

# **GOD – the Ultimate Father (and the Grandest “Father’s Day” of all time)**

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Abstract: **Abstract:** Jesus came to reveal God our Father, whom Jesus says is greater than He is (John 14:28). In fact the Bible calls God the Father "the God of Jesus" (Eph. 1:3, 17). This sermon, originally preached in July 04, is as timely as ever as we observe "Father's day". Get excited again about God as your Ultimate Father and preview the greatest "Father's Day" of all time (it hasn't happened yet).

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Hi again, everyone. **As I start this message [originally 2004], our children and my wife have just given me a glorious Father’s day, as usual for them. Our children do an excellent job of conveying their love, respect and honor to their dad.** This year we weren’t graced by Heather’s presence, as she’s in Orlando with her new husband Matt, but we received a very sweet phone call from her and their Father’s Day card. This most recent Father’s day we spent the weekend on the Oregon coast together and had a glorious time. As their dad, I felt very loved, honored and appreciated, as they make me feel *every* Father’s day.

That got me thinking about the *ultimate* Father of all – GOD our Father. It seems ***much of Christianity almost ignores God the Father***, with their focus being almost *entirely* on Jesus Christ. Or for some – even Mary. **Any of you who have heard me from the beginning know I have indeed glorified my Savior and speak constantly of Jesus.** After all, we’re going to marry Him, I pray. After all, He’s our King, our Master, our Lord, our *Life*.

*But*, I sure don’t want anyone thinking I’m forgetting or minimizing God our *Father*! Let’s ***NOT*** forget *Father*. Hence this message. In our love for Jesus, we must not move the focus off of *Father*. The “kingdom of GOD” is after all *God’s* kingdom – and He will let Jesus be its king over it, but under the Father (1 Corinthians 11:3; 15:27-28)

I will say this too: I *also* know some who speak virtually of *only the Father* – and minimize Jesus. *That shouldn’t be, either* - - as we’ll see in today’s message.

***TODAY I want to focus on seeing God as our very real FATHER – an intimate father, and the ultimate FATHER. And I’ll even talk about how our heavenly Father even has his own Father’s Day – which I’ll cover at the end of the message.***

***This message will start what will eventually be several messages having to do with GOD: other topics which will follow will include how to find God, what it means to know God, and how to show your love for God, according to God’s word. So we’ll focus in depth on coming to know God in a future message.***

## **WHY THIS MESSAGE ABOUT THE TRUE GOD IS BEING GIVEN**

***WHY do we need this message? Because everything ultimately is all about GOD. Not us. Because the kingdom of God is all about the family of God, with GOD as its FATHER.***

***\* Jesus defined “eternal Life” in John 17:3***, during one of His prayers to Father just hours before His illegal arrest in Gethsemane. He said, “And *this* is eternal life, that they may *know* you, *the only true God*, and Jesus Christ whom you sent.” **I John 5:20** makes a similar case.

***If eternal life itself is defined by being able to know that you know God and Christ***, we’d be smart to start building that relationship, right? We’d be wise to be learning how to come to intimately *know* God and Christ, right?

**Remember Jesus is the Door**, and the Way....**but to what?** To a relationship with our FATHER! To Salvation (Acts 4:12). To the kingdom of *God*. Yes, Jesus is an all-important part of the puzzle, and the means of *salvation* – but salvation is possible only if we come into the Father’s *family*. So we have to come to know our Father, whom Jesus came to reveal. *That’s why I’m sharing this message* which is a focus on *GOD our Father*.

***This concept of focusing on knowing God is not limited to the New Testament. Jeremiah said something similar:***

***Jer 9:23-24*** “Thus says the LORD: "Let *not* the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches;

***24 But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the LORD.***

***Another reason to really focus on God the Father is that Jesus said the greatest commandment of all – and He quoted from Deut 6:4 -- is to love God with everything we’ve got:*** with all our heart, all our soul, all our strength. The gospel accounts add “with all your MIND.” There’s nothing greater – nothing – than to be sure we’re loving God with everything we’ve got! (Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34).

***Another reason to have a series of messages about the true GOD:*** *So many have a wrong concept of God*. Some see Jesus as “the loving, kind, forgiving, gentle one – but His Father – whoa—He’s the heavy handed one; He’s the God of judgment, fire and brimstone.” Nothing could be further from the truth! In fact, Jesus said “If you’ve seen me, you’ve seen my father” (**John 14:7-9**) And lets not forget: Even Jesus, when He returns as king of Kings – you can read it for yourself in Revelation 19-20 especially, is coming as a conquering king, with His robe dipped in *blood*, coming to make war and to – frankly – *destroy* the assembled armies ready to fight Him. *Both* Jesus and His Father are a loving GOD, and *both* mete out strong justice too, when its warranted. It’s a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God, especially if you’ve been fighting Him!

***Another reason for this message:*** *Some of us have a tough time with the concept of GOD as a loving father because we didn’t have such a father to experience.* Well, your wait is over. The one ultimate dear Father has asked *you* to come into His family. God Almighty wants *you* as His very own son or daughter.

And *He's* a perfect Father. So from now on, we can't regret not having a great father on earth – for we've now got the perfect Father. You'll see that more and more as we go along, I hope.

