

June, 2014

Dear Families of Gilead Bible Church,



As I was thinking about Father's Day, I was thinking about the great example of fatherhood in our Heavenly Father. I read an article that spoke on that perspective, entitled, "The Fatherhood of God: Of Him, Through Him, To Him (George Davis)." **

In our day, the title father invokes images of a remote-control-hoarding couch-potato or bumbling handyman, obsessed with power tools that he doesn't know how to use. He is cast daily on sitcoms as an egomaniacal, emotionally-callused and intellectually-challenged megalomaniac, as caring toward his children as a bull buffalo trampling his young. Though dramatized for comedic value, this sad satire is not altogether fictional. Fathering by default has become a rather common thing in our day. Sadly, in some cases, fathers have done unspeakable harm to their children, even sexually abusing them.

Because of the poor example of their fathers, many Christians today have difficulty relating to the fatherhood of God. They have trust issues that they can't get beyond because they transpose the poor character of their earthly fathers onto their Heavenly Father. They seem destined to relate to God in the unwholesome way they related to their earthly fathers. Many find it difficult to trust in the provision of God because their earthly fathers often failed to provide some of their most basic needs. Jesus very likely faced the same issues when He taught the multitudes about the unfailing care and provision of their heavenly Father.

What stirring and tender terms the Son used to describe the faithfulness of our Father! His concern and provision extend to the lilies of the field, which He clothes in glory surpassing that of Solomon. Even the birds of the air are the constant recipients of His care. He is concerned when even one of them falls to the ground.

There is a seldom-pondered aspect of God's fatherhood I would now like to address. The term Father (Greek pater 3962) as applied to God, means the Begetter. He is the everlasting Father who continues to beget moment by moment. Relating to God as Father means that we yield to His ongoing fathering. Whatever does not issue from Him is a bastard.

Regardless of how good it looks, if it doesn't have its origin in Him, it is illegitimate. Jesus taught His disciples to begin praying with this very acknowledgement, "Our Father who is in heaven . . ." Have you ever considered the full ramifications of these words? They are the key to prayer, in that God's fatherhood is inseparably attached to His provision. And Fatherhood is all about begetting. Jesus was teaching His disciples a manner and attitude of prayer that acknowledged God as the origin of everything. To truly honor Him, you must do just that. Prayer then is both asking God to issue forth, and allowing Him to do it by staying out of His way. Unless we understand this we will not wait the due time, but instead do as Abraham did, hastily taking matters into our own hands and becoming our own begetter. Abraham went into Hagar to create his own child of promise and then dared to offer the child to God for approval.

No matter how earnestly Abraham pleaded, "O that Ishmael could live in your sight," God refused to accept what did not originate in Him. God is not really our Begetter, our Father, until our ambition to bring things to pass by our own energy is severely tested. Until we get the "our Father" part down, we will constantly be answering our own prayers and offering to God things that do not issue from Him.

Those things that do not emerge from the Father's heart are illegitimate, and will not be sustained by Him. God takes this very seriously. He has set in effect a causal law that governs both the natural and spiritual realms. Every living thing, without exception, will inevitably take on the nature, life and likeness of its source. Often the differences are not immediately noticeable (See Matthew 13:24). It may look good for awhile, but if it does not issue from the Father, it will eventually take on the likeness and character of its source, whether Satan or man. God is not mocked; we will reap what we sow. Whatever originates in the mind of man will take on the likeness of man. If it comes from the Father, He will sustain it and it will look like Him and return glory to Him. Paul explains it this way: "For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."(Romans 11:36 NKJV)

A careful examination of the prepositions of, through, and to in Romans 11:36 will reveal much.

