

Glen Park Gospel Church  
**Tuesday Evening Bible Study Group Notes**

Rev Chris Trinham

Children of the King

No 1.

## Our Father Which Art in Heaven

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 3.14-19.

Of all the Bible metaphors which describe the Christian's experience of God's redeeming love, perhaps the most extensive and instructive are those which tell us that all those who have put their trust in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ are members of His 'family', and are therefore brothers together of one another and the first born Son, Jesus Christ. The use of this extended metaphor, or better, series of related metaphors, provide for us a richness of meaning that would be impossible without them. They describe in easily understandable terms the nature of our relationship with the eternal God, our Heavenly Father.

### First, Jesus Called God 'My Father'.

When Jesus on earth spoke of God, He called Him, 'My Father'. When Jesus drove the sellers of oxen, sheep and doves from the temple He explained his action with:

Make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. John 2.16 AV

He identified His Father as the God of the Jews who questioned Him, It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, that He is your God. John 8.54 RSV.

And again,

I and my Father are one. John 10.30

Such familiarity was a strange new sound to Jewish ears for their prophets did not normally speak of God in these terms. (There are some evidences; see Psalm, 103.13, Proverbs 3.12, Etc.)

### Second, We also Call God 'Our Father'.

It was Jesus who taught us to call God 'Father'. He called God His father, and taught His disciples to do the same:

All things are delivered to me of my Father; and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is but the

Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him. Luke 10.22.

To Mary at the tomb he said:

Touch me not for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God. John 20.17.

If God was His Father and the disciples were His brethren, who was their father? Jesus made it all very clear when He taught His disciples to pray: Our Father which art in heaven...

This theme is taken up by the New Testament writers and is woven through their teaching. See for example Galatians 3.24-29.

The relationship that we have with God by accepting the death and resurrection of His Christ is the reality. Its nature is that of a father-child, and we understand and handle it best when we call Him 'Father'.

The Bible does not teach 'the universal fatherhood of God' as some men do, that all men are God's children. It is true that all people are created of God, that Jesus Christ died for all men and that all are called upon to repent; but it is those who do repent of

their sin and accept the offer of pardon through the redemptive death of Jesus who become God's children and have the right to call Him 'Father.' Acts 17.30&31, Romans 5.18-6.4, 1Timothy 4.10.

To the contrary, Jesus taught that many share a similar relationship with evil one, saying to some in His day: You are of your father the devil, (John 8.44) because their actions were of a nature which harmonised with and derived from Satan. The word 'father' here is also a metaphor expressing the nature and character, thereby adding emphasis.

### Third, We are of the 'Household of Faith'.

The Bible a household was more extensive than our western nuclear family. It included servants and slaves needed to run the household and conduct the family trade or business as well as the extended family. The term 'household of faith' term comes from Galatians 6.10. See also Ephesians 1.10&11, 3.15 and Hebrews 1.13&14 - Compare Jude 1.6 and Job 1.6 suggesting that the 'every family' consists of the angels who were faithful to their creation, the old testament saints and those whom God has brought into His household by creation, by calling and by redemption according to His own purposes. See also Hebrews 12.1 There is one big family.

### Fourth, His Children bear Their Father's Likeness.

This was true of Jesus. He bore the likeness and image of His heavenly Father. He was able to say to Philip:

He who has seen me has seen the Father . . . Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? John 14.9&10.

This likeness is moral, not physical.

It

has to do with our character, what we think and say and do. As He is holy, so His children will be holy. Men of this world ought to be able to look at us also and see the nature of God just as we see the light of the sun reflected in the moon. What they see in Jesus, they ought to be able to see in us.

### Fifth, We Enjoy the Blessing of Being a Member of His Family.

We may eat at His table. See Luke 11.3, Proverbs 30.8&9, Philippians 4.19.

We may enjoy the security of His home. See Isaiah 33.16&17, Psalm 91.9-16, Philippians 4.7, John 14.27.

We may enjoy the warmth of His fireside. I John 1.3-7, 1 Corinthians 1.9, Hebrews 11.5.

We gain by the privilege of His chastisement. Hebrews 12.5-11.

We may anticipate the richness of His inheritance. Ephesians 1.18, Colossians 1.12, 1 Peter 1.4,

We bear the honour of His name. See 1 Peter 2.9, 2 Timothy 1.9&10.

We must share the family business. See John 20.21, Acts 1.8, Ephesians 2.10.

# Welcome

## Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North

Sundays 10.30 am

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