In fact, the *concept* of “fatherhood” comes from GOD:

**Eph 3:14-15** “For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 *from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named...*”

**Another reason for this message, is that central to the 10 commandments is the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment (Exodus 20:12) which has to include GOD as our Father:** its all about honoring our Father and mother. That of *course* includes God, as our Father. And I must say it of course includes your earthly father too. ***The commandment gives no prior conditions.*** It doesn't say “honor your father and mother *if* they are honorable”, or “if they love you”, or “If they haven't abandoned you”, or “If they're not a drunk, or other kind of sinner” – just simple words: *Honor them.*

After all the Bible tells us in fact to learn to live a life of *honoring all* (**I Peter 2:17**). Peter even goes on to say “**honor the king**” – who at that time was – in most people's minds, *undeserving of honor*. That was Nero, he was talking about. So we are to be living with a deeply respectful attitude to everyone we come in contact with, as a future member of God's family. Esteeming others better than ourselves. That we treat any human being, regardless of what WE think he/she is – with respect, for they have been made in the likeness of the Almighty Himself!

**1 Peter 2:17** – “*Honor ALL*. Love the brotherhood. *Fear God*. *Honor* the king [Nero]”

Notice honoring the king and honoring all are both before and after the 2 word command to fear God! Then Peter goes on to say in the next verses how we are to be submissive even to harsh masters or employers. Even those who – *in his day* at least – “beat you”. Incredible, isn't it? We sure wouldn't put up with that today! So what about a less-than-honorable *Dad* that you have on earth, or have been yourself?

I need to take a 2-3 minute *digression* here for those of you who've had a difficult father – or *abusive* father. ***If you've had an abusive, evil father, that can certainly affect how you view GOD as a Father. You must take steps to improve this concept, or it can affect your relationship with God Himself.***

**But what do you DO when you've had an abusive father? What can YOU be doing?**

\* PRAY – for God to help you understand *how* to honor a man whom you may feel is not worthy of honor. There ***are no conditions to the 5<sup>th</sup> command***, which also includes honoring God as our very real father too.

--pray for God to help *you* be the kind of ***child*** to that man *you should be* regardless of how HE has been to you. Pray God can turn *your heart* back to your own father.

- pray for the ability to ***forgive*** him fully. Listen to my message on ***FORGIVENESS***.

- pray God will help *you accept* your father as he is and let you trust GOD to “fix” your father in His time...and to help you still ***honor*** him as best as you can.

- pray *for your father* himself – that God will mold and shape him and work with him
- **pray** for God to have *His will* with your father and with *your* relationship with him.
- \* and admit **we** don't deserve the love and honor **God** gives **us** either! So why withhold any?
- \* AS we forgive and love someone others may feel is unforgivable, unlovable, we help *that* person begin to see the love of God more clearly too, through **YOU!**
- \* do your best not to dishonor him, talk badly about him, or discredit him.
- \* In the end, God's goal is for you to be able to *turn your heart back to* your father and hopefully he to you. That may not be fully accomplished til the Kingdom is established, but in your heart, you could make it a goal you want to happen.. . . but it may take a lot of time and healing for you to be able to.
- \* if we can't or won't do this, it will limit our own blessings and relationship with God we could be having, and limit the relationship you can have with *heavenly* Father.

***I know what I've just said will be terribly difficult for many who've had abusive fathers. But our spiritual walk, our spiritual life, is all about forgiveness and grace. As children of a forgiving Father, of a gracious Father, we need to become like Him in every way. Especially since WE have been recipients of God's unbounded grace, forgiveness and love.***

**BUT for today's message:** remember we now have a loving Father no matter how our own fathers failed, or no matter how much *we* have failed as father or mother ourselves. *Especially* since God our Father *is* honorable, we really need to learn to *honor* God in all we do and say.

### **BUT, LET'S NOT FORGET JESUS EITHER!**

One quick caution: we focus on Father, *neither* should we jump into the other ditch and forget JESUS! That's not right either! That's worthy of its *own* message, but write down a few verses to read at leisure yourself:

**John 5:32** – "...all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father" – or else we're not honoring Father either.

And when we believe in Jesus, it is showing we believe in the One who sent Him (John 12:44). Jesus frequently encouraged his disciples to believe in HIM as well as in God (John 14:1). In fact, if you look up in a concordance "preached Christ", or just look up "preach, preaching, preached" – you'll find many places where the early disciples indeed preached *about* JESUS. So let's get the balance on this subject.: as we magnify Jesus, let's also focus on Father!

**Do you ever wonder *what you are, or who are you are?*** Why you were given *life* in this world? If someone were to ask you "who are you?", we'd normally answer with what our *name* is, especially our *family* name. If that doesn't clear things up, we might add, "So-and-so is my Dad" – and hope that helps. People talking about you and me might say, "he – or she - - is one of SHIELDS' kids".

Even in this life and this world, we often attempt to identify ourselves by who our *family* is, who our *father* is. *Our father gave us our identity. Its NO different spiritually. We receive our identity spiritually by which Father we have spiritually. More on that later.*

As I record this, in **July 2004**, Father's day has just passed a few weeks ago. **But even before Father's Day, it made me start thinking more about my dear Abba, our Heavenly Father.**

And let me say this too: I know up front that I'll fall way short in any attempt to talk about God. His true depths are unfathomable. We tend to see God the way we want to. We create God in our image, instead of seeing what the Bible clearly says.

