

# The Fatherhood of God – Part One

## LECTURE 6

*You are what your clearest mental picture of yourself is – not just to do with the power of positive thinking – but to do with imagination and God-given images*

### Session Topics:

1. **The Nature of the Father** . . . . . 181  
The father's authority. God the Father is not like other authorities we may have had in our lives. Perfect love.
2. **The Endurance of the Father** . . . . . 183  
He has a releasing attitude. He has an expectant attitude. He has a forgiving attitude.
3. **The Character of the Father** . . . . . 185  
The Father is our Creator. The Father is our Provider. The Father is our Friend. The Father is our Corrector. The Father is our Redeemer. The Father is our Comforter. The Father is our Defender. The Father is our Father.

### Outcomes:

**After completing this session you should be able to -**

Know enough about the Father to relate to Him in a closer and more intimate way.

### Objectives:

- **Identify with the Father's Character acknowledging Him as kind and good**  
Suppressing ideas that He is unjust. Loving Him for what He is.
- **Build a closer relationship with the Father by –**  
Coming into His Presence willingly. Relating to His Person. Submitting to Him in every way.
- **Separate your concepts about earthly fathers from God the Father**  
Forgetting your own experiences. Forgiving your own Father.

**John 17:6** *I have manifested Your Name to the men whom you have given Me out of the World.*

In developing Christian Character, that is, in **growing up spiritually**, it is essential that we have the right environment and atmosphere **in which to grow**. By this we do not refer to an atmosphere created by anything in this **natural world** in which we live. We are not talking about circumstances or people around us that create a good atmosphere.

Jesus Christ came to introduce us to **God as our Father**. When Jesus came to manifest in all our dealings with God, He **told us to treat him as our Father!** What a privilege! A good **father** produces children with character and maturity. God our Father is **such a Father**.

We are talking about an atmosphere created by our faith and dependence on the Fatherhood of God

## ■ Fathers in this World

Unfortunately, we are living in a world where a **good role model of a father** is on the decrease. The word "Father" in our modern world will most likely have a bad connotation.

Our Father God influences the way we turn out.

Our impression of God the Father will influence **our submitting ourselves to his influence**.

### ◆ People Without Identity

This is the story of a young man on a drug trail, whose father had told him that he was unwanted and hated.

### ◆ People With Hostility

So many people are hostile toward their fathers. They have been rejected, neglected and ignored. In doing this, so many fathers **present the wrong image of Father God**.

"The happiest day of my life was when both my parents were killed in a car accident"

**John 1:12, 13** *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become **children of God**, even 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**.*

We were born again of our Father because He wanted us

### ◆ People are Hurting

People have become hostile because of **bad fathers**. Fathers forsake their homes and their children. They spend thirty seconds a day communicating with their children and three and half hours watching television.

People are hurting! They turn to crime, violence, drugs and alcohol because of these hurts.



### ◆ People in Existentialism

Fathers are neglecting their children and running after things and pleasures. They deny God, moral absolutes and the importance of the family. Thus **rejection and emotional scars are "normal"**.

### ◆ Perverted Fathers

One young man described how his father forced him to watch him beat his mother and cut her with a knife. Young girls are being molested by fathers, grandfathers, brothers, uncles and family friends.

One young man was palmed off on his grandfather, who sent him to an

orphanage where he was forced to go to church. He became anti-God and anti-parents. It is **no wonder** that people have the **wrong impression of fatherhood**.

♦ **Bought Love**

Prostitutes pay pimps to live with them because, 'even prostitutes need someone to laugh and cry with'.

One young girl sobbed in confusion in a counselling situation, because she was rejected by her father. He wanted a son – not a daughter. Another wanted to die because her parents continually compared her with the sister who had died.

♦ **The Anti-father Image**

■ **The Broken Spirit**

**Proverbs 15:13** *A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of heart the **spirit is broken**.*

**Proverbs 18:14** *The spirit of man will sustain him in sickness. **but who can bear a broken spirit?***

So many are **deeply hurt!** There is only one way out of this **prison of hurt**.

The hurting person **must forgive!** It might be difficult, but **not impossible**. God is faithful to help you. Admit your weaknesses to Him and He will enable you. **forgiveness brings liberty and freedom.**

God is the **good Father who** makes the difference. He changes us. He heals us and gives us **wholeness**, but, our hurts and our perception of the **father** can block the reception of love of the **Father** and prevent it from healing us.

Because of the perversion of fatherhood in their lives, people cannot always relate to God as a Father

Forgiveness will bring healing to a broken spirit



## 1. The Nature of the Father

**Luke 11:11-13** *If a son asks bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if He asks for a fish, will He give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!***

Man's view of a father has been perverted to such an extent that they believe that the Father God is responsible for the evil and destruction in their lives.

