

June 15, 2014 - "So, God is Your Father?"

It is recorded in Genesis (1:27-28) that "God created man in His own image; male and female He created them. God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves along the ground.'"

God is the Creator of all, and yet His desire is to be your Father. And just how does that happen?

Ephesians 1:13-14, "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession -to the praise of his glory."

In **Mark 3:35** Jesus says, "Whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." So, what is the Father's will?

1Timothy 2:3-6, "God our Savior ...wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for us."

2Peter 3:9, "[God] is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

We (**Romans 3:23**) "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," i.e., we are not acceptable to God; in fact (**6:23**) "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord," for (**5:8**), "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us," therefore (**10:13**), "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved," for God turns no one away.

John 1:12-13, "to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God —children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."

God wants everyone to become a child of His, but there can be no family relationship between you and God apart from salvation, no salvation apart from forgiveness, and no forgiveness apart from repentance. All who believe and receive Jesus Christ become a child of God.

As a child of God you are a believing, learning, and following, servant of Jesus Christ (a Christian). The Family of God is God's Church, a Fellowship of Believers, the Bride of Christ, and the Body of Christ, of which, we are each one a "body" part or member, and Jesus is the Head.

1Corinthians 12:12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. **18** But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. **27** Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Colossians 1:18, "And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church."

1Peter 2:9, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

Titus 2:14, "Jesus Christ "gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good."

Ephesians 5:1-2, "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God"

Hebrews 10:10, "we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

God predestined us (**Ephesians 1:5**), "to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ," (**Ephesians 2:4**), "it was because of His great love for us that He did this."

1John 4:7 exhorts us to "love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God." The reason we express love for each other is because God has given us birth into His family and (**1John 4:16**) "...God is love," (**1John 4:19**) "We love because He loved us first," and therefore (**Ephesians 4:32**) we are to "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

If you are a Christian, then God is your Father and you are sovereignly called to live in such a manner so as to imitate Him. You and I owe it to each other, to our brothers and sisters in the Lord, to Jesus Christ who gave His life for us, and to our Father in heaven who has purposed His great plan and provision of forgiveness from sin, eternal life, and fellowship with God and those who belong to Him.

As I have been blessed to serve people with the hope of Christ, it has become clear to me that the lost and lonely people of our society are separated from what they desperately need, Jesus Christ. They need to be born into the eternal family of God--where they will find life, hope, purpose, and love.

Our priority is to those who come into God's family; in fact, the evidence of God's Fatherhood in our lives is expressed by our love for one another.

And we are to love (**1John 3:18**), "not with words or tongue but with actions and in truth," (**Galatians 6:10**), "especially ...those who belong to the family of believers," with whom we are (**1Peter 3:8**) to "live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be[ing] compassionate and humble."

The world is full of lost, lonely and hurting people; we, God's people, must bring them the good news of the Father's plan, purpose, and provision through His Son.

Some of the people we reach out to will accept the free gift of God; but many, (probably most) will only want services and resources for their felt needs.

God's Word has the power to bring conviction, confession, repentance, forgiveness, and salvation; we must pray for God's wisdom, power, and strength, as we reach out to receive God's children into His Family!"

As Christians, God is our Father, and we should live in such a way as to honor Him, while at the same time encouraging one another (**1Corinthians 15:58**) to, "stand firm. ...[giving] yourselves fully to the work of the Lord," which is (**1Peter 3:15-16**) to "set apart Christ as Lord [in your heart]. Always prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect," exemplifying the Fatherhood of God, your love for one another, and your compassion for the lost.

2Corinthians 13:14, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ [God's Son], the love of God [the Father], and the fellowship of the [God] the Holy Spirit be with you all." And all God's people said? Amen!