

CITY VIEW CHURCH

Knowing God

The Heart of the Father
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INTRODUCTION

Our perception of God is shaped by our image of our natural fathers and by the teachings from the old testament we have received. It is interesting to me how much emphasis we put on the old testament since, first, it is OLD and we have a NEW covenant. Secondly, the Old was a covenant given from God to Moses who gave it to the nation of Israel ONLY, and the NEW is founded by Jesus himself. What is odd to me is how much emphasis we put on the OLD and how little we put on the NEW.

So our image of God the Father has been shaped by a misunderstanding of the covenants given to man. The Church was given the New Covenant not the Old. Israel was given the OLD not the NEW. These things distort our view of the Father.

How did Paul go from being a zealot for the law killing new believers to someone who knew God as ABBA.

Why does God tell us not to lie or not to . . . is it because he wants to deprive people of fun? Or could it be because God cannot lie and to tell a lie would be contrary to his nature. Remember we were created in the image of God and were designed to be like him until the fall came. So God is not trying to deprive us but to shape us into his image.

DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT WHAT YOU BELIEVE IS REALLY REAL? If so how would you live your life differently?

Are we more concerned with being right about our doctrine so we don't have to change it. Or, are we more concerned with knowing the truth which will set us free?

When was the last time you re-examined what you believe in light of your spiritual growth. Or is it easier to just go on and continue to preach the same old stuff.

Do we want to stay where we are because we are afraid people will no longer respect us if we admit we had got it wrong somewhere? Or that we like the control we have over the people and to change would cause us to lose that control?

There are bible dictionaries available to us that we did not have 5-10 years ago so there is no excuse in not growing in our knowledge of the Word of God.

CONTEXT CONTEXT CONTEXT we cannot get good doctrine without reading the bible in context. Once we begin to read in context we will be forced to throw out many of the sermons we have because they have nothing to do with the context.

Nine Covenants

Eight of these covenants God made with Man, the first covenant is the Eternal Covenant made in the Eternal Counsels and persons of the Godhead.

1. Eternal Covenant

Made in eternity in the counsels of the eternal Godhead, between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is the all comprehensive covenant, including in itself the covenants of creation and redemption and God's eternal purpose for man. All other covenants are but fragments of the whole and are a progressive unfolding of this Eternal Covenant.

2. Edenic Covenant

Made before the entrance of sin, involving the original man and women, Adam and Eve. It reveals God's original purpose for the whole of Adam's race. **GEN 1-2**

3. Adamic Covenant

Made after the entrance of sin, with Adam and Eve, the original sinners and parents of the human race. It involved God's judgment on sin and the coming of the Messianic redemption. **GEN 3**

4. Noahic Covenant

Made with Noah, after the flood, involving all creation, all creatures and all future generations of the human race. It establishes God's purpose as revealed in the Edenic covenant. **GEN 6-9**

5. Abrahamic Covenant

Made with Abraham, the father of all who believe, the father of the chosen nation of Israel, after the Tower of Babel and the scattering of the sons of Noah in their tongues, families and nations. It involved Abraham, his natural and national seed called Israel and the Messianic seed, Jesus Christ. It includes in itself the coming in of the believing Israelites and Gentiles into the Kingdom of God. **GEN 12-22**

6. Mosaic Covenant

Made strictly and only with the chosen nation of Israel, after the Exodus from Egypt at the foot of Mt. Sinai. **EXO 19-40; GAL 3:24**

7. Canaanic Covenant

Made with the nation of Israel, especially the second and new generation at the end of the 40 years, wanderings in the wilderness and before they entered Canaan, the land promised in the Abrahamic Covenant. It laid out the conditions for entering into and maintaining the promised land. **DEU 27-33**

8. Davidic Covenant

Made with David after the death of King Saul and at the establishment of the Kingdom of Israel. It involved David, both his natural and spiritual seed and pointed ultimately to the Lord Jesus Christ and the everlasting throne and kingdom of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. **2SA 7; PSA 89;132**

9. New Covenant

Made with the nation of Israel after the rejection of Messiah by the Jews and just prior to the crucifixion of Christ. It replaced the Old or Mosaic covenant with its laws and regulations. It made salvation available to all men through the cross of Calvary, and made the Gentile Nations covenant partners with Israel. **JER 31:31-34; HEB 8; MAT 26**

God's Eternal Plan

The Mystery of God was kept hidden from the beginning of time until the fulness of time would come. Christ at the appointed time would come to redeem God's creation. God kept it a mystery so the demonic forces would not be able to stop the plan of God.

