

Session 7 Jesus Revealed the Father (Jn. 14:7-9)

This is session seven of the *Intimacy with the Trinity in John 14* series. I have said this over and over that in the next semesters it will be *Intimacy with the Trinity in John 15*, then *John 16*, and then *John 17*, Lord willing, and I think He is willing.

We are in Session 7 here, and we are working through John 14 verse by verse. We are in verses 7-9 tonight. This remarkable declaration that we are so familiar with might not seem remarkable, but it is truly remarkable that a man walked on the earth—Jesus of Nazareth—fully God, fully man, who revealed what the God of Israel, the God of Genesis 1 is like. He gave us clear insight into the God of Genesis 1: His leadership and His emotions and what it is that He wants and what He is after and how He relates. That is a remarkable reality which we have embodied in one Man, a perfect picture of what the invisible God is like and what He wants, and how He acts and what we can expect from Him. It is remarkable.

We can easily move on past that and forget how absolutely glorious that reality is. We need to look at the life of Jesus and search it for understanding of the Father's emotions, His embrace, His leadership, His activity, what He wants, and what He is going to do. We can get all kinds of understanding that, as the years unfold, prepares our heart for troubles, for disappointments, for the glory of God and many, many different facets both positive and negative that we will face in our lives.

I. REVIEW: JESUS' COMMAND NOT TO ALLOW TROUBLE TO DOMINATE OUR HEART

- A. Jesus commanded the disciples not to let trouble dominate their hearts (Jn. 14:1). In other words, we are to take every thought captive to agree with Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). We do this by replacing negative thoughts with the biblical truths—by speaking these truths over our lives.

¹**“Let not your heart be troubled...believe in Me...”**²⁷**My peace I give to you... ”** (Jn. 14:1, 27)

⁵**casting down arguments** [lies against the truth]...**against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity** [agreement] **to the obedience of Christ...** (2 Cor. 10:5)

Jesus starts off with the primary exhortation of the whole chapter and says, “Don’t let your heart be troubled.” He commands the disciples to do their part because we do have a part in not allowing trouble to dominate our emotions. He says, as it were, “You have to believe in Me. I am going to give you a number of core truths”—in John 14, 15, 16, and 17—“and you have to engage with those truths. You have to believe in Me. What I am about to tell you is not just so you can say, ‘Wow, isn’t that amazing!’ It is so that you can get these truths into your conversation with the Lord, with Myself—Jesus—and with the Father. If you do your part when trouble rises up in your heart and you resist it, I will do my part,” verse 27, “and I will give you supernatural peace.”

Philippians 4:7 speaks of peace that guards the mind and the emotions or the mind and the heart. Can you imagine supernatural peace? How critical it is in the hour that we live in to have peace guarding our mind from rambling on in dark thoughts! With our emotions raging like a storm on the inside, He says, “My peace will guard your heart and your mind.”

I am going to use a different verse to say this same principle that I have said every week about how we do our part. I have been talking about how we are transformed by the renewing of our mind and have used that passage a handful of times, “You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.” Well, in 2 Corinthians 10:5, here is one way that Paul said it; he is saying the same thing, “Take every thought captive to obedience or to agreement with what Jesus says.” So, in our thoughts fear emerges, shame emerges in our mind and in our

emotions, worry, rejection. We take that thought captive and say, “No! I am not letting you run wild! I am taking you captive into obedience or into agreement with what Jesus says. I am going to say what Jesus says, and I am going to take you into captivity. I am not going to let you run wild and destroy my inner life.”

Verse 5 in 2 Corinthians 10, Paul said, “Cast down the arguments” or the lies because the fear, the shame, and the rejection are rooted in lies, so cast them down; do not let it run rampant in your emotions because these are lies against the truth of God.

B. Jesus declared 5 core truths in John 14:2-7 which they were to embrace in believing in Him.

²In My Father’s house are many mansions...I go to prepare a place for you...³I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also...⁷If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.
(Jn. 14:2-3, 7)

Jesus declared five core truths in John 14:2-7. I have been talking about the four core truths in John 14:2-3. Here we are adding another passage, so now we are at the fifth core truth, and there are several more to come throughout John 14 that we have to believe. Meaning, we have to engage in conversation with the Lord on these truths. We have to take captive the lies, and we have to replace them with truth. That is our part of not letting fear and trouble dominate our heart.

1. **Truth #1—My Father’s house:** The Father’s house is the New Jerusalem. The redeemed will live together with Him forever in His immediate presence as part of His family.

In 14:2, He says, “In My Father’s house.” We are going to live forever with the Father; that is core truth #1.

2. **Truth #2—I am going to prepare a place for you:** Jesus went to the cross to prepare our place in the Father’s house. He secured the way for us to enjoy the Father’s house forever.

Core truth #2: I [Jesus] go to secure a place, and it can never be undone. We are going to enjoy the Father forever. It is guaranteed, the place is prepared, and it is secure.

3. **Truth #3—I will come for you:** He will come to His people *physically* at the end of this age, while He comes to them *spiritually* in this age by the indwelling Spirit (14:23).

“I am coming back for you. I am going to shift this earth to the age to come, and it is going to be forever together in the glory of God. I am coming back for you. I am coming back for you at the Second Coming, and it is a future of indescribably glory for billions of years, but I am also coming back to you by the person of the Holy Spirit, and I will be interacting with you even by the Indwelling Spirit.”

