

Text: John 16:25-28

Title: "The Son's Father - Part Two"

Time: 7/9/2023 am

Place: NBBC

Introduction: You may remember that on Father's Day, we spent some time in the Gospel of John discovering that it has much to say about God the Father, the First Person of the Trinitarian Godhead.

You may also remember my sharing that, in addition to the handful of passages in John that refer to Jesus as "God's Son," I found 187 verses in this Gospel, which refer in some way to God the Father. I said that Leon Morris notes that the word *father* is used 137 times in the Gospel of John, and that second place belongs to the Gospel of Matthew with only 64 times [*New Testament Theology*, 248]. So, it is no wonder that we were unable to finish our look at this enormous topic, the Fatherhood of God in the Gospel of John, on Father's Day.

Today, we live in a nation that has decided that, whereas we have but one Sunday in June on which to celebrate Father's Day, we need the whole month of June to celebrate the sin of homosexuality. Perhaps this simple feature of our nation's calendar sums up well what is wrong with our country today. Fatherhood is on the decline, and sin is on the rise. Many believe that these facts are related.

For instance, Fox News published a Father's Day article that attributed a lack of church attendance to the deterioration of faithful fatherhood in the home: "This conclusion is drawn from the results of a nationwide survey of 19,000 Sunday church attendees conducted during worship in 112 evangelical, Protestant and Catholic congregations in 13 different states. Overall, the survey found 80% of all Sunday church attendees in the United States grew up in a continuously

married home with both biological parents at a time when this is becoming increasingly rare. . . .

“Much has been written about the negative effects on children – ranging from poverty, to mental health and low educational outcomes – when dad is not in the home. It also turns out that it has a big impact on your likelihood of experiencing faith” [[foxnews.com/opinion/heres-why-people-abandoned-church-right-way-fix](https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/heres-why-people-abandoned-church-right-way-fix); accessed 6/12/2023].

The Gospel of John tells us about the Father who never fails and who provides hope to all who need a good Father, whether or not you grew up with a good human father in your home. In our passage, Jesus takes the time to tell His disciples about this Father. This Father is His Father.

He tells us that the Father can be known proverbially or plainly. *Father* is a relational term, and in the Gospel of John it plainly describes God in His relationship with three others: (1) God is Father to His Son, Jesus Christ; (2) God is Father to the world, and (3) God is Father to believers. In our first message on this theme, we learned of the amazing relationship of the Father to His unique Son, and the still more amazing truth that the Father in His love gave His Son to die for the world.

This morning we will focus on that last relationship – God the Father’s fatherhood of believers, those whom Jesus describes in verse 27 of our passage: “For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.” John’s Gospel tells us at least three things about God’s fatherhood to those who have believed on Christ for their salvation from sin.

I. God the Father gives believers to His Son, Jesus Christ (6:34-40).

Illustration: I remember well the day my daughter Kara and I walked arm-in-arm down our church's aisle on her wedding day. My son-in-law Matt was awaiting our arrival at the front, and it was my job as Kara's father to step up to the plate when the minister asked, "Who gives this woman to this man?" I gave Kara to Matt. That was my job as Kara's father (joined by my wife in the happy duty as well, of course).

Application: The Gospel of John indicates that God the Father gives believers to His Son. Passages like the one we just read reads as though God the Father views each of us as believers in a way that mirrors the way I viewed Kara that day. As our heavenly Father, God the Father gives us to His Son, much like the way I gave Kara to Matt, acting as her father.

We do not often think about what it means for us to be given by the Father to His Son, Jesus Christ, but John's Gospel tells us that this truth was very important to Jesus. He often reflects on this amazing truth in the Gospel of John:

6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out";

10:29, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand";

17:2 "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him";

17:6, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word";

17:9-10, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them";

17:12, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled."

That we belong to God's Son is the accomplishment of God the Father, and this accomplishment is full of meaningful blessing for our lives. It means that believers shall come to Christ without fail. It means believers will never be cast out by Christ. It means that believers cannot be plucked out of the hands of the Son, nor of the Father. It means that the Son has given believers eternal life. It means that believers now understand who the Son is, and that they now can keep His Word. And it means that the Son prays for believers in a way that He does not pray for the world. Believers belong to the Father and the Son, and the Son is glorified in each one.

Believer, do you see yourself given to the Lord Jesus Christ by your heavenly Father? God the Father gave His Son His bride, the church. Kara understands and rejoices in the truth that her father gave her to her husband. It changed her life. Do you feel the same way about what our heavenly Father has done for us, or are you offended at the thought that anyone would presume that they had the authority to give you to anyone, be He God the Father or not? The true believer will rejoice that our heavenly Father has given us to Christ. Do you rejoice in this?

II. God the Father seeks believers to worship Him correctly (4:19-24).

Illustration: Some of you know that I am a cancer survivor, probably because you prayed for me. My cancer was only stage one, and I am grateful for that blessing. I remember hearing for the first time from my gastroenterologist that I needed to see a surgeon. Up to that point, I had exercised and had eaten healthy food. I did not feel sick, and seeing a

surgeon was not what I wanted to do. I would have much rather just continued to eat well and exercise when I can.