1CO 2:8 - None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

He made known the mystery of his will

God made known his mystery through his Apostles and Prophets by his Spirit. This mystery is now made manifest to us.

EPH 1:9 - Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.

1CO 2:10 - But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

ROM 16:25 - Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

The Eternal Purpose Revealed

God revealed his eternal plan to us, his plan was formed before the world was created. The purpose of his plan is that the church would become the bride of Christ, and that the church would make known to the principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God. So we as the church would reveal the power of God to the demonic forces in the heavenly realms.

Titus 1:2 - a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time.

2 Timothy 1:9–10 - who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,¹⁰ but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

1 Peter 1:18–20 - For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers,¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.²⁰ He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.

Matthew 25:34 - "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.

Ephesians 3:9–11 - and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God chose us in Christ before the world was created

Christ purposed to die for man before man was even created. This was the eternal purpose and plan of God. An elaborate plan was made before the Eternal Godhead, Jesus agreed to be born of a virgin and die for the sins of this creation which was in the heart of God to create. Scripture teaches that God chose us to be in Christ before the world was made.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 - But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

1 Peter 2:9–10 - 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. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

1 Corinthians 1:27–28 - But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are,

Ephesians 1:3–12 - Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹ And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. ¹¹ In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, ¹² in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

God is a Spirit

God is not a man with flesh and blood, He is a spirit. The definition of "Spirit" is a life giving spirit, the phrase describes the nature not the personality of God."

JOHN 4:24 - God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

A Spirit does not have flesh and bones

Here Jesus tells us that a spirit does not have flesh and bones as we do. Our spirit man cannot exist on earth without a bodily form. Therefore man needs a body to operate in the natural world. God is a spirit, who does not need a body to operate with. Because God is a spirit and not limited to a body of flesh and bones, he is all powerful, everywhere present and all knowing.

LUK 24:39 - Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

Omnipresent - God is always present: His presence is always available

God is a spirit, he can be everywhere present at the same time. He is unlimited by space or time. God fills both heaven and earth and he can live in us and fill heaven at the same time. Since He is a spirit he is not bound by physical hindrances.

ACT 17:28 - For in him we live and move and have our being. As some of your own poets have said, We are his offspring.

JER 23:24 - Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?" declares the LORD. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" declares the LORD.

- **He fills all things**

EPH 1:22-23 - And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

- **There is no place man can flee from the presence of God.**

PSA 139:7-12 - Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

- **Heaven and earth cannot contain God**

2CH 6:18 - "But will God really dwell on earth with men? The heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!

**Omniscient - God is all knowing:
His directions are always right**

God is all knowing, because he is a spirit and fills all things; he also knows all things. God has perfect wisdom, perfect knowledge and perfect understanding. There is nothing hidden from the eyes of God. He sees every thought every action and every motive.

Proverbs 15:3 - The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

1 Corinthians 3:20 - and again, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile."

1 John 3:20 - whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

**Omnipotent - God is all powerful:
He can enable you to accomplish His will**

God is all powerful, there is nothing impossible with him. He is the creator of the universe and all that is. He merely speaks and the worlds are formed. There is no power in heaven or earth greater than his.