4. **Truth #4—That where I am, there you may be:** Here, Jesus gave one of the reasons for going to the cross. He desires His people to be with Him even more than they desire to be with Him.

Why does He want to secure a place and come back for us? In core truth #4, He gives us the why behind the what: “Because I want you with Me where I am.” Beloved, He wants us with Him more than we want to be with Him. We think, “Oh God, I love Your presence!”

He would say, “I want you to be with Me more than you want to be with Me!”

And what do we do with that truth? Well, in a normal, weak thought process the thought is: “My life is worthless; it is not going to work. I am forgotten!”

And the Lord would say, “No! No! Speak the word of God! I want you with Me!”

“Well, it does not feel like it, Lord!”

“Take that thought captive and bring it into obedience or agreement with what I said.”

5. **Truth #5—From now on you know the Father:** We can know the Father through Jesus.

Relating to the Father empowers us to “not let trouble” dominate our heart according to 14:1.

In verse 7, we are see core truth #5: “If you had known Me” or if you had understood Me in the place of the word, know. “If you had known Me or understood Me, you would have understood My Father, His heart, His embrace, His leadership, His narrative about your life, and you would have understood My Father’s leadership. From now on,” He declares a fact, “From now on you do know Him. You can engage with the Father because of what I have done. From now on you have indescribable possibilities because you can now engage with the Father directly.” That is the fifth truth.

What do we do with these truths? It is so common for believers to just be tossed around like a ship out at sea, tossed by the waves, the emotions, confusion, rejection, lies, shame, “I am worthless! I am cancelled out. I have no future! It does not matter anyway!”

Jesus would say, “No! Engage with the Father! He is there, and He wants to interact with you. Make that a priority.” Of course, for everybody—in theory—it is a priority but, I think that for most people in reality, it is a rare interaction. Jesus is saying, in effect, “Do you understand that from now on you can interact with the Father and the possibilities are endless where that could take you in terms of your inner life and in terms of your outer life as well?”

Truth number 5, just to say it again: By relating to the Father now in an intentional and continual—though not continual in the sense of every moment of every day—but in an intentional way and not in a casual here and there—by relating to the Father, it empowers us not to let our heart be troubled, not be taken by the storm of wild emotions. By interacting with the Father, we are empowered to not let trouble dominate our hearts, and that is what He said in verse 1. He said, in effect, “You have to believe that you really can interact with the Father and, because it is true, make it a priority in your life.”

II. JESUS REVEALED THE FATHER TO HIS PEOPLE (JN. 14:7-9)

- A. One of Jesus’ primary themes in John 14 is how we are to understand the Father. Each person of the Trinity is emphasized in John 14-16—the Father (Jn. 14), the Son (Jn. 15) and the Spirit (Jn. 16).

One of Jesus’ primary themes in John 14 is how we are to understand the Father. There are significant implications to how we understand the Father, understand His embrace. Many people know in theory that the Father embraces us, but in actuality, shame, fear, and rejection rule in their hearts. Know the Father’s narrative for your life. The enemy is going to work overtime to sell you on his narrative of your life. Often our own narrative, our own view of our life, is influenced much by the enemy and often even through the lips of others. Jesus is saying here, “It is important that you understand the Father’s leadership and His embrace, His narrative, His promises, and His activities in your life.” Know who He is to you and who you are to Him. The implications are very significant because that is the way we can walk free from fear, offense, deception, etc.

Let’s read the three verses that we are going to break down in this session, verses 7-9, and then we will look at some of the phrases in a few moments, one by one. Jesus said, in effect, “If you had known (or understood) Me”—if you have really understood Me the last three and a half years—“you would have understood My

Father's leadership. And you need to know it now because I am going to die tomorrow. And the way that you think about the Father's leadership is really going to affect your mind and your emotions and therefore your actions." He said, "If you had known and understood Me" which they did not. They saw His miracles and thought that was amazing, and they heard His teaching, but they did not know that it was a perfect reflection of the Father's leadership. They needed to understand this because they were going to be under the Father's leadership after He died.

He said, in effect, "You would have understood My Father's narrative towards you. You would have understood His promises towards you, if you had really understood that I was a perfect expression of His heart and of His leadership. However, from now on you know Him. From now on you have seen Him, and so from this day forward you are going to go back and review"—Jesus is talking to the disciples—"the things I taught, the way I interacted with broken lives, how I healed people, what I did in My lifestyle and then you are going to connect the dots which will give insight to what the Father is like. And then you are going to say 'Oh, okay, now I am seeing, and I am going to interact with the Father with the confidence of knowing about Him from the deeds and the teaching and the lifestyle of Jesus.'"

So we read the four gospels, and of course it makes us love Jesus, but it is also causes us to understand the Father's leadership. That is what they did not grasp. Philip said, "Show us the Father, and that is enough for us."

In verse 9, Jesus said, "Philip, have I been with you so long"—three and a half years—"and yet you still do not understand that I was showing you the Father for the last three and a half years?" He said, as it were, "Let me say it clearly, Phillip: he that has seen Me, heard My teachings, watched My miracles, seen the countenance on My face, seen the joy that I had in forgiving and rescuing lives, from now on understand you have seen the Father. Connect the dots now. So how can you say, 'Show us the Father?'" Again, the bigger storyline is "I am going to die tomorrow, and you must believe in the Father's leadership. It is critical that you believe what I tell you about what I, Jesus, am going to do and what My Father is like because it will matter dynamically in the way you navigate trouble in your mind and emotions."

