

## God as Father

The heart of Father God is for relationship: for His sons and daughters to know who they are and return home. He desires to have an intimate relationship with us as He did at the beginning.

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

Before creation we were chosen as sons and daughters to live in the middle of His love.

- **Ephesians 1:3-6** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, <sup>4</sup> 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, <sup>5</sup> having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.
- **Romans 8:15-17** 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." <sup>16</sup> The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> 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.

## The Original Plan

**Genesis 1:26-27** Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." <sup>27</sup> So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

We are created in His image.

- They had intimate relationship together: Creator with His creation.
- **Genesis 3:8-9** And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"
- This was a common occurrence.

- They were around God.
- It was family.

## The Fall

In the garden, Adam and Eve choose to walk away from their position in the family and proclaimed "I can do it myself."

- **Genesis 3:4-6** <sup>4</sup> Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup> For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." <sup>6</sup> So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

## The lies of the enemy:

- You will not surely die (You are physical beings, not spiritual beings)
- For God knows... God cannot be trusted. He lied to cover the real truth.
- In other words — You are not who God says you are. God is not who He says He is.
- We still believe these lies today to some measure.

## The Result:

**Genesis 3:9-13** <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where *are* you?" <sup>10</sup> So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." <sup>11</sup> And He said, "Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" <sup>12</sup> Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." <sup>13</sup> And the LORD God said to the woman, "What *is* this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

- They were afraid and hid — fear and shame
- Before they sinned, they were naked and unashamed:
- **Genesis 2:25** "The man and the woman were both naked, and they felt no shame."

- When they died, they experienced fear and shame, but this is not God’s design for us:
  - **2 Timothy 1:7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.
- They passed the blame — flesh patterns began to develop
- Once sin entered the world, the relationship was broken: not by anything the Father did but by the children. Their perspective changed, so they covered themselves and hid from God.
  - Who told you that you were naked?

### **He sent them out of the garden. Why?**

- **Genesis 3:22-24** Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”— <sup>23</sup> therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. <sup>24</sup> So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.
- We usually look at this as God kicking them out as punishment.
- But it’s actually love...“lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” [in this sinful state].

### **How do we interpret the story of the fall of man? Adam and Eve eating the fruit?**

#### **Is it:**

- God set them up for failure
- They sinned and immediately God is on the scene hunting them down
- God then curses them for their disobedience
- And finally, in their most vulnerable and scared state, God kicks them out of their home and away from all their provision making them homeless and desperate.

#### **OR is it:**

- God gave them everything they needed and warned them of the one danger
- When they sinned He knew they would be scared and He sought after them
- God explained the consequences of their actions so they would be prepared to deal with them – consequences they brought on themselves.

- He provided clothes for them to cover them better than they did on their own without Him (still providing for them)
- He removed them from danger and from having eternal consequences from their sin.
- He provided a way back – and they would be a part of that!
  - **Genesis 3:15** And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”
- And... He never left them. God is still with them as they are having children and raising their family.

### **How does misinterpreting this text affect our image of the Father?**

- Do we see God as an angry God looking for opportunities to punish us, or as a loving God looking for opportunities to fellowship with us, provide for us, and protect us?

### **God’s Plan for Restoration**

**GOOD NEWS!** God the Father had a plan to restore His children back into the family.

- **Galatians 4:4-7** But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. <sup>6</sup> And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” <sup>7</sup> Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.
- **1 John 4:14-16** And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

Jesus is the answer. He redeemed us that we may become children of God!

- **Romans 5:1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
- **Galatians 3:26** For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

God’s will, that we become His children, and He our Father, has come to pass

- **2 Corinthians 6:18** "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty."
- **John 1:12-13** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

### **Do you really know Him as your Father?**

- Many people in the church today know God loves them but have they experienced Him loving them intimately?
- What about you? You can know in your mind that He loves you but do you know Him loving you? Have you experienced Him loving you?
- Do you believe that Father loves you and desires to have an intimate relationship with you?

**1 John 4:9-10** In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

**1 John 4:19** We love Him because He first loved us.

**1 John 3:1-2a** Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. <sup>2</sup> Beloved, now we are children of God...

**Because God loved His creation, He provided a way for that relationship to be restored.**

### **Listen to His heart from these passages:**

- **2 Corinthians 5:17-19** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. <sup>18</sup> Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.
  - If you are in Christ you are new. You are adopted in. The old life does not exist anymore.
  - We are reconciled to God. So much so that we are now entrusted with the same ministry of Christ — to reconcile others.

- Our trespasses are not imputed to us. We are righteous.
- **Romans 8:28-39** And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. <sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. <sup>30</sup> Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." <sup>37</sup> Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
  - We are being made into the image of Christ.
  - He foreknew us, he chose us to be made into His likeness, He called us, He justified us, and He glorifies us.
  - If God does all this, what could ever come against us?
  - We are more than conquerors, because Christ conquered everything, then gave the benefits and victories to us.
  - Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Have you experienced God as a loving Father who is for you? If not, why?