- ***of** (Greek ek 1537) denotes origin--the point from which action or motion proceeds.*
- ***through** (Greek dia 1223) signifying the channel of an act; the ground or reason by which something is or is not done--the means.*
- ***to** (Greek eis 1519) into, unto, to, toward, for, denotes the destination.*

Everything will be tested by these criteria. If it is not of Him it will not be sustained through Him and it will never return glory to Him. Whatever does not originate in God will not be supported by His Spirit and therefore will never lead into, unto, and on toward His eternal purpose and glory. God is glorified only when things are of, through and to Him. The of part is the hardest for most of us because it requires the death of our plans and programs and consigns us to the scary position of waiting upon God to act. This is a great test and humiliation for the flesh. If we do not stop acting of ourselves we will never realize the through of God, where all is nurtured and brought to fruition by Him. Until we know the Father as our Sustainer, we will never share in the to part, where all is unto Him and He receives all glory. If God's Children understood this, it would certainly put an end to many Church practices; prayer would replace brain-storming and waiting would replace reckless religious experimentation.

Jesus spoke of the Father's aggressive posture toward those things that are not of Him. "Every plant not planted by my heavenly Father will be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13 NLT). Jesus was referring to the religion of the Pharisees, which was for the most part the invention of the Pharisees. At best it was a mixture. God does not reward good ideas. He is not seeking innovative young talent. He never said to anyone, "You take it from here." No. He is looking for those who will reverently yield to His fatherhood.

Reformation history should be viewed as the ongoing plucking of the Father. He is still weeding His garden, uprooting everything that He has not planted. We may try to blame the devil or other people when our planting withers, but God is to blame. He is pulling up by the roots all that finds its origin in the traditions of men or has been sown by the enemy (Matthew 13:25).

While in the wilderness, Jesus was tempted by Satan to turn stones into bread. But He answered, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds [is now flowing forth] out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)

What was wrong with turning the stones to bread? What could it have possibly hurt? Answer: the idea did not proceed from the mouth of God. It might have seemed like a good idea, but its origin was wrong. In the economy of God, things are not tested and approved based upon necessity or logic but upon the grounds of origin. Did it proceed from Him?

Father give us discerning eyes and careful hand so we won't spend our days in vain--planting what you are plucking!

God Bless,

Pastor and Helen Moy

** <http://awildernessvoice.com/Fatherhood.html>



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親愛的基列主內弟兄姊妹，

當我思想着父親節時，我想到天父是一個為人父親的很好榜樣。我讀了有關這方面的一篇文章，題目為“父神：本於祂，倚靠祂，歸於祂（喬治·戴維斯）”**

在我們這個時代，父親這形象讓我們聯想到一個常卧着沙發椅上不動的人，並霸佔着電視遙遠控制器，在電視前的長期觀眾。又或是一個裝模作樣的技工，沉迷於那些他不知道如何使用的電子器具。很多電視劇描繪父親為自大，感覺遲鈍，不負責任，又不懂照顧他們孩子的男人。雖然這是說著玩的，可嘆的是很多父親現在就是如此。更可悲的是有些父親對自己的孩子做出無法形容的傷害，甚至是性虐待他們。

由於他們父親的惡劣榜樣，今天很多基督徒很難與天父的正確形象有相連。他們無法擺脫不信任的問題，因為他們把世上父親的惡劣品行轉置到天父上。他們似乎注定要把地上父親的不健康形象與神掛勾。許多人很難相信神會供應，因為他們地上的父親往往未能供應他們一些最基本的需求。當耶穌教導羣眾有關天父無盡的關懷和供應時，他們很可能也會面對這同樣對神不信任的問題。

神的兒子是用那麼動人心弦和溫柔的詞語來形容我們天父對祂兒女關懷的信實！祂的關心和供應甚至伸展到野地的百合花，就是所羅門極榮華的時候，他所穿戴的，還不如這些花。甚至連空中的飛鳥也不斷的得到祂的關注。當他們其中一隻掉落在地上時，祂也為牠擔心。

我現在想提出一個極少為人思考關於神的父親屬性。天父這用詞（希臘原文），在應用於神，表示領導者。祂是永恆的，一個無時無刻都引領我們的父。認神為父親意味著我們完全順服於祂無時無刻父親的蔭底下。