- B. We can see the Father's personality, power, and purposes through the life and ministry of Jesus. In a Jewish context, most thought of God as being distant from His people because He is the transcendent creator of Genesis 1. They rightly *trembled* before His power and holiness. Jesus taught that by understanding the Father's heart, they could also have *confidence* before Him.

7"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."⁸Philip said..., "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."⁹Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (Jn. 14:7-9)

- C. ***If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also*** (14:7): To the degree that we understand Jesus' teaching, mission, and personality, we know the Father. Jesus clarified that one of the main purposes of His teaching ministry was to reveal the God of Israel as our Father. Jesus emphasized the affectionate, deeply involved, relational dimension of God's personality as Father.

Let's take the first phrase in verse 7, "If you had known Me," or, if you had understood Me. To the degree that we understand Jesus' teaching, His mission, His personality through the four gospels, to that degree we understand the Father's embrace. We understand His narrative towards our life. That is one of the big ones, and so often that we cannot get a hold of God's narrative over our life, and so we sink with despair and fear and tons of uncertainty.

1. If you had known Me or understood Me, you would have understood My Father's heart, embrace, and leadership over your life. Jesus is saying how important it is that you understand the Father's leadership, heart, promises, narrative, and who He is and who you are to Him. The implications significant in empowering us to walk in truth and liberty and free from fear, accusation, shame, and deception.

"We do not have to know the details of the future"—you have heard the phrase—"because we know the One who holds the future," which is a cute phrase, but it is actually true. If I believe in His character, I do not have to know the details about next year and the future trouble and the future glory, because I am connected to Him and He has an interest in me like Jesus had with His disciples. He revealed what the Father is like towards His children. Jesus emphasized the affection, the deep involvement, the relational dimension of God's personality as a Father. And I would add the Father's embrace, the Father's narrative, the Father's deeds and leadership. Jesus emphasized those dimensions of the Father.

2. The enemy will work overtime to convince you of his accusation narrative of your life. Often our view of our lives is influenced by enemy or from lips of others.
3. The incarnate Christ revealed the Father (Jn. 1:14, 18; 8:19; 10:30; 12:45).

¹⁴The Word became flesh and dwelt among us...the glory as of the only begotten of the Father... ¹⁸No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son...has declared Him. (Jn. 1:14-18)

- D. ***From now on you know Him and have seen Him*** (14:7): Jesus told them that from that day forward they now understood that they have significant information about the Father's leadership from Jesus' life and teaching. From now on you know Him and see Him. This is the most reliable road map to blessing.

He says, "From now on you know Him and you have seen Him." Again, that is a startling statement! I mean absolutely stunning that a man born of a woman, lived on the earth, and was a perfect representation of what the Father's personality and leadership is like and what His activity is like. Jesus was actually stating a fact. He said "From now on you do know, but you have to do this: you have to take time to review what I have taught you and what you have seen Me do and how I have lived. Connect the dots and recognize the Father's leadership in it." This is Jesus talking here.

1. Jesus declares the fact: from now on **you do know Him**. There are dynamic new possibilities for our life because you can now engage with the Father directly and "see" His activity in your life through the paradigm of Jesus' life and ministry as set forth in the gospels. What a glorious gift the four Gospels are in giving us knowledge of the Father so that we can connect the dots and "see" the Father's leadership in our life in this hour even though He is invisible. This is what 14:1 is about. Jesus is saying do you understand that from NOW on you can understand and interact with the Father, and the possibilities are endless in terms of you growing in peace and love and humility.
2. He gives us clear insight into His leadership, and into what He wants and how He relates. Jesus declared that from "now on" we know this about God and, therefore, we can "see" evidence of it when we review our life through this lens.

3. As we look at the life of Jesus in the four Gospels, we search for understanding of the Father's heart, mind, leadership, and activity, so that we can anticipate it in our own lives to find peace and comfort in times of pressure and thus refuse to allow trouble to dominate our heart (14:1).
4. The essence of eternal life is to encounter the Father and the Son in a growing relationship. Life without the Father is the essence of the darkness and torment in hell.

³This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus... (Jn. 17:3)

The essence of eternal life is to encounter the Father and the Son. Jesus would say a few hours later in John 17 that, "This is the essence, this is the main point of eternal life: to interact with the Father and to interact with Me, the Son." That is the point. Often—and it is not wrong to do this but often—the gospel is presented as a free way out of hell, fire insurance. That is true, it is our free ticket out of hell, and people say, "How would you like to live forever and get out of hell? And dah, dah, dah" presented in the negative. There is a biblical model for presenting those kinds of truths, but Jesus is saying, "Salvation is much more than getting out of trouble. It is entering into an interaction with the God of Israel, with the God of Genesis 1 and with Me, His Son." Beloved, we have it made! We have such an incredibly good deal. The Father and the Son have brought us into communication with Them. That is the essence of eternal life.

Eternal life starts in this age. I do not want to wait until the age to come to interact with the Father.

5. Unbelievers will stand before Jesus in His presence which is so filled with beauty, life, and joy. When unbelievers are brought there, He will command them to go from Him (Lk. 13:27).

²⁷But He will say, '...I do not know you...Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.'