- Lord God omnipotent reigns - **REV 19:6**
- Nothing too hard for God - **JER 32:17**
- With God all things possible - **REV 15:3**

**God is Love:
His will is always best**

We usually leave this one out of this list of attributes. Yet the scripture clearly states that God is love. Therefore, this attribute must be added. As we remember because God is love by nature everything he does in regards to man is all because of his love for us. Therefore, everything God asks us to do will be the best thing for our lives. His love will always move to bring blessing and fruitfulness in us.

1JO 4:8 - Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Wisdom and Knowledge

Knowledge and wisdom are two different things: Knowledge is taking in the Word of God and wisdom is putting out the Word of God. Knowledge is the accumulation of facts; wisdom is the correct application of those facts. Notice that knowledge and wisdom come by fearing or reverencing the Lord. If you want to be wise, study God's word.

COL 1:9-10 - For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.

Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs is always referred to as "SHE", a virtues woman while the wisdom of man is referred to as a harlot. Wisdom is concerned with how we live our lives.

JOB 28:12-28 - "But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell? Man does not comprehend its worth; it cannot be found in the land of the living. The deep says, 'It is not in me'; the sea says, 'It is not with me. It cannot be bought with the finest gold, nor can its price be weighed in silver. It cannot be bought with the gold of Ophir, with precious onyx or sapphires. Neither gold nor crystal can compare with it, nor can it be had for jewels of gold. Coral and jasper are not worthy of mention; the price of wisdom is beyond rubies. The topaz of Cush cannot compare with it; it cannot be bought with pure gold. "Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell? It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing, concealed even from the birds of the air. Destruction and Death say, 'Only a rumor of it has reached our ears. God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells, for he views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens. When he established the force of the wind and measured out the waters, when he made a decree for the rain and a path for the thunderstorm, then he looked at wisdom and appraised it; he confirmed it and tested it. And he said to man, 'The fear of the Lord--that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding."

God is Wise

All wisdom and knowledge are found in God. He is all wise and all knowing. Man's wisdom is only found in God, apart from God man is wise only in his own eyes yet he lacks true wisdom.

ROM 16:27 - to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

1TI 1:17 - Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Knowledge of God

What is Knowledge? Knowledge is the taking in of the Word of God, Wisdom is putting out of the Word of God. Knowledge is the accumulation of facts, Wisdom is the application of those facts, Wisdom is the ability to apply knowledge.

Without knowledge we are destroyed

ISA 5:13 - Therefore my people will go into exile for lack of understanding; their men of rank will die of hunger and their masses will be parched with thirst.

We need the knowledge of God and his commandments before we can do them. If we do not know what God expects from us we cannot be obedient to him. Knowledge also protects us from danger. The knowledge of fire can keep us from being burnt or causing others to be burnt. The Knowledge of God's Word keeps us from being destroyed by the devil. Paul said we are not to be ignorant of his devices, In other words, we need knowledge of those devices so we can avoid the traps that have been set against us.

HOS 4:6 - my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. "Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.

God is a Good God

MAT 19:17 - "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."

The definition of goodness is: Moral Goodness and kindness. There is only one who is good. The Bible teaches that God is good. Only God is inherently and totally good. God in his nature is totally good, in him there is no evil. Therefore, all that God does is good. We many times cannot understand why bad things happen. If God is good then why does he allow bad things to happen to people. But the Word of God teaches that all things work out for good to those who love God. Therefore we must trust that God knows what is best for us.

ROM 8:28 - And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

God is Good

Goodness is part of the character and nature of God. He is morally good and kind. Therefore all his acts are good. The Bible declares that God is good to all and that his spirit is good. Goodness is part of God's character

God is good to all

PSA 145:8-9 - The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

- The Lord is good and a stronghold in times of trouble

NAH 1:7 - The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him.

- God is good and upright

PSA 25:8-10 - Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant.

- God is good and he does good

PSA 119:68 - You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees.

- The Holy Spirit is good

PSA 143:10 - Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground.

- Taste and see that the Lord is good

God wants us to experience him, and see that he is good. He wants us to test him. God will prove himself to be good. Oral Robert's coined the phrase, "God is a good God." And this phrase is true, God is good.