**This is contrary to the nature of the Father!**

■ **The Need for Good Fathers**

One night, after Floyd McClung had taught on the fatherhood of God, a shy teenage girl came forward and wept on his shoulder. Her father had died when she was very young. She missed a daddy to guide her and protect her. She was hurting. Together they came to the Father and asked Him to be a father to her. God did. A few years later she was a radiant confident young lady. She had experienced the **Fatherhood of God**.

■ **Our Concept of the Father**

The Word of God reveals to us that **God is our Father**. Jesus Christ revealed to us the **nature of the Father**.

When we read the Bible describing the Father, we think of protection, provision, warmth and tenderness. We see a Father desiring to be intimately involved with His children in every detail.

Let us look at **seven concepts** concerning our **Heavenly Father**:

## 1.1 The Father's Authority

**Hebrews 12:9, 10** *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** ...*

The question is: **what causes hurts in the area of authority?** When fathers abuse their authority, children are hurt. When fathers bully their children either physically, mentally or emotionally, children get a perverted idea of authority. This is what causes people to reject the ministry of the Father. Even when God reaches out, past hurts influence our response towards Him.

### ■ Perfect Love

**Ephesians 6:4** *Don't keep on scolding and nagging your children, making them angry and resentful. Rather bring them up with **the loving discipline the Lord himself approves**.*

## 1.2 The Father's Faithfulness

**2 Timothy 2:13** *Even when we were too weak to have any faith left, **He remains faithful to us ... and He will always carry out His promise to us**.*

Earthly fathers might have let us down by devoting too much time to career or sport, by neglect or broken promises. But our Heavenly Father is always there.

- ◆ He was there before you were born;
- ◆ He was there when you were a child; and
- ◆ **He is here right now!**

### ■ The Home of God's Intention

God's plan for a home is that it should **mirror heaven**. It should be a place where the father serves the family with love. The home should be a place of security and a place where each child is being prepared for experiencing **the love of God**.

This is God's intention! But unfortunately the home is bombarded by the god of this world whose intention it is to destroy it.

#### ◆ Recognise this Fact

We are living in enemy territory where our parents are failing. **Face up to this and see that this is not what God intended.**

- ◆ Live in forgiveness
- ◆ **Accept God's love and faithfulness**

## 1.3 The Father's Generosity

Our materialistic culture is projecting a dangerous philosophy. We place so much value on our expensive and fragile possessions and too little value on the **people around us**; more especially, **the children in our care**.

- ◆ Our Father is **generous**
- ◆ Our Father is **extravagant**
- ◆ Our Father is **rich**
- ◆ Our Father **possesses heaven and earth**

The Father is not stingy, possessive or materialistic. On the contrary, **He is full of forgiveness, mercy and love**.

We need to have our concept of the Father moulded by the Word of God

God the Father is not like other authorities we may have had in our lives

Our Father longs to surprise us with those extra things, those little pleasures and treasures that only a Father would know we yearn for – *Floyd McClung*

## 1.4 The Father's Affection

**Hosea 11:4** *I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love; I lifted the yoke from their neck and bent down to feed them.*

**Deuteronomy 33:12** *Let the beloved of the Lord rest secured in Him, for He shields him all day long, and the one the **Lord loves rests between his shoulders.***



Man is the product of the Father's creativity. As such He pursues us. He wants to cleanse us, reconcile us to Himself and pour His affection upon us. **God is a doting father.** When we do well, He boasts about us. When we fail, He corrects us. When we are hurt, **He feels with us.**

We are the apple of His eye – the centre of His affection

## 1.5 The Father's Presence

The one thing that we cannot imitate our Father in, **is the ability to be everywhere at the same time.** This means that our Father can be **with us allways.**

### ■ His Undivided Attention

**1 Peter 5:7** *Let Him have all your worries and cares, **for he is always thinking about you and watching everything that concerns you.***

The Father gives us each His individual attention. Our problem is that we ignore Him. Our parents may ignore our efforts, **but God never does.**  
**God ...**

- ♦ never **tires**
- ♦ never gets **irritated**
- ♦ is never **overworked**
- ♦ is never **distressed**

Rejoice in the wonderful love of your Father God

## 1.6 The Father's Acceptance

The love of God our Father is **unconditional.** It is based on a decision.