²⁸There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac... and all the prophets...and yourselves thrust out. ²⁹They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God." (Lk. 13:27-30)

Life without the Father is the essence of darkness and torment in hell. There is a verse in Luke 13 where the unbeliever in the age to come stands before Jesus, and they are in His presence which is so filled with beauty and life and joy. In His presence is the fullness of joy. The unbelievers are brought there, and I do not know exactly what is going on in their minds, but then He says, "Depart from Me," and that is when they gnash their teeth! They are saying "No! We cannot leave this Presence!" He says "No, depart forever!" And one of the great penalties or torments of hell is that they got to be in His presence for a few moments even during their time of judgment, and it is indescribable glory. And then He says, "Now depart from Me!" in Luke 13. And that is when they gnash their teeth and say, "This is indescribable!"

6. God's names reveal different facets of His personality. He has over 300 names in Scripture.

²⁶I have declared to them Your [the Father's] name, and will declare it... (Jn. 17:26)

A few moments later Jesus is praying to the Father, in John 17, and He says, "Father, I have declared Your name to them, and after I die and rise from the dead and am seated at Your right hand, I am going to continue to declare Your name to them." One of the focuses of Jesus' ministry through the Holy Spirit is making the name of the Father known. His name means not just His technical name; His name means His personality, His character, His plans, and what He is like. That is what the Bible means by the name of God. It is what He is like. It is His character. The name of a person depicts their character.

There were only whispers of “Father” in Old Testament, but in four gospels the name, “Father,” was what Jesus revealed most about the God of Israel. He said, “I will continue to declare the Father’s name”—by the Spirit, directly by the Scripture, and through the words of others who are the Father’s messengers. You can be messengers of the Father’s name by telling people what He is like and how He views them. There are over three hundred names of God with various ways to get to that three hundred, and they depict different facets of His personality, but by far the name of God Jesus revealed most was the “Father,” and that was new. There are only whispers of the Father in the Old Testament. In the four gospels, the vast majority of Jesus’ revelation of the God of those three hundred names was the name, Father. He said “I am going to continue to declare it by the Holy Spirit!”

How was He going to do that? How was Jesus going to declare the Father’s name through Church history? Number one, by the word of God. We read the Word of God, and we talk to Jesus and the Father, and our understanding grows incrementally, little by little, but it grows.

Another way we learn about the Father’s name is that Jesus proclaims it through the Lord’s messengers. I am talking right now about the Father’s name, and some of you are going to get a couple of new thoughts tonight. And the Lord is going to use you and is using many of you in the same way. You do not need to stand on a platform and speak on a microphone. You can do it one on one, one on two, one on three. You are messengers of the Father’s name. You are telling people what He is like. And it matters because some people will get it directly from your words, but those very people will get it through your mouth as well.

Determine that you are going to partner with Jesus to make the Father’s name known, His character, His plans, His narrative. Some people will get it that way, and then other times they will get it through dreams and visions. Acts 2:17 says, “In the generation the Lord returns all of the servants, all of the children of God, sons and daughters, will receive dreams and visions.” And the dreams and visions I care about the most are not just the details of what might happen in nations or in people’s lives. Those are important, but I want to see the heart of the Father and the Son more by dreams and visions. I have had a few of them over the years in my life, and I love it. It is fantastic, and it marks you in a special way.

Another way that Jesus reveals the Father’s name is by intervening and blessing your circumstance, the surprise healing, the surprise open door, the surprise trouble that the Lord answers. We say, “Father! You know me! You love me!” And He says, “There you go, there you go. I am revealing My Name in these various ways.”

- E. **Show us the Father** (14:8): Philip asked to see the Father. He apparently was asking Jesus to give them a theophany or a visible manifestation of God (Ex. 24:9-10; 33:18; Isa. 6:1) like what Peter saw on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt. 17:1-7). The prayer to see the Father or to grow in the knowledge of God is one of our most important and needed prayers (Eph. 1:17; 2 Pet. 1:2; 3:18).

⁸Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” (Jn. 14:8)

*I don’t think Philip understood that he declared **two** significant truths—“Show us the Father” and “it is sufficient.” Why must John 14:8 must be a priority prayer? There is prevailing stronghold related to fear of rejection and trauma of shame.*

1. Philip was confused. When did he see the Father? How can Jesus say that Philip saw Him? Jesus was talking about seeing the Father in a different way, but Philip did not understand it.
2. There are three questions in John 14—Thomas (14:5), Philip (14:8), and Judas (14:22).

Phillip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that is sufficient for us.” When he said, “Show us the Father,” he apparently—what I assume and many Bible teachers have the same assumption—was asking for a theophany. A theophany is a big word that just means a visible manifestation of God. Peter, James, and John had just been to the Mount of Transfiguration, and Jesus transfigured. His face was brighter than the sun. And the glory of God, they saw His glory in His deity and His glory that is going to be given to Him after He rose from the dead. And they were just awestruck in this theophany, this manifestation of God right in front of their eyes. Moses saw God in a manifest way in various ways. He never saw His face, but they call it a theophany. Philip was saying, “Show us one of those about the Father!”

Jesus was saying, “No, you are not getting it. I might show you something,”—I mean later on John in Revelation 4 saw a theophany. He saw the glory of the Father on the throne in Revelation 4 and 5. And others did, but Jesus was saying here, “That is not what I am talking about right now. I am not promising you a theophany between now and the end of your natural life. I am helping you connect the dots through the written word of God and through the Holy Spirit touching your hearts. You are going to connect the dots of what I did, and you are going to see the Father!”

