

Daddy God

When I was growing up, my Mom and I would read the Bible every night at bedtime. Then we would kneel beside my bed and we would pray. We would always pray to "Papa Dios". In other words, Daddy God. Then I would say "bendición" and she would say "Que Dios te bendiga y te favorezca", or in English, "May God bless you and favor you".

Last week we talked about the person of the Holy Spirit. This week I want to talk about God, the Father.

In preparing for this sermon I did a lot of research and what I found was a lot of intellectual discourse on who God is. Not surprising, seeing as the word theology means the study of God. However, none of it was conveying what I was looking for so I stuck to the Bible and my own personal experience.

I grew up with an absentee father who, when he was around, he was the disciplinarian. In some ways that would serve me well as it kept me out of trouble in my teens because I didn't want to do things that might get me in trouble with him. He always found fault and I never quite measured up. It wasn't until later that I discovered that I was his fourth son and that I was born when he was 47 years old. I was a concession to my mother, because in his mind, he was done raising children.

The only way my father knew to show any affection at all was when he would go to the bakery, pick up some pastries, and he would just hand them to me. A good psychologist would have no problem discovering the root of my lifelong battle with obesity.

Needless to say, I did not have a great model for what a true father is supposed to be.

1. He disciplines His sons and daughters

Heb 12:5-8

"My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. 6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."

7 It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8 If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

So far, this description of our relationship with the Father fits with my experience of my earthly father. For all his faults, he was stern but fair, and he was never abusive. He would have me go into my room to think about what I had done wrong and to wait for him to come in to hand out discipline. Those moments waiting were far worse than the actual discipline. Afterward, we would again discuss what I had done wrong and why I deserved my punishment.

I didn't understand it at the time, but he disciplined me because he wanted his son, who carried his name, to represent him in a way that would bring shame to

that name. He did it because he cared about me and wanted to save me from a lot of trouble. Again, I did not appreciate this or understand it at the time.

2. He provides for His sons and daughters.

Luke 11:11-13

What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; 12 or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Now, while my earthly father was not an affectionate one, he was a good provider. I didn't realize how poor we were growing up until I saw a drawing of our living room that I had made as a child. It was then that I realized that our living room furniture was actually cheap patio furniture. The kind with an aluminum frame with interlaced straps of material. And yet, we always had a roof over our heads, clothes to wear and we never lacked for food. Looking back, now I realize why I only got one or two toys on Three Kings Day.

Here is where my earthly father and my Heavenly start to part ways.

James 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights

My Heavenly Father loves to lavish gifts on His children. He does not dole out His love with a dropper but with a fire hose. He does not hold back. He always wants the best for His children.

He spoils us by giving us the gift of His Holy Spirit. What more could we ask for or need?

3. He frees and delivers us from sin and fear

Gal 4:6-7

And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

While there is much descriptive language about who God is in the Bible, none is more impactful than calling Him Father. This is where my experience with my earthly father and my Heavenly one really start to diverge.

Growing up I saw God as the angry man in heaven with a long beard just waiting for me to step out of line so He could punish me.

But as I started reading His Word and discovering the Father through the eyes of Jesus, I started seeing Him in a different light.

During the Great Awakening, Jonathan Edwards preached a famous sermon entitled "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God". It described what would happen to people who continued to live lives of drunkenness, sin and debauchery and failed to repent and come to Jesus.

While it was a very effective sermon, it was a tool for the times. Over time, people could only see God as being angry. While it is true and God and sin cannot coexist and that without Christ's atonement it puts us in enmity with him, once we come to the foot of the cross, we discover a totally different God.

Now we find a God who calls us sons and daughters. Now we find a God that has made us co-heirs with Christ. Think about that! Think about all that God has given to His Son. He has also made us partakers of that.

We no longer need to live as slaves to sin.

We no longer need to live in fear of punishment.

We no longer need to feel like outsiders, intruders, aliens.

4. He adopts us as sons and daughters.

Rom 8:14-16

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

We now get to call Him Daddy, just like Jesus did.

John 17:22-24

The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

He loves us just the same as He loved Jesus.

He wants to be one with us just as He was with Jesus.

He wants nothing to stand in the way of our relationship.

He wants us to be part of the family.

He wants us to partake of Jesus's glory.

John 17:22

The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one

Conclusion

John 17:11

Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.

Earlier I talked about my earthy father and I painted a pretty dim picture of our relationship.

Weeks before my father passed, he ended up in the hospital and they had him on oxygen and I believe that helped him to regain some lucidity. He asked both my

mom and I for forgiveness for the way that he had treated us. What's more, for the first and only time in my life, he told me he loved me and was proud of me. He had seen me go into full time ministry and he was proud that I carried his name.

I can't begin to tell you what that moment meant to me. It was such a gift from God.

Even more, God showed me His love through my earthly father's words.

So now, every time I pray, I start by saying "Daddy God" because that is who He is to me.