**Isaiah 55:8-9** says, His ways are not our ways: "*For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,*" says the LORD. "*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.*"

*The book of JOB does a great job of showing how deep God is; how high are His ways, how inscrutable are His plans.*

**Also: Rom 11:33-34** "*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! 34 "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?"*

*We can learn a lesson from Job: to see God more clearly: get ourselves out of the way.*

*As we come to know God, like Job we have to learn that we don't need to always understand WHY God does what He does— but surrender to God and accept what He does. We don't always need to understand why, but we do have to come to ACCEPT whatever God does. As we come to that same place of surrender, giving up our own will, our own thoughts, our own desires and plans – God becomes so much clearer when we get ourselves out of the way. I'm preparing a topic on "Living by Faith" and it has much to do with this too. Another way we can say it: "we don't always need to know WHY – we just need to know WHO".*

*So let's start by understanding there is an unfathomable depth to God and that it will become our lifelong quest to go ever deeper with God and His mind... and we'll never quite get there. But what a journey we can have in this lifelong quest to honor and better get-to-know Father in heaven.*

**\*\*WHEN YOU SEE A LOVING RELATIONSHIP between a Father and Son,** *that is so heart-warming! And yet I assure you, nothing we have seen on earth can even come close to the way our heavenly Father feels about you and me. But there are some really heartwarming Father-Son stories out there.*

**1992 Barcelona Olympics :** *One US runner in a race, who had trained for years for this few seconds in time – 200 meter or something like that, I can't remember– but as the race started, about halfway through, he pulls a hamstring or something and crumpled on the track with searing pain in his leg...*

An older man jumped down from the stands. On his T-shirt were the words, “Have you hugged your child today?” He powers his way through the security people and runs up to the crumpled athlete on the ground and falls down on his knees beside the runner. It didn’t take long to realize this was the father of the athlete.

His son is trying to get back up and finish the race. Dad is obviously frustrated. He wants to help, but what can he do? His dad is saying, “You don’t have to do this... it’s OK”... but then a scene I’ll never forget: with his arm around his son, he lifts him up, and together they hobble to the finish of the race...as the Father *supports*, even half-carries – his injured son to *finish* the race set before him. They finish the race together with the crowd exploding in applause.

***We don’t all have fathers like that. Some of you hearing this even have had abusive fathers. And its going to be tough to see God correctly as a loving, always-there Father for you. And a Father you can – and must – come to really know. Intimately, personally.***

**Some of my FONDEST memories of my dad:**

-- ***MY father was a missionary to the Philippines. He gave his life serving the poor, the needy, the sick and old infirm. He ran a mission, led a Bible school, served in an old folks home, and he literally saved dozens of lives, starving children and sick babies. (story of Mike and Vic)***

-- ***my dad praying with me when I was afraid one time, in the dark, and he laid beside me and prayed and in that prayer let me know my heavenly Father would always be there beside me.***

-- ***My father is dead now, but my memories of him live on. He was an awesome tenor. I loved to hear him praise God in songs that were always on his lips. I’ve known few men who had the faith my dad had. My dad had his problems, but I’ll always remember Him and wanting to please God, especially in his later years.***

-- ***One time he came to visit us when I was a young, busy minister ... too busy, getting all the details ready for a church canoe trip. He asked me how much praying and Bible study I had done in the last few days, and then said, “Don’t ever get so busy working FOR the Lord that you neglect to have personal time to better know the Lord”.***

***I loved it when I could spend time with my Dad. I can’t anymore. He is no longer with us. Do you have an earthly dad still? Don’t ignore him. Call him. Spend some time together – something you know he’d love to do with you. ESPECIALLY on this Father’s Day. Do it!***

***(My dad – final letter story; reconciling and approving of one another just days before his sudden and unexpected death. Happy we were able to do it)***

**ELIJAH REVEALED THE ONE TRUE GOD**

***Do you remember ELIJAH and the nation of Israel at Mt. Carmel? Be turning to 1 Kings 18. Elijah does something here that really HI-LITES how important HE felt it was to know the true God.***

**This was during the infamous reign of evil King Ahab and his evil wife, Jezebel.** She had brought in hundreds of priests of Baal and *Asherah*, the female consort of Baal, and had gotten the nation of Israel to depart from the true God. Jezebel, we read in 1 Kings 18:4 had gone so far as to **massacre** the true prophets of God.

The *truth* of God had been thrown out the window.

So in **1 Kings 18:16-19** – Elijah throws down a challenge to have Israel meet with him at Carmel, along with 450 priests of Baal and 400 prophets of *Asherah*. So Elijah is outnumbered 850 to one! Now let's pick up the story.

If *you* were to get the nation back on track, what *one doctrine* would you focus on *first* and *most*?

Many of you would say "the sabbath", or the 10 commandments. Others might say Jesus' redemptive sacrifice, or grace, or other answers. But what did ELIJAH focus on? Perhaps there's a lesson here for *us*, today.

No doubt the nation had forsaken God's way *wholesale*. Elijah could have talked about the 10 commandments, justice, helping the poor, marriage laws, tithing, reopening the temple, sabbath day, the holydays, justice, mercy, faith, -- a thousand important areas the people needed to have restored! **But what one thing did he focus on?** Some people got all alarmed when a certain denomination abandoned the true sabbath. But long before that, they had abandoned something even MORE importantly I feel Elijah would say the same thing, because he *does* right here:

### **1 Kings 18:17-24**

Vs 17-20- Elijah convinces Ahab to gather the Israelites to Mt. Carmel.

21 And Elijah came to all the people, ***and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If THE LORD IS GOD, FOLLOW HIM; BUT IF BAAL, FOLLOW HIM."*** *But the people answered him not a word.*

22 Then Elijah said to the people, "I alone am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. 23 Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it. ***24 Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God."***

Elijah is trying to turn the hearts of the CHILDREN of Israel back to their Father – GOD. That is what was central to Elijah then, and will be to the end time Elijah. There IS yet an end time Elijah!

***Gods –even false non-existing gods – come with their own set of doctrines.*** Allah – and Islam – have a set of doctrines in the Koran, and OUR God has a set of doctrines in the Bible. They are NOT the same God. Their teachings are radically different from each other. ***ONCE YOU HAVE THE RIGHT GOD, that God's teachings come with that God! So the first thing you have to teach is who the right God is. That is why the very first commandment is about identifying the one true God we are to worship.***

***v.24 – whichever God answers by fire: interesting.***

***BAAL was the Canaanite SUN GOD – the God of fire, warmth, heat.*** This was supposed to be Baal's strength: fire. Elijah goes on the attack. Takes the fight right into the enemy's home turf!