This means that **God accepts us as we are.** This acceptance is not based on our performance. We cannot earn His acceptance – **He already accepts us.**

**Zeph 3:17** *The Mighty One will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness. He will quiet you in His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.*

Our Father has decided to make us the objects of His love, whether we accept it or not

## 1.7 The Father's Communication

Some fathers are withdrawn and quiet and never communicate with their children. Many think that God is withdrawn and quiet. When somebody says ... **"The Lord said to me ..."** ... some people cannot fathom it. God will answer you. We must learn to cultivate a **listening ear.**

## 2. The Endurance of the Father

God is the perfect parent

**Floyd McClung** tells the story of a man named Sawat, who came from a small village in the South of Thailand. His father was a Christian who had taught him about the love of the Father. His parting words to his son who left to seek his fortune in Bangkok, were – **"I will be waiting for you".**

Sawat was shocked by the prostitution in the city where he found nervous and frightened eleven-year-old girls. Soon he was sucked into this world of sin and he prospered. But soon afterwards he hit bad luck. He was arrested and branded



a police spy and finally ended up living in a shanty on the city dumps.

He had disgraced his family and doubted that his father would still be waiting. Finally he wrote to his father, telling him that he would be coming home. He asked his father's forgiveness. He asked his father to tie a piece of white cloth on the tree outside their house which was next to the railway track.

When they came near to his home, he could not bear to look. Burying his head between his knees, he asked a fellow passenger to look. With surprise in his voice, the passenger exclaimed "**Look!**"

The father ran alongside the train with tears in his eyes, saying, "**I've been waiting for you**".

**Luke 15:11-24** ... the Father said to the slaves; Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. And a jewelled ring for his finger, and shoes. And kill the calf we have in the fattening pen. We must celebrate with a feast. For this son of mine as dead and has returned to life. He was lost and is found. So the party began.



The tree was covered with white cloth while the father was dancing and waving a white flag

This story of the prodigal son shows God as a Father. We see what our Father is really like.

## 2.1 He has a Releasing Attitude

The father had prepared his son for adulthood. The time had arrived to test his son's **maturity** and their father/son relationship.

**Fear** dominates and controls; **love** allows freedom of choice. Love operates in an atmosphere of **faith**. This is how our heavenly Father is.

- ◆ He puts up with us
- ◆ He believes for us
- ◆ He dreams for us
- ◆ He then **endures until he sees results**

## 2.2 He has an Expectant Attitude

The prodigal son left the protection, provision and presence of the father. We see also that the father did not follow the son. He allowed the hardships of transgression to do their job. The father waited with **longing** and **expectancy**.

**Isaiah 30:18** ... the Lord waits to be gracious to you; therefore He exalts Himself to show mercy to you.

## 2.3 He has a Forgiving Attitude

This father's expectancy was rewarded. He turned from a waiting father to a **running father**.

The father knew **that he had a son who wanted to be back** because the son returned out of his own free will. An **expectant** attitude produces a **forgiving** attitude. Bitterness **expects nothing good**.

God hates sin, rebellion and evil. He will not accompany us in sin, **but he will wait** expectantly and **run to us when we return**.

The father had cultivated their friendship the son had to choose

No matter what you have done, the Father waits patiently

The fact that the father ran to meet his son proved that he had already forgiven him

## 3. The Character of the Father

What is our Father?

### 3.1 The Father is our Creator

**Acts 17:28** *In Him we live and move and have our being ... for we are indeed His offspring.*

**Isaiah 64:8** *But now, Oh Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You our potter; and all we are the work of Your hand.*

### 3.2 The Father is our Provider

**Matthew 7:11** *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!*

The Father is a Giver of good gifts. He provides for us spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically.

### 3.3 The Father is our Friend

**Jeremiah 3:4** *Thou art the friend [guide] of my youth.*

The Father is our **Friend, Guide and Counsellor**.

**Isaiah 9:6** *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

**Psalms 73:24** *You will guide me with Your counsel.*

### 3.4 The Father is our Corrector

**Hebrews 12:5-11** *And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those whom He loves, and he punishes everyone He accepts as a son. Endure hardships as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by His father? If you are not disciplined and everyone undergoes discipline, then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirit and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in His holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.*

### 3.5 The Father is our Redeemer

**Psalms 103:8-13** *The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy [steadfast love]. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children so the Lord pities those who fear Him.*

**Psalms 103:4** *He **redeems** your life from destruction [hell].*

### 3.6 The Father is our Comforter

**2 Corinthians 1:3** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and **God of all comfort, who comforts us in all affliction.***

### 3.7 The Father is our Defender

**Psalms 91:** Our Father protects us, defends us and delivers us.

### 3.8 The Father is our Father

**2 Corinthians 6:18** *I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters says the Lord almighty.*

- ◆ He is the Father of the fatherless
- ◆ He is a Father of love

These are just some of the characteristics of our Father. There are many other characteristics. Our Father is patient, considerate, holy, discerning, caring, compassionate, sensitive, tender, gracious, just, etc..

## NOTES