PSA 34:8 - Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

PSA 33:5 - He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD. KJV

- God is good to us

God is good to his people. For so long the Church has thought God loved to judge and condemn people. Yet this is so far from the truth. Jesus came as an expression of the love of God. He came to reveal God's love and goodness.

JAM 1:17 - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

MAT 7:11 - If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

PSA 73:1 - Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

- Don't despise the riches of his goodness

When we judge others wrongfully, we are saying we despise God's goodness and long-suffering forgetting that the goodness of God leads men to repentance. And through the hardness of our heart we store up wrath for ourselves. Therefore we must not judge others, or we in turn will be judged.

ROM 2:1-6 - You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. God "will give to each person according to what he has done."

The Faithfulness of God

Faithfulness - absolutely trustworthy, loyal, reliable, true to his word. God is totally reliable and absolutely trustworthy. God is true to his word. The Bible declares that God is not a man that he should lie, and also that he hastens to perform his word.

DEU 7:9 - Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.

God is Faithful

1CO 1:9 - God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

Most often we see faithfulness in connection with God himself. Because God is faithful, he can be trusted completely to carry out his commitments to us in Christ. Faithfulness is also a word which is used to commend believers for their quality of steadfast endurance. God's faithfulness is unending, it endures to all generations.

PSA 36:5 - Your love, O LORD, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies.

PSA 89:2 - I will declare that your love stands firm forever, that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

PSA 119:90 - Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures.

DEU 32:4 - He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

ISA 11:5 - Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

- God is faithful in temptation

This is one of the greatest promises we have. That God would promise to be faithful to us when we are being tempted to sin. God declares himself faithful to deliver us from temptation.

1CO 10:13 - No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

- God will not allow his Faithfulness to fail

God is so faithful he promises to keep his Word and not to allow any of his faithfulness to fail. God is revealing to us that his faithfulness cannot fail us. It is impossible for God to forget his promise to us.

PSA 89:30-35 - "If his sons forsake my law and do not follow my statutes, if they violate my decrees and fail to keep my commands, I will punish their sin with the rod, their iniquity with flogging; but I will not take

my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness. I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered. Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness and I will not lie to David.

- Compassion's new every morning

God's compassion is new and fresh every morning. Each day we start fresh with the Lord. Great is his faithfulness.

LAM 3:22-23 - Because of the LORD'S great love we are not consumed, for his compassion's never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

- Faith in God will establish people

The faithfulness of God is what releases strength and protection from the attacks of the enemy. Because God is faithful to us he will not allow us to fail. Even tho we go through difficult times God will not fail us.

2TH 3:3 - But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

- Faithful is he who also will do it.

This verse has been a great blessing to me personally. God gave me this verse when I was a young man and was desiring to enter the ministry. I had been told that I would never be successful in the ministry. I would never become a good speaker. Yet God called me into the ministry, so I stood on this verse for years, believing that if God had called me he would do it.

1TH 5:24 - The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

- God is Faithful to his promises

God promises to keep what he has said. He told us that he was not a man that he could lie. But what he had spoken surely it would come to pass. God is faithful to his promises.

HEB 10:23 - Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

- Faithful and just to forgive

Not only is God faithful to keep his promises but he is faithful to forgive us of sin if we will come to him and confess it. The enemy would try to convince us that when we sin we are unworthy to come to God. Yet God declares to us that he will be faithful to forgive us if we will come to him.

1JO 1:9 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

- Jesus Christ is Faithful high Priest

Jesus was faithful to the cross, showing us that God is totally faithful. Since he was faithful to the cross he is able to understand our sufferings and help us when we need him. He has become a faithful high Priest to help us to God.

HEB 2:17 -3:1 - For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

God is Love

God is love, that is who he is . Yes he judges but that is not who he is, God is love. We need to understand the importance of nature. All cats purr and meow, all dogs wag their tails and bark. A cat cannot bark, nor a dog purr, it is contrary to its nature. Nature determines the actions of lifestyle of which every kind of animal we are discussing. So it is with God, his nature determines how he will act. God cannot change, this means that he is constant in the way he is. Because of God nature it is impossible for God to lie. He is truth therefore it is contrary to his nature to tell a lie. So when we say God is love, it is a quality of his nature it is constant and will never change.