In fact, Baal was worshiped by sacrificing your firstborn to him, by burning your firstborn *alive* (Jeremiah 19:5). The Bible euphemistically calls this many times, “passing your children through the fire”.

**1 Kings 18:26-29** *I’ll summarize:* So the priests of Baal kill a bull, crying out to Baal from morning to noon... at which time Elijah starts to taunt them and say even, in the original Hebrew, maybe Baal is in the bathroom (“he is busy”). Then they kept it up til at least 3 pm or later. Nothing. Verse 29 says, “... but there was no voice, no one answered, no one paid attention.”

30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.

**V 31-34** – he has them SOAK the wood, the sacrifice and the altar til water is filling the trenches.

36 *And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice [late afternoon, around 3 pm, before sunset], that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. 37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that YOU [not Elijah –but GOD ultimately did this] have turned their hearts back to You again." [GOD is really the one who opens the way to His presence though He uses His servants as the TOOL]*

38 *Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The LORD, HE is GOD! The LORD, HE is GOD!"*

40 And Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!" So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there."

*God – and ELIJAH His servant – did not take lightly what these false prophets had done to turn Israel away from the true God.*

**The end time ELIJAH also is one who leads the children of Israel back to the right Father – and for that matter, their physical elders also.** We don’t know for sure, but I suspect the end time Elijah will be one of the two witnesses, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> witness will be a type of Moses – who was a fugitive murderer out of Egypt -- and then brought back by God; the 2<sup>nd</sup> witness was also typed by Joshua the filthy high priest of Zech 3, whom God redeemed and brought back.

John the Baptist was a type of the end time Elijah, as Jesus said so. Yet **Mal. 4:5-6** says Elijah will come before the “great and dreadful day of the Lord” – *implying just before*, not 2,000 years before. Jesus said about John and Elijah, “Elijah HAS come” but previously said ***shall come and restore all things. All things have not yet been restored, by anyone yet, in my opinion.*** (Matthew 17:10).

**Mal 4:6** says “*And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.*”

“Fathers’ may well refer primarily to GOD, as our father, as happened in Elijah’s day. The original Elijah said, in His prayer, in verse 37 of 1 Kings 18, “*YOU, O GOD, have turned their hearts.*” So *God* does it – thru the work of Elijah, as was the case with John the Baptist in **Luke 1:16** – who was to “turn many of the children of Israel ***to the Lord their God.***”



SO in any case, that is what *Elijah* did – point people back to *God*, as their Father and their one *true* God.

### **GOD AS A REAL FATHER WAS NOT GRASPED IN THE O.T.**

***GOD AS a real FATHER was a new concept. The idea of us being able to understand God as our FATHER was not really absorbed in the Old Testament period.*** Sure, there are verses that refer to God as *a* Father, but it was believed to be more allegorical than real.

Here are a few quick references in the Old Testament: I won't take time to turn to them.

**Exodus 4:22-23**—God tells Moses to tell Pharaoh that God considers the nation to be His SON...

- **Luke 3:38**, Adam is said to be “of God” or son of God

- God uses it in reference to Solomon in **2 Sam 7:14** “I will be his Father, and he shall be My son”

- **Isaiah** mentions the same concept a couple times in Isaiah 63:16 and 64:8 – “You Oh Lord are our Father....” And in **Psalms 103:11** we catch a *glimpse* of the tender Father God also is when it says, “as a father pities his children, so does God pity those who fear Him.”

***But generally God was not considered “Father” in a REAL sense until New Testament times.***

**\*\*\*That all changed when God**, in His deepest love for all of us, gave us His only Son, Jesus Christ – to die in our stead and to be our Savior. And besides dying for us, Jesus came to *reveal* His Father (Matthew 11:27) and the fact that there would be more children because of Jesus' redemptive act.

The name “FATHER” implies having *children*. We don't call anyone a “father” unless he has kids. And we don't refer to someone as “OUR father” unless we are his child. Same with our Father in heaven! **Jesus came to reveal that we are to pray to God as “our FATHER in heaven” – a revolutionary concept back then.**

***Jesus spoke often of what kind of Father He has, and we now have:***

- how God is more than willing to give His Holy spirit to those who ask Him.
- How Father lets it rain or lets the sun shine on the righteous as well as the wicked (Matt. 5)
- How Father knows every hair on our heads.... Knows us that intimately
- How deeply our Father rejoices when we repent and come back *home* to Him.

Jesus' Father is also called “The Ancient of Days”. He was the ultimate God of the Old Testament – as well as the new Testament now, though the voice Israel heard was the voice of the One who became Jesus.

JESUS, we can see, *also* came therefore to *reveal what kind of Father* we have, for He made that *really* clear when He was resurrected, when He told Mary Magdalene that He was **going “to my Father and your Father, my God, and YOUR God” (John 20:17).**

## **ABBA, DEAR FATHER**

In fact, JESUS came to reveal God not just as “FATHER”, *but “ABBA” FATHER – our dear Father. Regardless of what kind of father you’ve had, or have been, we can all have the perfect Father and loving Papa now – God himself*

**PAUL expands on God not just being “father” but a “daddy”, a very close father:**

**Rom 8:14-17** “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 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.”* 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that ***we are children of God***, 17 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.”

