without faith it is impossible to please God. Jesus had to have faith in the same way we do. Scripture teaches that he was even tempted in every way just like us but never sinned. Many of us get tripped up by the way we are tempted. Some even feel that merely having the temptation is sin because we are so repulsed by some of the thoughts that come to us. Our identity can be shaped by how we think God feels concerning us. We wonder how he could even love us. The bottom line is that he doesn't love us because of who we are, but because of who he is. He is love and that's what love does. I like to say it like this: he can't help himself. It's just the way he is! He loves you. Get used to it. We can have a misunderstanding of who God is because of bad theology that has been erroneously passed down to us. That has to change and when it does our lives will too. We are loved and accepted by the Father when we have the Son living in us. He is our life!

Jesus emphasized having a relationship with his Heavenly Father. When he taught the disciples to pray he said, "This, then, is how you should pray: **Our Father** in heaven, hallowed be your name..." Matthew 6:9 (NIV) It was to begin with that relationship. He also gave Father the credit for teaching him everything he said and did. Read and meditate on the following passages and get a glimpse of our wonderful Heavenly Father.

John 8:28-29 *So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the **Father** has taught me. 29 The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."* (NIV)

Matthew 5:43-48 *"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 **that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.** He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 **Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.**"* (NIV)

Matthew 11:25-30

*At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, **Father**, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. 26 Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. 27 **"All things have been committed to me by my Father.** No one knows the Son except the **Father**, and no one knows the **Father** except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. 28 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."* (NIV)

Matthew 18:10-14

*"See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of **my Father** in heaven. 12 "What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and*

*one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? 13 And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. 14 **In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.*** (NIV)

John 4:23-24

23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the **Father** in spirit and truth, **for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.** 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." (NIV)

John 14:6-26

6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me.** 7 If you really knew me, you would know my **Father** as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." 8 Philip said, "Lord, show us the **Father** and that will be enough for us." 9 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? **Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.** How can you say, 'Show us the **Father**'? 10 Don't you believe that I am in the **Father**, and that the **Father** is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, **it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.** 11 Believe me when I say that I am in the **Father** and the **Father** is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. 12 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the **Father.** 13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the **Father.** 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. 15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command. 16 And I will ask the **Father**, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. 20 On that day you will realize that I am in my **Father**, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21 Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my **Father**, and I too will love him and show myself to him." 22 Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?" 23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My **Father** will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. 24 He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the **Father** who sent me. 25 "All this I have spoken while still with you. 26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the **Father** will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. (NIV)