1JO 4:7-16 - Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

Salvation is given through the love of God

Salvation is a result of the love of God for his creation. Because he loves us so much he provided a substitute to take our punishment. Jesus had to love mankind greatly to humble himself and become a man, one of his own creation. Then to suffer an agonizing death, and be separated from his father. Understand what that separation meant to Jesus, he is God, part of the trinity. He is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. To be separated must have been a great sacrifice. Yet he did it for love.

- Love sent the Son

JOH 3:16 - "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

- Jesus laid down his life because he loved us

1JO 3:16 - This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

- Christ died for us to show us his love

ROM 5:8 - But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

- God revealed his love to us by calling us his children

1JO 3:1 - How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

We are filled with the fullness of God through his love

We must know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge to be filled with all the fullness of God. Understanding that God loves us is a basic point in coming to the Lord. If I think God hates me I will not respond to him. So realizing that God loves me is what causes me to seek after God and be filled with his fullness.

EPH 3:17-19 - so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

- God blesses us because he loves us

DEU 23:5 - However, the LORD your God would not listen to Balaam but turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loves you.

- We are conquerors through his love

ROM 8:35-39 - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Chastened through love

God only disciplines those he loves. Hebrews tells us that if we do not receive the discipline of God then we are not his children. So chastening is the result of the love of God.

HEB 12:5-11 - And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

- Boldness in the day of judgment

1JO 4:17-18 - In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

- God's love is given to you

God gave his love to us and because of that love he has sent us a comforter to help us. Both Jesus and the Father love us and through the love of God Jesus will manifest himself to us.

JOH 14:15-26 - "If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?" Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. "All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

How to develop love for God

This is how we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of err. If you are of God, you will hear these words. Those who are born of God walk in love, those who do not love, do not know God.

1JO 4:6-13 - We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood. Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that

he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

- Love is of God

Love is of God, for God is love. This again, is the nature of God. It is impossible for God not to love us. Since God is love, the secret of love is found in God.

- He that loves is born of God

Only those who are born again can love like God loves, unconditionally. We refer to the Greek word "agape" which means to make a deliberate choice choosing to love regardless of whether anyone responds to your love in return. We can only love in this way if we are born of God.

- He knoweth God

The reason so many people don't love God is because they don't know God. We cannot know God and understand him and still walk in hate. If we seek to know God we will learn how to love.

- If you don't love, you don't know God

Notice that he doesn't say they are not born of God, but only that they don't know God. This describes much of the church today. This is why there is so much strife and fighting in churches. They think they know God, yet they really don't.

Loving in deed and truth

- Deed and Truth

Love is more than feelings, if we love God how do we show it? If we love God we will seek after him, study his word and develop an obedient heart towards him.

1JO 3:18-19 - Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence.

- Love God with all your heart

MAR 12:30-31 - Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

With all your heart - thoughts and feelings of the mind.

All your soul - psuche, spirit

All your mind - deep thought, imagination

All your strength - forcefulness, power, ability

- By keeping his commandments

Jesus told us that the sign of our love for him was obedience to his commandments. We need to view obedience to the word as a release of our love for God not as a bondage of the law. A friend of mine and I were once talking about why he had never committed the sins that most teens were committing and his answer has left an impression on me I will never forget. He said, I never went into drugs and the sins of the world because I loved my father too much and I didn't want to hurt him. This should be our attitude towards God.

JOH 14:15 - "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

JOH 14:21 - "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

The Heart of the Father

More than anything else God wants us to know him. So many of us have a false understanding of God and who He is. We have developed our image of the Father through our experiences with authoritative figures and the emotional wounds they have inflicted on us, and other peoples perception of what God is like. These images have hindered our desire to know the Father and develop an intimate relationship with him. For many the relationship they have with their natural father has greatly effected the way in which they relate to God the Father.