**\* Here’s what VINE’S Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words says about “abba”:** “abba NT:5 is an Aramaic word, found in Mark 14:36; Rom 8:15 and Gal 4:6. In the Gemara (a Rabbinical commentary on the Mishna, the traditional teaching of the Jews) it is stated that slaves were forbidden to address the head of the family by this title..... ***Abba is the word framed by the lips of infants, and betokens unreasoning trust; “father” expresses an intelligent apprehension of the relationship. The two together express the love and intelligent confidence of the child.***”

**What an exciting concept!** The great creator is your Daddy, for real – your own Papa, your own loving father. And He wants us *close* to Him and He wants to have us inherit everything He has.

**Gal 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, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the ***Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!”*** 7 ***Therefore you are no longer a slave*** but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

**Remember what Vine’s says** – that slaves were not allowed to call the head of house “abba”.

The FIRST time “Abba” is used in the Bible shows us the *moving intimacy* with which it was used.

**Mark 14:32-38** “Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, “Sit here while I pray.” 33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. 34 Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch.”

[Jesus is saying: “I’m *really* feeling badly fellas, so bad, I could just DIE. Please fellas, I need you beside me right now”. This was one time that even JESUS asked for help from His friends. How much more *personal* and tender can you get than that?]

35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. 36 ***And He said, “ABBA, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.”***

*Remember I talked about the father of the runner in Barcelona jumping on to the track in 1992? Well, God the Highest was no doubt really hurting to see His eternal companion and now Son, Jesus Christ – in so much agony.* This was a moment in time they had anticipated, even planned for, but I'm sure it still hurt more than you and I can ever know. And even Jesus' three closest friends couldn't stay up with Him and sense the agony of the moment. So Father does what?

**Luke 22:41-44** "And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." 43 Then *an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.* 44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

*God sends "comforting angels"* to help His Son before the scourging and crucifixion would start.

What did the angels do? What did they say? I'm sure the angels – perhaps Gabriel or Michael included – had a message from Father in the Highest. What a great Father He is. Honor Him. Worship Him. Praise Him. *And while you're turning your hearts strongly to Father in heaven, do the same for your earthly father too.* The rewards will be incredible.

**THAT same closeness that Jesus had with Father – is what we're being told WE can now also have.** There may be comforting angels Father will send for US some day too. And perhaps that "messenger" or "angel" may be *you* – sent by God – to *be* a comforter, a strengthener for someone in deep sorrow. Play your role well, if you've been called to do that.

*Don't ever wonder if GOD understands what its like to be a DADDY.* HE is the one who *invented the concept* of being a daddy, a loving papa. He is ALREADY a papa – and when **JESUS came back from Mission Accomplished on the earth, and stood before the HOLY FATHER** in His temple in heaven, with millions of angels singing loud hosannas and praises – I'll bet there was a bear hug *from Father* to Jesus like *never seen before!* Of course He knows what a hug feels like! Of course He understands what a daddy feels.... When He had to forsake His one and only Son, and let Him be *tortured* by humanity.... Of course our Father knows depths of feeling!

### **GOD IS ON HIS THRONE, IN PERFECT CONTROL**

*--depending on how big our God and Father is, the name "GOD" should have an awesome calming effect. Is your life unsettled, and not in the order you want? Isaiah felt that way when righteous king Uzziah died. He was a powerful king, a righteous king – who blew it with an impetuous act near the end of his life and God gave him leprosy, and he died shortly after. ISAIAH* was allowed to see God in *vision*. This "God" he saw was the one who became Jesus, not the Father, for in fact the words of Isaiah here in Isa 6, are quoted in John 12:39-41 as referring to Christ.

**Isa 6:1-7** "In the year that King Uzziah died, *I saw the Lord* sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. 2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

[When we are unsettled, do we *see God* too, as *still* in charge, still *there* for us, still ruling His universe. Calm down, nothing has changed. What an awesome God we have. ]

4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am *a man of unclean lips*, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD [YAHWEH] of hosts." 6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal which he had taken with the tongs from the altar. 7 And he touched my mouth with it, and said:

"Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged."

When we really come to see God, several things happen:

- \* We see how *holy* and righteous He is
- \* we see our own *lack*, our sinfulness and need to be cleansed

***But no matter what, GOD is still on His throne running things! Even when we don't see it!***

***As we focus on Him, it puts everything else we're going thru in focus. When we pray "our Father in heaven" – there should be a great calming effect when we realize the one we're talking to about our concerns is our very own PAPA, very own Daddy, Himself – and He's the ALMIGHTY! There is nothing impossible for Him. We not only have a loving heavenly Daddy, but an all powerful One!***

*One time when I was about 5 or 6, I remember being stuck in some mud...and I was crying. The rest of the family had gone on without me. Then Dad looked back, picked me up with one hand and swooped me out of the mud. I was so impressed. How big, how strong he was. How comforting it was to know I could call on a Daddy who cared, who could help, who was strong, who was there! But God also wants us to learn to ask.*

*Story of Rachel trying to lift something heavy – "are you using all the strength you have?"— I asked. Was trying to get her to see she could ask me to help her. God is the same: He is all powerful. We need to look to Him for help.*

***Does He want to do good by you? Of course. Every good and perfect gift is from Him. And He has the power to accomplish anything He so desires.***

***\*\* how God becomes our Abba, Father is in the message on "New Creation***

### **WHICH FATHER IS YOUR FATHER?**

***God is not the only spiritual Father in the universe. Jesus said MOST of the people of the world do NOT have God as their father. God CALLS OUT from the world those He wishes to be part of His first fruit, early called-out ones and adopts them into His family. NO man should take on the title of "Father" for religious reasons, ever (Matthew 23:9). We have only one "holy Father".***

*That's the actual Greek word: adopt. Study it some time. That's what it actually says in the original Greek. We are also eventually BORN into the Family, but for now are full, legal ADOPTED children. But unless God does that, the uncalled, unsaved have a different Father for now.*

***In John 8:42-44***, Jesus clearly says the Jews in front of Him were not of GOD, but their father – and for all uncalled, for all unsaved this is for NOW at least true – they are of their father the devil.