I don’t think Phillip understood. He made two tremendous statements here. His prayer, “Show us the Father,” and the second, “I will be totally satisfied. It is sufficient if we see the Father.” Those were two of the clearest prophetic declarations. I don’t believe Phillip meant them in the way that we can take them now.

Beloved, I want to encourage you make this one of your primary prayers, “Show me the Father.” That is the Ephesians 1:17 which we pray so often in the prayer room. “Father of glory, the Spirit of wisdom and revelation,” whether it is the knowledge of Jesus or of the Father, you are going to get the revelation of God.

You want to see the Father’s narrative for your life. That is one of the big needs in the body of Christ: to see how the Father sees your life and what He says about you in your weakness, in your smallness, and in the small impact that you have and how **dear** it is to Him. We get lost in the shuffle when we see that so-and-so has a big impact, and their life looks really happy and dynamic, and there is a lot of glitter and sizzle, and we all say, “Wow! Wow!”

The Lord would say “Forget all of that! Know what I think about you and how I value what you are doing!”

“Show me the Father’s activity, let me see His interaction in my life and in history.” And then we recalibrate our life when we understand God’s narrative. It is not the same as our narrative and it is not the same as the enemy’s narrative of our life. We take our narrative and lay it aside. God has a narrative for you. He has a view and a plan for you that is dynamic and wonderful. It may have difficulties, it may have smallness, it may have setbacks in it, but He says, “I know what I am doing, and it is beautiful what I am doing.”

I believe that this is one of the most important prayers you can pray, “Show us the Father.”

- F. **It is sufficient for us** (14:8): Philip declared that it would be enough for him. One of the deepest cries of our heart is “to see the Father.” The Spirit is calling the Church to encounter the Father.

⁸**Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” (Jn. 14:8)**

And the second true statement, “It is sufficient for us.” One of the deepest cries of the human heart whether we identify it or not is to see the Father. The human heart was created in a way that we long to know that the Father enjoys His relationship with us. There is this deep longing. I call it the most significant and important longings in the human spirit.

1. Our greatest emotional need is to have *the assurance that we are enjoyed by God* even in our weakness. Every person was created with a longing to be delighted in and enjoyed by God. A prevailing stronghold in many is related to the fear of rejection and the trauma of shame.

*God created us with the longing to want the assurance that He enjoys us, not just that He loves us. I mean, it is love, but love is used in so many ways that people can just pass that by. I like to use the word, “enjoy.” I mean it is love, but the Father **enjoys** us even in our weakness. Beloved, that truth has dynamically changed my life over the years, as it has grown little by little over the years how He loves me and you. We were created for this.*

However, you have to see His narrative to feel that emotion. You have to see the truth about what He is like or you will never buy into that. You will think, “Oh, that is not really true. That cannot be true. I am a failure. I am a loser. I am a nothing. I am a this... I am a this... I am a this...everyone has told me that. The enemy tells me that, look at my life!”

*And the Lord would say, “No, look at **My** words over you.” I don’t mean prophecies of grandeur, but the biblical declaration of who you are to Him.*

Why must John 14:8 be a priority prayer? “Show us the Father!” Why? It is because there is a prevailing stronghold in many lives, in many believers, which is related to the fear of rejection and the trauma of shame. There is this stronghold in the lives of millions of believers. Therefore, we must pray this prayer of Philip—although I believe he was praying it with a wrong view in mind but—“Show us the Father.”

2. Our lives are unsettled and without a “stabilizing anchor” until we know the narrative and embrace of our Father. Many sincere believers are paralyzed by shame in their walk with God. A life of shame leads to a life of sin. If we feel dirty before God, then we will live dirty.

Number two: Our lives are unsettled without this “stabilizing anchor” in our life, until we know the Father’s embrace, until we know the Father’s narrative, until we know the Father’s leadership, i.e. the kinds of things He is going to do even in our circumstances. Many sincere believers, many sincere believers—I have been a pastor over forty-five years—and one of the number one issues in the lives of believers is they are paralyzed by shame of their sense of failure. Even exaggerated, their failures are real, but they make it the main part of their narrative and their story, and they read and interpret their life through that failure. The Lord would say, “That is just not Me! Take that thought into captivity! Take it! Put it into prison behind you and get rid of it! And bring your thoughts into obedience to Me.”

A life of shame, one thing I have seen and learned through watching it is this: a life of shame leads to a life of more sin. If you feel dirty before God, you will live dirty. People fall into horrible situations, and they feel so dirty and think “It is over!” But Jesus says, “My blood! I prepared a place for you!” That is one of the core truths! “I want you where I am! That is where you are going to be. We are going to be together forever! You can interact with the Father even now!”

“No! I am dirty! I am worthless!”

And when you feel dirty, you live dirty, because it does not matter anymore. It’s like, “Who cares! It is over anyway!” The enemy just piles up lies, lie after lie after lie.

- G. **Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip?** (14:9). Earlier Jesus established the truth that to see Him was to see the Father (Jn. 8:19; 10:30; 12:45). Now confidence that the Father is like Jesus was a life-and-death issue for them spiritually—that the Father had the same zeal for healing, multiplying food, forgiving sinners, and calming storms as Jesus had.

¹⁹*“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.” (Jn. 8:19)*

⁴⁵*“And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.” (Jn. 12:45)*

³⁰*I and My Father are one.” (Jn 10:30)*

Jesus said, “Philip, have I been with you so long, yet you do not understand that I have been giving you perfect insight and clarity about the Father’s leadership and His embrace over your life and His tender mercy? You do not understand that, do you, Phillip?”