JER 9:23-24 - This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD.

What is God really like?

This question has been asked for centuries. We see God the Father through Jesus. He is the reflection of the Character and the nature of God. Jesus is God in the flesh. Jesus only did what he saw Father God do, he only spoke what Father God spoke to him. If we want to know what God the Father is like and how he relates to people then we need only look at Jesus and we will see the Father.

EPH 5:22-23 - Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

- Seeing the Father through Jesus

Jesus is the exact representation of the Father. If we see Jesus we see the Father. Jesus came to reveal the love of God the father. Men for so long had a false image of God the Father, Jesus came to change that image and reveal a great and loving Father.

HEB 1:3 - The Son is the radiance of God's Glory and the EXACT REPRESENTATION of his BEING.

- Anyone who has seen Jesus has seen the Father

JOH 14:8-11 - Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

- Jesus does only what he sees the Father do

JOH 5:19 - 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.

Jesus shows us the Father

When Jesus healed the sick and raised the dead he did it at the direction of God the Father. He reveals the love the Father has for people in the miracles that he did.

ACT 10:38 - how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

- By his concern for 4000

Jesus reveals the love and concern of the Father for the hungry. God is even concerned with our daily life. He cares about our being hungry or about our having clothes to wear.

MAT 15:29-38 - Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on a mountainside and sat down. Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel. Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way." His disciples answered, "Where could we get enough bread in this remote place to feed such a crowd?" "How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked. "Seven," they replied, "and a few small fish." He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people. They all ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was four thousand, besides women and children.

- By turning water into wine

Jesus gets involved in every area and issue of life. He went to a wedding and then when people began to complain about there not being enough to drink Jesus performs a miracle and turns water into wine. Jesus did not officiate at this wedding he was merely a guest, yet he still performs a miracle showing his value in the affairs of life.

JOH 4:46-54 - Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death. "Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe." The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies." Jesus replied, "You may go. Your son will live." The man took Jesus at his word and departed. While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour." Then the father realized that this was the exact time at

which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and all his household believed. This was the second miraculous sign that Jesus performed, having come from Judea to Galilee.

- By healing the sick

Jesus healed the sick and revealed the desire God the Father had to ministry to his children. God had already revealed himself as Jehovah Rapha, the Lord our healer. Jesus came to carry out the Father's desire.

ACT 10:38 - how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

The Character of the Father

Jesus came to reveal the character of the Father to us. God wants us to know that even tho He is a judge he is also the God of Love. God always has time for us, He always accepts us and will always be there for us.

JOH 3:16 - "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

- God is never too busy for us

This parable is about Jesus ministering to the little children. The disciples felt that the work of God was too important to take time to spend with little children. There were sick to heal, lepers to cleanse, and the dead to raise. Yet Jesus, stopped in the midst of this busy schedule to touch the children. This shows us that God the Father will never be too busy for us. He will always be available to us any time day or night.

MAT 19:13-15 - Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.

- God totally accepts us

How would you feel if you decided to bring your wife home some flowers and said, "I love you" and she ran to get money to pay you for the flowers? We can't perform work to receive God's love; we must accept his unconditional love. We many times try to pay God for his love. We love God because he first loved us.

ROM 5:8 - But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

- God values us above all else

This parable is about the birds of the air and the flowers of the field. When Jesus shares this story to tell us that we don't need to worry about the basics of life. God promises to supply these things for us. We don't

even need to specifically pray for them. But one key thing is said here. Jesus says, "Are you not much more valuable than these." We are valuable to God. Jesus died to save us, if we weren't valuable to God, Jesus would not have had to die.

MAT 6:25-33 - "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

- God will never leave us

Jesus promised to never leave us or forsake us. God will always be there for us in good times and bad times. You cannot commit one sin and have God leave you.