*If this is a new concept for you, don't get mad at me. That's what Jesus SAID. God has a plan to call people into His family, but until He calls and until they answer, HE is NOT their father.*

***This concept that Satan has a family – goes all the way back to Genesis 3:15*** – in the prophecy of enmity between the serpent's (Satan's) seed – and the woman [the church]. And the woman was to have a Seed – which was Christ – which would conquer the Serpent. You can read it in Gen. 3:15.

Then again in ***Matthew 13:38***, it is made clear in the parable of the wheat /tares that there are weeds, or tares, which are “sons of the wicked one”. Take your time to look these up if you need to.

And finally in ***1 John 3:8-10, 12*** – Cain is said to be “of the wicked one” and those who live a way of sin as a way of life are said to be “of the Devil” and not “of God”. If this is a new concept to anyone listening or reading, please take time to look it up.

***God now makes it possible to come out from under the fatherhood of the Devil, who has deceived the whole world, and now come into God's family***, with GOD as your very own dear Daddy, your most Holy, loving and perfect Father, ***regardless of any kind of father you've ever had – you've got the ultimate in Daddies now: God Himself.*** And He's inviting you into HIS very own family, to be HIS son or daughter. How awesome is that!?

There is a *process* to all of this – and its done by *God's* will, not ours.

***John 1:10-14*** “He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12 ***But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children OF GOD, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, NOR OF THE WILL OF MAN, BUT OF GOD.*** 14 And the Word became flesh and *dwelt* among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the **Father**, full of grace and truth.”

God in the person of Jesus, comes and walks, eats, sleeps, lives with *sinful man* – and even has something about Him that makes *repentant sinners comfortable* around Him.

***YOU were handpicked by the greatest Being in the universe (John 6:44). VALUE that calling, cherish it! Show you value it.***

God then presents us to Jesus, as He is the Door and the Way. Nobody can come to the Father, no one can be saved, except through Jesus (Acts 4:12). ***Jesus in turn reveals Father to us:***

***Matt 11:27 (and repeated in Luke 10:22)*** “All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, ***and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him***”

***\*\*\*I hope you all understand that as great as JESUS is, the FATHER is even greater. And that is the way Jesus would have it and taught it. The Godhead is not equal personalities. But Jesus IS part of the godhead! Jesus is called “son of the Highest” – Luke 1:32.***

**John 14:28** “You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' *for My Father is greater than I.*” *There you have it in plain talk.*

**Eph 4:6** says God the Father “is above all” **I Cor. 11:3** says “...the head of Christ is God”.

In fact, Jesus says God the Father is His GOD! (**John 20:17; Ephesians 1:3, 17; Rev. 3:12**, etc.) Do you think of Jesus having the Father as His God? And yet Jesus Himself is very God (John 1:1-3). *It would be heresy to say Jesus is “a” God.* The Bible nowhere says that. What the Bible says is that Jesus is GOD, not “a” God. I’ll cover that in detail some other time. But there is only ONE God. Jesus made that clear: “the Father and I are one”. In Deuteronomy, the Lord is ONE. It may seem mysterious, and it can be a mystery, but Jesus and Father are so one in mind and heart, that though they have different missions and purposes, and Jesus submits to Father, they are One. Jesus even prayed that all of us may be one as HE and Father are one (**John 17:21, 23**).

**So you will hear much from me over the years lauding and praising my Savior Jesus Christ, but I want to be very clear: Is Jesus is the central focal point of the Bible? No.** Jesus Himself said, as we’re seeing, that His entire focus was to reveal the *Father*, whom He said was *greater* than He! Jesus came to show the way into *his Father’s house*, the kingdom of GOD.

The fact is – we have to believe in, honor, praise, worship and obey – and have *faith* in – *both* – Jesus Christ and God the Highest. (John 5:23; 6:29, 40; John 12:44-45; 14:1; 17:3; 1 John 3:24; 4:15; Colossians 2:2 and many more).

### **GODS “SOFT SPOT”**

*Let me say this too: Our Father seems to have a soft spot for repentant losers. So you’d better too. He has a tenderness for the castoffs and dregs of humanity. You should know that, if you understand what YOU are – the not so mighty, not so noble.*

*Jesus, representing His father, seemed to look for people like Zaccheus – ‘come down, for I must have dinner with you’ – and salvation came to that house that day!*

*John 4 - -For the Samaritan woman at the well – to whom Christ revealed Himself. that happened so rarely. Jesus revealed His identity to only a very few.*

*For Matthew, the tax collector. For the woman caught in the act of adultery. For the woman with a past whom He let wipe His feet with her tears and told her she was forgiven, and that she loved much, for she recognized she was forgiven much.*

*Paul said there were former homosexuals, adulterers, liars, and every type of sinner in the Corinthian church. So take heart! Regardless of how man might see you and me and our past, take heart. The Eternal Himself has chosen you and let any man touching the apple of His eye beware!*

Then when we accept the Call, we must truly **repent** and be baptized, we then have the elder’s hands laid on us and we receive the Holy Spirit, the incorruptible seed of God. A bit of God and His eternal life now come into us and we come into a state of *grace*. We’re saved by grace, covered by grace and will be in the kingdom because of grace.

And now the *EVIDENCE* of that newness of life is a life that now goes the *other* way, a new direction. We are saved by grace, and the evidence is a life of new, good works as proof of the grace and salvation we are now under.