Now, this is a correction. He is saying, “Have I been with you so long?” He is wanting to awaken Philip to urgency. He is wanting to alarm Philip and the guys all standing there. “Tomorrow I am going to be dead! You will all deny Me tonight! You must know that My last three -and-a-half years is how the Father is going to look at you, in the way that I have looked at broken lives. You have to know that! You cannot be casual about this!”

Like, “Well, if I connect with it, I connect with it.”

“No! You need to get a hold of it!” Jesus is seeking to alarm and alert and to awake urgency in Philip.

Beloved, I can say, by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit is saying that to the body of Christ across the earth, “Have I been with you so long,”—two thousand years the Spirit has been in the Church’s history—“and you still do not know the Father’s leadership through the life, the words and the deeds of Jesus. And therefore, you are tossed by storms because you do not know what the Father is really like and what He is going to do.” I have listed four verses there, but there are a few more.

1. I am going to die tomorrow and therefore, you must believe in, understand, and thus “see” the Father’s leadership. It is crucial that you believe the truth about what My Father is like; it will equip you navigate the pressures that you will face so that trouble does not dominate your mind and emotions.
2. Philip, you don’t understand that I have been giving you is very rare and even perfect insight in the Father’s leadership and His embrace over your life. You must connect the dots to see My Father’s work in your life by both what He allows and prevents from happening. Jesus wanted to awaken Phillip and His disciples to urgency, knowing that He would die the following day.
3. In Mark 6, after He multiplied the food, they still did not understand it because their hearts were hardened. Now Jesus wanted them to take seriously their need to cultivate understanding. In Lk. 24:25, Jesus said to the disciples on the road to Emmaus that they were slow of heart. He was alerting the disciples to this because He loved them and wanted them to be intentional about interacting with the Father.

Earlier, Jesus established the truth: “If you see Me, you see Him,” but that bounced right off them. He had told them that a number of times. In Mark 6:52—I do not have it on the notes—He told them after He had multiplied the food—which He multiplied three times and they could not get it— “You do not understand because your hearts are hardened” He was not rebuking them, saying, “Oh you are just a bunch of hopeless hypocrites, your hearts are hardened!” He is saying “Take seriously your need to lean into the Spirit of understanding. Go after it. It is yours, but know that you are a couple steps further back than you think you are.”

He again told them in Mark 6:52, “Your hearts are hardened.” That is not a rebuke; that is an alarm statement. He told the disciples on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24:25m “You are slow of heart.” Again, that is not a rebuke; that is an alert. “You do not want to spend the next ten years ‘slow of heart.’ I am telling you because I love you. I am telling you because if you get intentional about interacting with Me and the Father and if you know you are slow of heart and hard of heart”—because we all are by nature—“if you go after it, I will give you more!” That is the point He is making because He has told them four or five times in the gospel of John alone, “When you see Me, you have seen what the Father’s leadership is like and what His narrative is like towards broken lives and people who need mercy.”

- H. ***He who has seen Me has seen the Father*** (14:9): Jesus was calling them to interpret His 3½ year ministry of teaching and miracles as revealing the Father. The disciples had not yet realized who Jesus was as the exact representation of the Father (Heb. 1:3). Here Jesus declares His deity.

³He [Jesus] is the radiance of His [Father’s] glory and the exact representation of His nature...
(Heb. 1:3; NAS)

- I. ***How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’*** (14:9): Jesus’ astounding reply to Philip is that to see Him is to see the transcendent God of Israel who is their heavenly Father. “How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ That is what I have been doing for 3 ½ years by My teachings, prayer life, miracles, and lifestyle,” Jesus was saying. “Philip you still do not understand one of My primary missions was related to revealing the Father—what He is like, how He relates to His children, and what He wants.”

He gives another alert statement to them. First He says, “Have I been with you so long? So How can you keep saying, ‘Show us the Father?’”

1. Jesus is not rebuking Philip but saying to him, “I will die tomorrow, and you must cultivate this growing dialogue with what the Father is like. The more you understand the Father the more you will process the future with confidence.”

He is not rebuking him with a negative tone. He is saying, as it were, “Philip! I mean, in twenty-four hours I will not be here! You have to lean into this! This is not like you are just telling some glory stories of when you traveled with Me the last couple of years. You have to connect with the Father! This is real! Your life is going to have pressures, and you are going to have a stewardship of the glory of God, but the only way it will work rightly is if you are in this growing dialogue with what the Father is like.”

2. As we read the gospels, we gain understanding of the Father’s leadership. “He who has seen Me”—that is, My countenance, the joy I have in forgiving and rescuing broken lives.

If you have an accurate view—a somewhat of an accurate view as we never get the full picture in this age but—the more I understand the Father the more I can process and look at my future. Though I see trouble, and I see pressures, but I have confidence. I am not nearly so vulnerable to fear and offense with God when I understand a little bit what the Father is like. I may not like some of the negative that is emerging. I do not like some of the negative things I might face. I do not like some of the difficulties that I might have to endure but I know that just in a minute everything that the Father has said is true and I have it made forever! And it is worth it to go with Him with all of my heart!