若不是出於神的吩咐，而是出自人以為美的事情，不管看起來有多好，都是違規的。

耶穌教導他的門徒祈禱就是要認同天父身份的權柄，“我們在天上的父……”

“你有沒有考慮過這些詞句的整體影響？這些都是禱告最關鍵的，在此與父神的供養是不可分開的。而父親的職責完全在於領導。耶穌教導門徒禱告的方式和態度，是要承認神是一切的起源。要真正尊敬他，你必須做到這一點。當我們為一些事向神祈求，同時必須要容許以祂的旨意成就，除非我們理解這一點，否則我們便不會等候神所應許的時間。就會像亞伯拉罕那樣草率的以自己的方法來處理事情，自己成為自己的領導者。亞伯拉罕藉夏甲來實現自己有孩子的諾言，然後又大胆地把孩子求神認可。不管如何，亞伯拉罕認真懇求，“但願以實瑪利活在你面前，”神拒絕接受那些不是來源於祂的。神不會成為我們的領導者，我們的父，直至我們意願讓我們以能力去達成的計劃被嚴厲的考驗。直至我們明白可為“我們的父”

；我們是會不斷地用自已的方法回應並實現自己的禱告和神的應許，但這一切卻不是由神所指示。

那些不是源於父神心意的東西是違規的，祂也不會維持。神看這事極其嚴肅。祂創造了因果規律管轄自然和靈界的領域。以這個規律掌管萬事。若任何事不源於天父，是出自撒旦還是人，起初差異並不立即明顯（見馬太福音13:24）但最終都會被分別出來。神是輕慢不得的，

我們耕耘什麼將收穫什麼。如果它來自天父，祂將維持它，並把榮耀歸給祂。保羅這樣解釋道：“因為萬有都是本於祂，倚靠祂，歸於祂。願榮耀歸給祂，直到永遠。阿們！（羅馬書11:36）。

通過羅馬書十一章三十六節仔細的考查關於“本於，倚靠，歸於”就會得到很多的啟示。

- 本於（希臘原文）表示原點 - 動作或運作的出發點
- 倚靠（希臘原文）方法 - 標誌著行為的通道；理由使某事做或不做
- 歸於（希臘原文）進入，走向，代表目的地

一切事都將通過這些標準進行測試。

如果不是源於祂便不會藉著祂而持久，也永不會有榮耀歸給祂。無論任何事情若不源於神，不會被聖靈支持因此也不會導致永恆和為神帶來榮耀。只有事源於祂，倚靠祂才會將榮耀帶給他。源於祂這部分是人最難做到的，我們要放棄人為的計劃並一心的禱告和默默等候神的指示。這也是人極大的考驗和羞辱。但我們若不停止自己行事，我們永遠不會明白神在整件事的作為。神的兒女若能完全信靠神是我們的領航者，這肯定會杜絕很多教會魯莽宗教的實驗。

耶穌指出天父處理那些不是源於祂的事手段很嚴厲。

“凡栽種的物，若不是我天父栽種的，必要拔出來。”（馬太福音15:13

NLT）。耶穌指的是法利賽人自己發明的宗教。充其量它是混合物。

神不獎勵新主意。祂不尋求創新的青年人才。祂從來沒有對任何人說，“你從這裡做起。”不，祂尋找那些虔誠地順服祂是父神的人。

宗教改革的歷史應被視為天父的不斷去蕪存菁，祂還在清除祂花園裏的野草，把那些不是祂栽種之物連根拔起。神把所有源於人的傳統或那些被敵人所播種的全部拔起（馬太福音13:25）。

把石頭變成食物有甚麼不可？這有甚麼不對？

但耶穌回答說：“經上記著說：人活著，不是單靠食物，乃是靠神口裡所出的一切話。”（馬太福音4:4）它看來似乎是一個好主意，但它的起源是錯誤的。

在神的角度，事情的考驗和批准並非根據需求或邏輯，而是否出自神？

天父請給我們雪亮的眼睛，謹慎的手，以至我們不會浪費我們的光陰- 種植你會拔除的！

願主祝福你們

梅牧師及師母

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