

FATHER'S DAY - FROM A FATHER'S HEART

INTRODUCTION

- A. How does the Bible depict a loving father?
1. It pictures poor relationships like Jacob showing partiality to Joseph, or Eli not dealing with the rebellion of his sons, Hophni and Phinehas.
 2. There are few pictures of positive relationships in the Bible.
 3. Of course, there is practical instruction.
 - a) Proverbs 22:6, *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*
 - b) Proverbs 4:1, *Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight.*
 - c) Ephesians 6:4, *Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*
 4. There is one relationship worth examining on Father's Day - God the Father and God the Son.
- B. God can be called Father because of His nature
1. There is unity: there is one God, Deuteronomy 6:4, *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*
 2. There is diversity: three eternal persons in one divine nature, Trinity
 3. Evidences for Trinity in the Bible
 - a. Plurality Genesis 1:26, *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."*
 - b. Triunity, Isaiah 48:16, *Draw near to me, hear this: from the beginning I have not spoken in secret, from the time it came to be I have been there. And now the Lord GOD has sent me, and his Spirit.*
 - c. Identity, 2 Corinthians 13:14, *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*
- C. A glimpse of God as Father is seen in the Trinity
1. There has always been love and interdependence within the Godhead.
 2. The triune God is transcendent; the Father, Son and Holy Spirit don't need us.
 3. The triune God is immanent; they want us.
- D. The relationship worth examining on Father's Day is God the Father and God the Son.

AN EXAMINATION OF GOD AS FATHER

- A. God as Father was revealed in the incarnation of the Son
1. Jesus is uniquely the Son to the Father
 - a. Only Son, John 1:14, *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*
 - b. Beloved Son, Matthew 17:5, *This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.*
 2. Jesus is the reason individuals may have relationship to God as Father
 - a. The Lord's Prayer presented the relationship individuals may have with God, *our Father*, Matthew 6:9, *Pray then like this: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.*
 - b. Our relationship to God the Father comes through relationship to His Son, John 14:6, *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*
- B. Characteristics of the relationship between the Father and the Son
1. Love is the bond
 - a. The Father loves the Son, John 3:35, *The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand.*
 - b. The Father loves those who love the Son, John 16:27, *for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.*
 - c. The Son loves His followers just as the Father loves Him, John 15:9, *As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.*
 2. Imitation is a sign of love
 - a. The Father was Jesus' example, John 5:19, *So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise."*
 - b. Jesus revealed the Father, John 14:9, *Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father?'"*

3. Obedience is a mark of love
 - a. Love for the Father was exhibited by obedience, Matthew 26:39, *And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."*
 - b. Love for the Son is exhibited by obedience, John 14:21, *Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.*
4. Protection is a fact of love
 - a. The Father is capable of protecting His Son, Mt. 26:53, *Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?*
 - b. The Father protects those He has given to His Son, John 10:29, *My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.*
5. Provision is an indicator of love
 - a. The Father cares for the needs of His children, Matthew 6:31-33, *Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*
 - b. He gives the best gifts, Luke 11:11-13, *What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 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!*

C. Lessons from the Father and the Son relationship

1. How can I as a father ever hope to compare to God the Father? I am called to be conformed to the image of His Son which includes imitating my Heavenly Father.
2. What can I learn from the relationship of the Father and the Son?
 - a. Love is the bond
 - 1) Love children unconditionally - they don't have to earn my love, they have it.
 - 2) Love their mother.
 - 3) Love being with them and getting to know them.
 - 4) Love them by showing affection, R. Kent Hughes, *Men are never manlier than when they are tender with their children.*
 - b. Imitation is a sign of love
 - 1) Children imitate their parents, John 8:38, *I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.*
 - 2) They imitate what we say, what we watch, what we do.
 - 3) Do they see integrity, faithfulness, humility, fruits of the Spirit?
 - c. Obedience is a mark of love
 - 1) Discipline them for their good, Hebrews 12:6-7, *For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." 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?*
 - 2) Use discipline to develop character, not to get rid of your anger.
 - 3) Let children experience the consequences of their actions.
 - d. Protection is a fact of love
 - 1) We are to provide a safe, healthy environment.
 - 2) That would include physical, emotional and spiritual protection.
 - a) Do we monitor where they are?
 - b) Do we monitor who they are with?
 - c) Do we monitor what they do?
 - d) Do we monitor what they listen to and watch?
 - e. Provision is an indicator of love
 - 1) God's Word emphasizes the importance of providing for the physical needs of our children, 1 Timothy 5:8, *But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*
 - 2) Our provision is to include spiritual nurture, Ephesians 6:4, *Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*
 - 3) Don't leave such provision to others, to mom or to the church.

CONCLUSION

- A. There is great need today for fathers who imitate the Heavenly Father in raising their children.
 - 1. *Nearly 40% of American children currently do not live with their biological fathers.* American Demographics.
 - 2. In a survey of 4 and 5 year olds 33% of them said they'd rather give up their fathers than television.
 - 3. *We've shifted cultural values toward expressive individualism, an increasing belief that one's central responsibility is to oneself...it's had devastating consequences on our children.* Christianity Today.
 - 4. *Within the home, fatherhood in our generation has completed its 200-year march from the center to the periphery.* David Blankenhorn.

- B. Because God the Son became Man, we can be adoptive children of God the Father.
- C. As fathers who are Christians, we have the responsibility to relate to our children as the Father does to the Son.
 - 1. Love our children unconditionally.
 - 2. Pursue a life worthy of imitation.
 - 3. Obey God our Father and demand obedience from your children.
 - 4. Protect your family with your life.
 - 5. Provide for their needs by utterly depending on God our Father.

- D. For many of us, it is time to be godly grandfathers and great-grandfathers.