3. As we study the gospels to see what Jesus said and did, we learn about the Father's personality. If you want to know what the Father thinks about **death**—meditate on Jesus weeping at the tomb of Lazarus—or about your **sin**—think on Jesus going to the cross to secure your forgiveness—or about **social outcasts**—look at Jesus eating with tax collectors and prostitutes and sending them on their way forgiven, and feeling clean—or about **religious hypocrisy**—review Jesus denounce the Pharisees—or about **exploiting religion for monetary gain**—watch Jesus in the Temple, turning over tables, and rebuking them for making it into a den of thieves. If you've ever questioned how the Father **serves** you—look at Jesus washing their dirty feet—or how He sees **disease**—watch as Jesus heals all who are brought to Him. Meditate on all that Jesus is, says, and does.

III. THE FATHER HEART OF GOD —10 EXPRESSIONS OF HIS LOVE

We have here ten expressions of the Father's heart. We are going to go kind of rapid fire through most of these because they are not complicated, and you could have had twenty on the list, by the way. Someone might ask, "How did you end up with ten?" I ran out of space on the page. I am not presenting this as comprehensive, but it is enough to give you a running start.

- A. The Father knows that relationship or friendship-based leadership is the most effective way to lead (Jn. 15:15). Being trained in the context of relationship is far more effective than just learning principles. There are many principles of godly fatherhood. They include building relationships, being committed, serving, affirming, calling forth, training, correcting, honoring, communicating, listening, investing, understanding, following through, celebrating, and supporting in difficulty.

The Father knows, He knows this well—I mean it is so obvious but it needs to be said—that a relationship-based leadership is the most effective way to lead. He is saying, as it were, "If we have relationship, and we have friendship, and you trust Me, you will obey Me much more."

Beloved, that applies to family dynamics. Leadership in the family when it is based on relationship with a spirit of friendship—it does not mean that you agree with everything—but there is a genuine relationship-based leadership in the home or in any kind of team building whether it is in the marketplace, whether it is in a ministry setting in a church or on a campus or a camp or whatever in the missions' world. With any kind of team building, when there is friendship-based leadership, it is far more effective, and the ultimate picture of relationship or friendship-based leadership is with the Father. There is a lot more going on than just learning leadership principles and biblical doctrines. Your heart is interacting with Him, and your heart is opening. It feels comfortable and connected to Him, and you learn better principles and better doctrine when your heart is growing in openness and confidence before the Lord. And He knows that, and so as the Father He is going to lead us in these ways.

Then I have just a whole lot of things here in paragraph A, and you could have made this list twice as big with the many principles of godly fatherhood, again, whether it is a mother or whether it is a team building leader whatever, they include all of these different dynamics plus more.

- B. Expression #1 **The Father engages and dwells with His children** (Jn. 14:23): The Father will openly display His enjoyment and pleasure in the relationship with and lifestyle of those who value His love as evidenced by a life of obedience. The Father loves everyone in the sense of valuing and caring for them. Yet He only loves the lifestyle, choices, and fruit of those who seek to obey Him.

23 Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. (Jn. 14:23)

Expression #1: Jesus is going to talk about the Father. We are in verses 7-9. In a moment He is going to be at verse 23, and we will get there in a couple of weeks. Jesus got there in a few moments, but anyway, in verse 23 He talks directly about the Father. There He says, “I want you to know that My Father wants to engage with you and dwell with you and manifest His presence in your life.” That is the first thing that He is going to emphasize about the Father after He says, “I have revealed the Father.” He is going to manifest His glory to you in this age, not just in the age to come.

1. In 14:23, Jesus assured them that the Father wanted to engage with them and manifest His presence and activity in their life. This is the first thing the Jesus emphasized related to them knowing and seeing the Father. They had to have a new paradigm about God to recognize His activity in their life as being exactly like what the disciples saw in Jesus’ activity.

2. Moses prayed, “Show me Your glory!” The Lord proclaimed the name of the Lord: He is gracious kind tender slow to anger. That is the glory of God. It is our inheritance.

***18* And he [Moses] said, “Please, show me Your glory.” *19* Then He said, “I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you..” (Ex. 33:18-19)**

***6* And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth...” (Ex. 34:6)**

And the manifest glory does not necessarily mean that you will see some startling vision. You might! You might have a couple of those in your life, you never know, but that is not what I mean. Seeing His glory is feeling the tenderness of God touching your heart the way that He sees you with tenderness and kindness that is the glory of God.

That is what Moses said in Exodus 33:18. He said, “Show me Your glory!”

The Lord said, “The Lord shall proclaim the name of the Lord! He is gracious! He is kind! He is tender! He is slow to anger!” That is the glory of God. It is our inheritance.

Here is my point: do not settle for less than a growing relationship of the Father’s manifest presence in your life. Don’t look at this and say, “Hey, that is a good teaching on the Father. That is kind of neat, and those are some neat principles.” No, no, no! We have got to get these principles, these truths, in our mouth with the Father.

Again, the simple little thing I have said in every session, when we see a truth about the Father, we say, “Thank You God, show me more!” Turn that truth into conversation. Here it is: “Father, You want to manifest Your presence. Show me more! Show me this!” Get these truths into conversation in your mouth with Him.

- C. Expression #2 **The Father “prunes” His children** (Jn. 15:2): We must see the Father as a zealous vinedresser who oversees the fruitfulness of His vineyard. He takes the initiative to intervene to “prune” every fruitful believer to bring them to greater fruitfulness. The Father’s pruning is not discipline. The purpose of the Father’s *pruning* is to *remove distraction* from an obedient believer, whereas the purpose of the Father’s *discipline* is to *remove sin* from a compromising believer.

