

Topic: God the Father & Jesus

Scriptural References

- Old Testament references to God as Father and His character: 1 Chronicles 29:10-13, Psalm 104, Deuteronomy 32:6, Jeremiah 31:9
- New Testament: John 1:12, John 5:18, John 17:20-26, 1 Corinthians 8:6, 1 John 2:1, Matthew 6:7-13, 1 Corinthians 15:24-28

Biblical Explanation

There are three persons in one God—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God the Father is eternal, everlasting to everlasting, the creator of all, and is in control of all things (1 Chron 29:10-13). Terms like great, glorious, victorious, majestic, provider, and sustainer can be ascribed to God (1 Chron 29:10-13, Psalm 104). He is mighty, the strongest of the strong, yet merciful, extending kindness and forgiveness to those who do not deserve it (Deut 32:6, Jer 31:9). While these traits were associated with God the Father and His character, God's people saw the term "Father" as a formal way of declaring the awesomeness of God and properly revering Him as God who is intentional in all that He does but is not intimate in His experience with them as people. "Father" is used to communicate God's possession of and allegiance to the people of Israel.

God's allegiance and commitment has extended beyond the people of Israel as a nation or ethnic group. Through Jesus Christ, those who believe in God are "spiritual Israel", which simply means that through belief you become a child of the Father. You are a part of God's family, and all of the attributes listed in the Old Testament describing God's fatherly character toward His people then are applied to you today because you are His. Amen! You get kingdom benefits because you are a child of the Father (1 Cor 8:6, 1 John 2:1). Jesus makes clear that an additional benefit to the Old Testament understanding is that God the Father is personal and intimate in His relationship with each individual believer as well as the community. During a prayer to the Father for the unity of the church and its missional impact Jesus prays, "that they (us) may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they may be in us so that the world may believe that you have set me" (John 17:21). There is an intimate connection that believers have because we are in God, a part of Him. This is similar to the term daddy or dad, which for us communicates a connection deeper than simply a biological one, it communicates a depth of relationship. The God who created the stars and heavens created us, loves us, and is concerned about our individual needs as well (Matt 6:32). In that same prayer, Jesus also makes clear that He is the One who reveals the Father to believers (John 17:26). Our ability to even have an awareness of

God comes from the work and power of Jesus who also serves as our advocate, or positively speaks on our behalf, before God the Father (1 John 2:1).

Jesus uses prayer to give us the proper framework for understanding and engaging with the Father. In Matthew 6:7-13, commonly known as the Lord's prayer, Jesus says, "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." While we suggest learning and using this entire prayer, the first line, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name", provides understanding that is found in both the Old Testament and New Testament. Jesus uses "Father" in an intimate, close and personal manner. As if He (Jesus) and Father are united, one, and we are instructed to use the Father's name in the same way when we pray. But hallowed is a term that means holy, separate, or sanctified. To hallow God's name is to give God the reverence He is due, exalting Him appropriately because He is all and in all (Eph 4:6). So we are to understand God in a close and personal manner while honoring Him appropriately.

The last defining characteristic we will list in this guide is that all things will come under the rule of God the Father. Jesus has conquered death and is restoring all order on earth so that a heavenly reality (no pain, sin, death, etc.) will be an earthly experience. Once Jesus has completed that task fully, He will deliver the kingdom to God the Father, who will have all things under His subjection, or rule (1 Cor 15:24-28).

Main Points

- God the Father is eternal, creator of all, and in all
- The term Father has two frames of reference and we should embrace both.
 - Hallowed, which means God is separate, sanctified, or holy. He is different and is to be revered as Father, King of Kings.
 - Intimate, which means God is close and cares about our needs.
- Belief in God through Jesus Christ makes us God's children, and God our Father.
- Jesus reveals God the Father to believers.
- Jesus will put all things in order and present the kingdom of God to the Father, who will rule with justice and love.

Suggested Questions

1. What characteristics are associated with God the Father?
2. How does The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:7-13) help you understand how to revere God as holy while also experiencing the intimacy being His child offers?
3. How does the name Father help you in your connection with God?
4. How does the name Father harm your ability to connect with or understand God?
5. What does intimacy with God the Father look like for you?

Additional Resources

- "What does it mean for us to call God our Father?"
<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/qas/what-does-it-mean-us-call-god-our-father/>
- Pratney, W. A. *The Nature and Character of God*.
- GotQuestions.org
- The Lord's Prayer - Jubilee Worship:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olbaIA3xbWo>
- Most Beautiful/ So In Love - Maverick City Music
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCAY_qeDo-w