

## The Kingdom of God Part 18

### Your Father's Kingdom

1. Review?
  - a. We have looked at the Kingdom of God in the light of the *rulership* of God. It is His right, His rule, His authority, His power that rules over the Kingdom and all of His subjects. God alone has absolute right to rule and reign, and He has invited us to join Him in His Kingdom as it spreads across the face of the earth, bringing the good news of His love and purposes for mankind. God is good ...all the time. He is in a good mood. I love this one> God is good, Satan is bad. Cancer is bad, it comes from Satan. Healing is good, it comes from God. God loves you and when you begin to understand, comprehend, believe and really receive His love, you begin to appropriate all that God has for you. **Problem is, we don't BELIEVE God loves us.**
2. Missing from this picture of the Kingdom that I have painted for you over these past few months is the relational aspect that Jesus came to help us see concerning God. It is something so obvious that we miss it. Or when we refer to it, we actually never let it sink in. I am speaking of the "fatherhood" of the King, the Fatherhood of our God. Jesus starts unveiling this Fatherhood picture in His sermon on the mount. How strange it must have seemed to the Jews listening, to hear Him use this language:
3. Count how many times Jesus says, "YOUR FATHER."
  - a. Matthew 6:1-4 *"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from **your Father** in heaven. "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then **your Father**, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."*
  - b. *"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to **your Father**, who is unseen. Then **your Father**, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for **your Father** knows what you need before you ask him.*
  - c. *This, then, is how you should pray: " '**Our Father** in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if you forgive men when they sin against you, **your heavenly Father** will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, **your Father** will not forgive your sins. "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 17But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to **your Father**, who is unseen; and **your Father**, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*
    - i. He goes on and on, almost EVERY verse has a reference to "Your Father" and he continues it all the way through to the end of the chapter and beyond.
    - ii. His listeners would have been confused, because the understanding of God as Father would have been in the abstract for them, God was a Father to the nation, but not to the individual – this had to be hard!
    - iii. It is the same for us, while most of us *believe* in the fatherhood of God...we say we get it, because we have all heard sermons about God the Father, and how He is Jesus' Father and therefore our Father.

- iv. I think it is telling for us because we notice the do's and don'ts of the passage, but overlook the tender picture of the Father and His desire to reward His children. Why is that?
- 4. We don't act like children who understand the joy and love of their Father, do we? We act like we have a "mad, bad dad" instead of a Abba, Daddy, Father.
- 5. Let me take you on a time machine and go back to the beginning, to the very beginning, to the creation of Adam, we will find the Fatherhood of God evidenced.
  - a. The first glimpse of the Fatherhood of God is in the Book of Genesis. Chapters 1-3 in Genesis are about God generating and establishing a household. The plants and other things are created after their own kind (Gn 1:25), but God creates man in His own image (Gn 1:26). He is the first face Adam sees, the first voice he hears.
    - i. That is important, because it tells us that it **is normal for a child of God to see God's face and to hear His voice**. It is what we were designed for. Intimacy and communion is normal for you and I. Not hearing God and not experiencing His presence is not normal.
  - b. In Genesis 2:7, we are shown that Adam was created first. God, being a father, established a covenant with Adam, wherein life is promised to Adam (Gn 2:16-17). God made a covenant with Adam before Eve was actually created.
  - c. Genesis 2:22-23 describes the creation of Eve and the completion of the creation of mankind. In the equality of this creation, there is an order of creation. Mankind sprang from Adam, yet God designed that the rest of the human race should descend from the ordered relation of Adam and Eve. God desired that His fatherhood be passed down from one generation to the next.
  - d. Adam, as a son of God (see Lk 3:38), will "image" God to the rest of the world by mediating the Fatherhood of God.
    - i. This means, Adam must pass the knowledge of his Father to his sons, so that they too will know God as Father they way he does.
    - ii. **Man must know God and His Fatherhood before he can fulfill his own role of father in the world**. This is the work of man; Adam's charge is to be a father to the world. Adam will generate his own kind. He is given a wife to assist him in the work and produce other "fathers" to fulfill the cultural mandate that God has given to his children.
    - iii. We all need to understand and grasp our Daddy's love (in heaven) before we can really, really be decent fathers ourselves.
- 6. You have two children of the Father, with a perfect daddy, with everything they need, with the perfection of creation, the joy of a relationship that is fulfilling with God...and they are tempted by Lucifer to try to be "like God" (when they didn't realize that they already reflected perfectly their Father). Acting on a lie, they sin, and all of creation is torn from its perfection.
  - a. They choose to "eat" or feed upon something that is forbidden, something that is a poor substitute for the Tree of Life. Death and brokenness enter the world.
  - b. And you have the first evidence of an orphan (Adam and Eve) – who now HIDE from their Father!
  - c. A broken relationship with God the Father. Something that cannot be mended apart from the death of God's only begotten Son, Jesus. Jesus takes on flesh of humanity, living in its limitations but being completely and fully rightly related to His Father, and takes the penalty for the sin that Adam (and you and I) committed.
- 7. This act is called the atonement and it secured for us our adoption as sons into the Family of God.
  - a. When we celebrated the Lord's supper this morning, we celebrated that act of our Savior, who made it possible to become "children of God" and brothers and sisters of Christ and one another.
  - b. Where as once were orphans, enemies toward God, now we are once again His children.
  - c. There is still a problem. We still act like orphans...don't we?
    - i. Why? Because our earthly fathers were flawed, they said things like "no son of mine will ever..." or "you struck out? Try harder." Our earthly fathers based so much of their expression of love on our performance (even we have done this) – that the concept of a and unconditionally loving father is almost foreign to us.

- ii. Yes, God has standards and we never compromise them. But they aren't the basis of His love. Violating His standards has consequences – in the quality of life, the reception of His blessings and can even lead us to compromise our lives.
8. Do you know the biggest barrier to faith, the largest hurdle to receiving the promises of God is?
- a. It isn't fear. Although that is a big one. Its root is deeper than that.
  - b. **The biggest barrier to faith is a failure to believe we are loved by God.**
  - c. It may manifest as fear, worry, etc., but its root lies in believing the lie that God doesn't love us THAT much.
  - d. It is evidenced when people say, "*Sure I believe God CAN do that, but I'm not sure He wants to.*"
  - e. **It doesn't take faith to believe you are a sinner, it takes faith to believe you are loved and of eternal value by a loving God and Father.**
  - f. We need a radical renewal of our minds that breaks off the lies that say, God only loves me this much.
  - g. This attitude is that of an "orphan spirit" – one that says, I don't have a Father who REALLY loves me.
9. Folks, we need to come and let God love us, like our Father. The Kingdom Jesus released upon this earth requires that we know God the way Jesus knew His Father. Daddy. Pappa. Abba.
10. Deina, share your testimony concerning the Fatherhood of God and how that led you to feel and experience the love of God. After which we will have a time of prayer, ministry and worship. Won't you let God's love penetrate to your heart today?