



“...everything that is distinctively Christian as opposed to merely Jewish, is summed up in the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God. ‘Father’ is the Christian name for God.”
 -- J.I. Packer

GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF AS THE PERFECT FATHER WHO LOVES HIS CHILDREN WITH TENDER AFFECTION

Psalms 103:13-14 NLT

13 The LORD is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him.

14 For he understands how weak we are; he knows we are only dust.

John 1:12-13

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

◆ The Father's Love is affectionate

John 5:19-20

*19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. 20 **For the Father loves the Son** and shows him all he does.*

- ◆ "Love" is the English translation of "phileo" in Greek.
- ◆ this love is "the love of ... ardent affection and feeling" -- Fausett's Bible Dictionary
- ◆ this love "is to be distinguished from agapao in this, that phileo more nearly represents 'tender affection.' -- Vine's Expository Dictionary

- ◆ The Father loves us with the same love He has for Jesus

John 16:26-28

26 *In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. 27 No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.*

Note – “love” here is “phileo” again

Luke 15:18-24 - The Father’s heart for us, even when we stray

18 *I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.’ 20 So he got up and went to his father.*

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.”

21 *“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’*

22 *“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.*

- ◆ Living from the Father’s love

*“When our hearts are filled with security and trust in a dad who loves us, we stop living **for** our father’s approval, and begin to live **from** his approval. Out of our assurance of his unending love and commitment, we’re enabled to become the person we were created to be and, in the process, bring pleasure to our dad.”*

--Ed Tandy McGlasson, *The Difference A Father Makes*

Matthew 17:5

5 *While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”*

- ◆ **Identity and Security** “This is my Son, whom I love”
- ◆ **Approval – the Father’s Smile** “with him I am well pleased”
- ◆ **Encouragement to live our destiny** “Listen to him!”

- ◆ Living for approval instead of from love makes us slaves instead of sons. Living from love frees us to dream big and risk big

Luke 15:31-32 NIV

31 *“‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”*

EXPERIENCING THE FATHER’S LOVE

We can know the Father loves us with a knowing that transcends intellectual knowing and enters heart level, experiential knowing. The Holy Spirit reveals the Father’s love in this way.

- ◆ The Holy Spirit coming upon Jesus was accompanied by experiencing the Father’s love

Matthew 3:16-17

16 *As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. 17 And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”*

- ◆ The Holy Spirit coming upon us is also accompanied by experiencing the Father’s love

Romans 5:5

5 *And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*

“Paul uses vivid ‘Pentecostal’ language (‘poured out in our hearts’), and obviously recalls his readers to deep emotional experiences which must have been common to many of those who became Christians at that time.”

-- James Dunn, *Word Biblical Commentary*

John 17:26

26 *I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”*

- ◆ The Holy Spirit reveals God that we are beloved children to God

Romans 8:14-16

...those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.

“When a Roman father publicly acknowledged his child as his son and heir, legally in the forum, this ceremony was called ‘the adoption!’ All born in his family were children. Only those adopted were recognized as sons.”

--H.A. Ironside, *Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans*

- ◆ We are not to see ourselves as slaves to God, but as children
- ◆ “Abba” is the Aramaic word for “daddy”
- ◆ “We cry, ‘Abba, Father’” – implies not just an inner, quiet conviction of sonship, but an intensity of feeling

Galatians 4:6

6 *Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”*