**Eph 2:8-10** “For by *grace* you *have been saved* through *faith*, and that not of yourselves; it is the GIFT of God, *9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.* 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

*That process of becoming a child of God heavily involves Jesus Christ as you can clearly read in the well known passage of John 3:13-19.*

***Baptism and receiving His seed makes us God’s children and heirs of all He has!***

**Gal 3:26-29** “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were ***baptized into Christ*** have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are ***all one in Christ Jesus.*** 29 ***And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.***”

***Hebrews 2 says at this time Jesus is not ashamed to call us His brothers and sisters. We are now part of the FAMILY OF GOD, HIS children, brought into HIS family and Satan no longer has any claim or hold on us.***

**At BAPTISM and laying on of hands, THAT person becomes a NEW CREATION, A NEW CHILD of God, and becomes YOUR brother or sister.**

***At Rachel and Heather’s (my daughters) baptisms: after my own daughters were baptized, after they had the laying on of hands to receive God’s Holy Spirit, I gave each a bear hug as they stood there dripping wet, and with tears in my eyes, said - “SISTER, welcome to God’s family.” Because at that moment, though I was and always will be her earthly Dad, we were both at that moving moment, children of the Almighty. I was the trustee to bring her to her real Papa, her real Dad, God in the highest.***

***There’s great joy in heaven at a baptism and laying on of hands. A new life has begun!***

\* **Michelangelo’s** creation scene on Sistine Chapel – shows God with a smile on His face. The Pope was upset with a painting showing God smiling. Michelangelo refused to change it. He said, “I have yet to see any father, who when seeing His new son for the first time, doesn’t have a big smile on His face.”

### **TO WHOM SHOULD WE PRAY – Father only, Jesus only, both? Which?**

***Jesus also taught that only God should be referred to as our Father in the spiritual sense. It is WRONG to call a man “holy Father”. Jesus said so. Of course we can call our human fathers “father”, but never in the spiritual sense, as a quick study of the topic shows.***

***Matt 23:9 “Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven”***

***He taught us to pray to FATHER – not to Jesus Himself***, primarily, though it's NOT *wrong* to pray to Jesus as well. But mostly, the examples in scripture, is that of praying to Jesus' father and our Father – God the Father – when we pray. Paul spoke of bowing his knee to the *father* (Ephesians 3:14)

Here's an example of praying to Jesus though: **Acts 7:59**, Stephen, as he is being martyred, cries out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit". He prays to Jesus here.

But just about everywhere else, the teaching and example of scripture is to pray to FATHER, not to Jesus primarily.

### **RESPONSIBILITY TO UPHOLD FATHER'S NAME in HOLINESS**

***ONE VERY IMPORTANT CONCEPT: This also gives us a serious responsibility before God to uphold that name.***

***We pray "HALLOWED, HOLY, be your name". And we need to keep that tie holy and precious.***

***Matthew 5:16 – everything we do is to bring glory to Father.... Or it can bring shame. I'll say a LOT more about that in a follow-up message on "Do we really love God" and another on "Coming to Know God".***

***That's what the FIRSTBORN son of God, Jesus, did. He was the exact image of His Father. Remember that "likeness" has to do with "looking like" whereas "image has more to do with "being like". Jesus MAY have looked like Father, but He certainly acts like Father, walks like***

***Father, talks like Father, lives like Father and is like Father. They are so alike you can say they are ONE. One way they both live. "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father!" (John 14:9). Are we growing ever closer to being able to say that? We don't dare YET – but every day we can be, and should be, *more* like Father than we were before, as we mature and grow spiritually.***

### **HOW CAN WE UNDERSTAND A LOVING GOD ALLOWING HORRIBLE THINGS?**

***\*\*\*\*WHAT'S our FATHER LIKE? Do you know Him? Do you feel you have a connection with Him? Are you close to Him, and is He close to you? Have you found Him? Are you looking for Him? How loving, how wonderful is our heavenly Father?***

***God is beyond our understanding.*** On one hand He IS love personified. His love can be very tender and wonderful and warm – and that's the God we usually prefer – but *this* same Father can also have a love that is *fierce*, frightening at times if we don't accept what He's doing as love and for our good; can be very tough to understand with our human perspective.

For example, how many of *us* would put *our* wayward, sleepy children through a Great Tribulation – the *worst* time of trouble ever seen by mankind – regardless of how bad they've been? *That* is tough love. And the things God makes many of His people go through can be very, very tough. When Christ returns, He's coming with vengeance – it says – on those who destroy the earth. So there's that side of God too that we have to accept as part of the whole package.



**\*\* THE KEY is not to have to UNDERSTAND every single thing He does, or doesn't do – but to lovingly ACCEPT whatever He does or doesn't do. (repeat)** To literally TRUST Him so much that we can put our very lives in His hands – for REAL, without worry, without being overly concerned.

Let me say that again: we don't have to *understand* everything about God, for in fact, I doubt we ever *can* in this life. The *key* is to *accept* and fully surrender to Him.

I *don't* say those things lightly. I'm 51 years old. I've lost a son. Both my parents are dead. As well as my grandparents, most of my uncles and aunts. My sister is suffering from 2 severe strokes. We have had MANY sore trials, and I frankly *cannot, and do not* understand many of them. **BUT THIS I KNOW:** as Job said: I *know* my Redeemer lives, and though I die, though I suffer, though I don't understand what He does, I know my eye shall see Him at that day, at that time.