Application: As the Samaritan woman introduces the topic of religious worship in her conversation with Jesus, she sounds like she is having a reaction that is similar to the reaction I had when I was told I needed a surgeon. Jesus had just told her that he knew about the spiritual tumor that was killing her spiritually (vv. 16-18). He was ready to do surgery on her.

So this sudden interest in worship and religion was more a deflection away from her true need than it was a sincere interest in worship. Jesus responds to this deflection with instruction about the true worship that God the Father seeks from believers.

Of course, this true worship begins with dealing with the tumor of sin. The Samaritan woman comes to this realization in this passage (v. 29). For her, true worship began with the understanding that God's Son knew everything that she had done, and that He was the long-awaited Savior, the Christ, the salvation mentioned in v. 22, who would come from the Jews. She had a tumor called *sin*, and He was the Surgeon who could remove her tumor of sin through His work as her Christ, her Prophet, Priest, and King.

Jesus says other things about what the Father seeks in His worshipping believers. Right worship is not worship from a certain mountain or city, but from a certain kind of heart – a heart worshipping in Spirit and in truth.

What does worship from the heart in Spirit and in truth look like? Well, one clue is what Jesus says in verse 22. At minimum we can conclude that “we know what we worship” is better than “ye worship ye know not what.” Knowing what you are worshipping is better than not knowing what you are worshipping. Correct worship involves correct knowing.

What John says elsewhere about spirit and truth tells us that this knowing comes from the Word of God. John 6:63, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." God's words are spirit and life. And they are truth as well. John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth."

Because God's Word is truth, and because God's Word is spirit and life, to worship the Father in the Spirit and in the truth is to worship Him in His Word. So, the Father seeks worship from believers that comes from hearts worshipping Him in His Word.

There is likely no better example of this kind of worship than Psalm 119. At times, I will pray the 175 verses of Psalm 119 on my walk over the hill. When I do that, I have worshipped with a heart that is focused on God's Word.

Where worship content and style lessen the role of the Bible, it becomes the kind of worship that the Father does not seek. Whereas Jesus spoke of knowing, worshippers today talk about experiencing or feeling.

But where worship keeps central the role of knowing the Bible, it becomes the kind of worship that the Father seeks. Believer, are you and I that kind of worshipper? Have we let the Lord do surgery on our tumorous sin, and then do we have hearts focused in Spirit and in truth on hearing, knowing, believing, and obeying His Word? This is true worship.

III. God the Father enables believers to serve Him fruitfully (15:1-2).

Illustration: It is a part of the nature of fathers to correct their children. How deeply this is true can be illustrated by the fact that I still will try to give my son Brandon some golfing tips on the golf course, even though He now typically scores 20

shots lower than I do for a round. I began correcting his game when he was five years old, and it's just not easy for a father like me to stop now after all this time.

Application: God is a faithful Father when it comes to our need as believers for correction. The metaphor we find in the Gospel of John for this truth is not the game of golf, but the vineyard. God the Father is the perfect Vinedresser, and Jesus is the Vine. We are the branches of the Vine, and the Vinedresser examines whether we branches are fruitfully abiding in Christ. Where the Vinedresser finds no fruit, He deals with our need for removal from the Vine. Where He finds some fruit, He prunes us so that we will produce more fruit.

God the Father is glorified in our greater fruitfulness (v. 8). He gets no glory from an unfruitful branch, nor does He withhold His blessing to make us unfruitful. No, He is determined to help us bear much fruit, because that is what glorifies Him.

The fruit our heavenly Father is looking for in His beloved believers is obedience to His commandments, especially the commandment to love one another (vv. 9-14). How is our loving obedience to the commands of Christ? Are we bearing the fruitfulness of genuine love for one another?

That love grows cold in disobedience to Christ's command when love of self, love of pleasure, and love of money compete with our love for fellow believers in the Lord. How does the Vinedresser view your love for the Vine and its branches? Jesus's fruitful disciples love God and His people more than these things, and they seek to obey His commandments, especially the commandment to love fellow branches, with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Conclusion: In our text in John 16, the Lord Jesus promised His disciples, in that upper room, that the time would come when He showed them plainly their heavenly Father and His

love for them. As we have opened the Gospel of John together, we have been shown plainly the fulfilment of that promise. Jesus has told us plainly of the Father through the Gospel of John. The Father is Father to the Son, to the world, and to believers.

As the Father of believers, God gave us to His Son; He seeks true worship from us, which is from a heart focused on His Word; and He works even in difficult ways in our lives to make us fruitful when it comes to obeying His commands, especially the command to love one another.

The National Fatherhood Initiative tells us that 18.4MM children, 1 out of every 4 in the United States, lives in a home with no biological, step, or adoptive father, but the Gospel of John promises us that no believer is Fatherless. Why can we say that with confidence this morning? One simple reason:

“For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God” (John 16:27).

“A man came—I think it was actually in Philadelphia—on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, ‘Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.’ That is the distinction—the sermon, and the ‘lightning and the thunder.’ To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters.”

—David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

*Preachers and Preaching*