MAT 28:20 - and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

- We are conquerors through the Father's love

Troubles, hard times, persecutions, hunger, danger, death, demonic oppression, present things, fear of future, authorities, nothing from above or below, or anything in all of creation can take God's Love away from me. Even in hard times I am a conqueror because nothing can separate me from the love of God, nothing can stop God from loving me. **GOD LOVES ME.**

ROM 8:35-39 - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Loving Father - LUK 15:11-32

This is the greatest story of the Bible. We call it the parable of the prodigal son. But I believe this is the wrong title to this story. The story does not center around the son but rather the loving father. It is the father who is revealed in this parable. The son falls away takes his inheritance and squanders it away and finds himself in the pig pen. The father's relationship with both sons and his love for both sons is the central part of this story. So this is the parable of the Loving Father.

- Son squanders his living in sin

The son receives his inheritance and leaves home and blows it all on prostitutes and gambling. Finally, he takes the only job he can find, feeding pigs. He realizes that even the servants in his father's house live better than he is. He decides to go home and become one of the servants in his father's house.

Notice that while the Prodigal is in the pig pen, he plans to tell his father three things. 1) that he has sinned against heaven and against his father, 2) that he is no longer worthy to be called his son, 3) and make me one of your hired servants. When he finally reaches his father he begins to tell him these three things. But before he can say the third one his father interrupts him and shouts "Quick, bring the robe and the ring, kill the fatted calf and let's celebrate". God is not looking for servants he is looking for sons.

- Father runs to him

When the father sees the son still a great way off he runs to his son. The father doesn't wait until the son arrives in the yard. He is not angry or waiting to discipline the son, He is overjoyed that his son has come home so he rushes to his son and hugs him and kisses him.

- Kissed him (continual kissing)

When the father reaches the son, He hugs him and begins to kiss his son. This word kiss means to continually kiss over and over. The father is overwhelmed with love for his son.

- Best robe - Righteousness

When the son begins to tell his father what he had planned. He gets out the first two, 1) I have sinned against God and you 2) I am no longer worthy to be your son. But before he can say the third one the father cuts him off and calls for the robe to be placed on his son. The robe represents right standing with the family.

- Ring - symbol of authority of sonship.

The father also gives him a ring which represented that the authority of the father's house had been restored. The son now is totally restored to a full position in the father's house.

- Shoes on his feet - gospel restored

The father gives the son a pair of shoes signifying that where ever he went that he was part of the household of the father. He could now act and share in life and business on behalf of the father.

- Fatted calf - No condemnation

The father then kills the fatted calf, declaring that there is now no condemnation. He is forgiven and totally restored to sonship. Now that he is restored he does not have to perform or work to enter into his father's good grace.

There is a little story I would like to share. A little dog goes out to play and gets lost. He has a great time, and gets to playing in the ditches, chasing the neighbors' chickens; then he realizes he is lost and has done wrong. He searches for home and finally late that night, he finally sees home. He runs with such joy, that he finally has found his home. As he approaches the house he sees the master waiting at the door. As he runs closer he can't wait to jump in his master's arms and lick his master's face. He is so excited he was lost now he is found.

Our image of the Father at this point is to see the master scold and threaten the little dog, beat him and tie him up outside. The True Father hugs the muddy, dirty little dog and rejoices over his return and begins to clean him up and brings us in the house to get warm in his lap. God the Father can seek us out, when we come home He runs to meet us and begins kissing our neck, lavishing his love on us. This is the true image of our Father.

It is interesting to see the brother's response to the restoration of his brother. He denies that he is his brother and complains that his father have never done any of this for him. God treats both sons the same, he went to each of them. Both sons had the same authority and access to the father.

Abba Father

God wants us to develop a deep intimate relationship with him. He wants to be more than just a father, he wants to be our daddy. God loves his children, he will play with us like a father would a toddler. We need to get rid of the angry stern image we have of God and see him as a loving father.

ROM 8:15-17 - 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." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

PSA 139:1-19 - O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. You hem me in--behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you.