***But the main thing to remember is GOD IS love. He not only is 'love' personified, God is ALL of the fruit of His spirit. So think of the real God, the TRUE God as not just love, but joy. God enjoys a party and has one with the angels in heaven every time we deeply repent and come to our senses (Luke 15:1-9). I've given Him many occasions to party, I guess, upon repentance. And now I want God to have *pleasure* in me by living His way more perfectly too. In Psalms 16:11 it says "in Your presence is *fullness of joy*; at your right hand are *pleasures* forevermore."***

***GOD IS A HAPPY GOD – not a hanging judge, with a scowl on His face. Do you picture God – be honest now – as happy, jovial, laughing frequently – or sad, angry, bitter? Be honest. The true God is a blessed, a happy, a joyful God.***

***The Prodigal son story in Luke 15 always reminds me that Father will always be there for me if and when I repent from my heart. People might not want me back. People might say I***

***attend with their group, people might not come in and party with me when I return from a way of sin – but GOD, my Father, is there. Always there. Re-read the story sometime, then never forget it.***

***One of my favorite Psalms is Psalm 103. Take the time later to read the whole Psalm slowly. In there we're told He forgives *all* our iniquities, *all* our sins. Then in verse 11-13:***

***Psalm 103: 11-13*** “For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him. 14 For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.”

***God's love is such that He loved us before we even had any idea about Him. We love God our father because He FIRST loved me***

***I have no redeeming qualities, no merit that can be applauded, I certainly don't deserve God's love – but He still does love me, in SPITE of me.***

No need to defend me, or you – when I say “no redeeming qualities”—for the great Apostle Paul says the same in Romans 7: “I know that *in me*, that is in my flesh, *no good thing dwells*” and later in Philippians 3 counts everything in his life before Christ as *dung*. Garbage. Refuse. So are we any better?

*And yet in spite of all that He loves you and me. And He's perfect! Though I have nothing redeeming about me, His love for me and you is so rich anyway.* Even when people fail us, and give up on us, and decide they don't want us around – God does! How incredible is that!? He wants me – and you – around Him.... for eternity? After all the ways I've failed Him? Now that's love!

*I think one of the greatest reasons its wonderful to be a father or mother* – is to begin to grasp a tiny glimmer of the kind of love GOD has for each of us.

You know how you *hurt* for your children when you see them struggling?

Jon's recent bout with severe migraine, on top of a sprained tailbone – sat down beside him and prayed with him and for him. I loved him deeply.

**It's TIME for us to love GOD more than ever before and to return the love He has given us..**

**HOW? I'm going to do another message on "DO WE REALLY LOVE GOD". Be sure to hear it. GOD IS SUCH A GREAT FATHER. Do you have a living father still? HONOR Him, turn your heart back to him. LOVE Him. If he is an abusive father – and dangerous – then you may have to love from a distance. But you can.**

## **THE ULTIMATE FATHER'S DAY**

We think of this time period as being the day of Darkness. This is Satan's day in a way, as he is the god of this world, we're told in 2 Corinthians 4:4. **Then when Jesus starts to intervene, the final year before His descent to the Mt. of Olives will be His day – "the Day OF THE LORD".**

**In a sense, with Father in heavenly Jerusalem and Jesus here on earth during the Millennium, the entire Millennial period will be Jesus' day, as He and His bride (the church) restore the planet and save all humanity physically and spiritually.**

The Bible clearly speaks of "the Day of the Lord" – Jesus Christ's day. Do you realize there is also coming the true, ultimate "*Father's day*"? The Day of our Father. When **HE** is the entire focus.

**1 Cor 15:20-28** **"But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.**

**24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. 27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted."**

**Keep your finger here, but please turn now to Rev. 21:1-8.**

**Imagine what it will be like – ALL humanity, now changed to spirit sons of God – all together watching the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven...and then being ushered in to meet our Father, all His billions of children together, finally – at one, of *one mind*, one heart, one love, ONE FAMILY.**

**Turn with me to Rev 21:1-8** *“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.*

[Don't just read over that. The galaxies, universe, planets, everything as we know it today – all touched by Satan's rebellion – will be dissolved with fervent heat and God will start over with a new heaven and a new earth (**2 Peter 3:10-13**). NEW. Not just cleansed, not just refabricated or overhauled – no, NEW! Life for us going forward will be filled with everything being new – new visions, new beauties to behold, new wonders to gasp at, and its going to be thrilling!]

2 **Then** I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, **and they shall be His people**. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. 7 ***He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.***"

**Imagine.** We're all enthralled by the presence and glory of Father. Then there's a reverent *hush* that starts to spread across the millions and billions ....why? Because someone pointed to JESUS.... "What's he *doing*?" He's walking to Father... and then gets on His knees and worships God the Father, *HIS God* and *HIS father* (John 20:17; Romans 15:6; 2 Cor 11:31)

**BACK TO 1 Cor 15:28** *“Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”*

As we see the Captain of our Salvation bowing before Father, and worshiping, it won't take but a flash of a second for the rest of God's children to follow our Savior's example. We will all bow, we will all worship our Holy Father, and we will all be ONE family, ONE God – though many personalities.

*HIS* day will have begun! From that time forward, it will be *Father's day*. He will reveal at that time what His plans are, what happens next.... And we'll be in the palm of His hand, and His love will fill the whole assembly....

I envision Father, with tears filling His eyes, saying, “OK children, please get up now. I have a story to tell you. I'll bet you all want to know what I have in mind next.... Gather around and let's talk about what we do next.”

We won't have to be told twice. The rest of eternity – and glories, pleasures and joys forevermore, will have begun!!! (Psalms 16:11)

All for now, my brothers and sisters. *Dream the dream, live the godly life, set this joy before you always. And let's all turn our hearts back to our father in heaven – and to your fathers on earth.*

**I'll also develop messages on *coming to know God*, as well as *how to know if we* really LOVE GOD – as well as other topics. Be checking out the website for new messages.**

**Till next time, Philip Shields, one of my Father's sons -- and your brother, signing off. .... Live in the Father's love for *all* His children.**

**\*\*\*\*\***