1“...My Father is the vinedresser...²Every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken...” (Jn. 15:1-3)

Expression #2 of the Father: it is right after John 14:23 right here. We are still in the Upper Room Discourse. We are right here in John 13 to 17. The next thing is John 15, and this one really gets overlooked most times when we talk about the Father-heart of God, but it is the next point that He makes about the Father. He says in John 15, using the analogy of a believer’s life being like a vine which is a very common analogy and is very familiar in Israel, “My Father is the Vinedresser. He is the head gardener,” using the analogy.

Verse 2 speaks of “Every branch”—every believer’s life because the branch is a believer’s life—“if they are bearing fruit,” meaning they are growing in humility, they are growing in love, they are touching people’s lives, they are growing in a servant spirit, they are growing in living understanding and bearing fruit in that way. They are receiving it and imparting it even a little bit; they are bearing fruit. This is so startling: if you bear fruit, the Father is going to prune you. He is going to cut back the branch. What? Of course, a farmer understood this, those who worked in the vineyard, because if you do not prune the vine, it does not bear a lot of fruit. You cut back the different branches that are stealing the sap and wasting the sap, the life of the vine. You have to prune the branch in order for the branch to bear more fruit. This is a very simple principle to those who are in the vineyard.

You will bear more fruit. In other words, we must see the Father as a zealous vinedresser. He is overseeing the vineyard of your life, so set your expectation to be pruned. This is important because you will be pruned if you bear fruit. Being pruned many times looks like being downsized. When people get downsized [they are confused] because we are good Americans and we know the gospel of the American dream: the only thing that God does is make things bigger and better. Because we are Americans, so God must be an American. Maybe, maybe He is not. He is not! We have this idea that if it is God, it is more money; if it is God, it is more health; if it is God, it is more favor; if it is God, it is more comfort; if it is God, it is more ease; if it is God, then it is just happier and easier! God’s favor! Happier and easier! And He says “Not exactly, not exactly.” He takes the initiative as a Father to intervene—catch this—to prune.”

*Now the Father’s pruning is **not** divine discipline. Many people confuse discipline and pruning. Pruning is when He cuts off an area to remove a distraction from your life so that you have more fruit in the next season. It is actually because He is totally on your team.*

Discipline is when He is highlighting a sin so that you walk away from compromise. In pruning, He is removing a distraction so that you are not over-busy. He is saying, “No, because you do not have enough insight.” I mean, none of us do really. Every now and then we will catch a little bit of insight, but typically we do not have enough insight or resolve to draw back on an area is growing and is exciting. If it is growing and it is happening, it is like “Whoa! This is amazing! This is what I always wanted!”

But the Lord says, “Well, cut that off because now it is actually getting in the way.”

“No, no!”

So the Lord says, “I know you don’t get it. I will do it for you! And later you will say, ‘Wow! Thank You!’” Part of the Father’s love for us is that He prunes. We do not have the resolve or the insight to cut back on things that are seemingly thriving. Those thriving things are the fruit of having favor and blessing on our life, but now we have too many things thriving, and we cannot stay focused on what the Lord has called us too.

I don’t know hardly anyone that has the resolve and insight to prune themselves. Some do. I’ve done it once or twice, but the other five hundred times I didn’t do it very successfully.

- D. Expression #3 **The Father shows tender mercy and grace to His children:** The Lord expresses His tender mercy and His delight in His relationship with His children, even in their weakness.

Oh, I love this one! He shows tender mercy. He shows His delight in His children even in their weakness.

1. In Luke 15, Jesus gave three parables that have profound implications for our lives today. This chapter gives us one of the most significant revelations of the Father in the Scripture. The way we view God's heart toward us in our failure affects how we approach God. This is one of the most important issues. It determines if we run *to* God or *from* God when stumbling.

One of the most significant chapters about God the Father from the lips of Jesus is in Luke 15, in three parables. It is one of the most significant chapters about the Father's heart. I remember when I was about eighteen/nineteen-years-old, I stumbled into Luke 15, and I look back now almost fifty years later and think, "Lord, thank You that I stumbled into Luke 15 and got locked into it through various reasons." I didn't know fifty years later I would say, "That is the most significant chapter to get stuck in!"

Every time I preached to the high school and junior high groups, I told them Luke 15, Luke 15, Luke 15 all the time. They said, "Okay, Bickle, do you have any other verses?" Luke 15, Luke 15! I was actually talking myself into a place where my heart was going to grow for the next many years, and I was trying help the junior high and high school kids in the little Bible studies I was leading. And God was anchoring me in it by having me say it over and over.

In Luke 15 we see three of the parables. You cannot preach on it enough. When we have high school and junior high camps here, I almost always go to Luke 15. Some kids who have been here three or four years in a row ask, "Are you going to do Luke 15 again?"

I say, "I will do Luke 15 until the day I die and probably in the resurrection I will still be talking about it!" I am unashamedly loving Luke 15; it saved my life and anchored me for many, many years. I didn't even know it back then. I thought I was helping those junior high kids, but God was anchoring me.

The way we view God's heart towards us especially when we face our sin, our failure, and our weakness radically effects how we approach God. The way you think God feels about you when you face your failure effects greatly how you approach Him. I am talking about a sincere believer who hits failure, but they repent of the failure. They have acknowledged it before the Lord. That is not what they want to do!

Most believers run from God instead of to God because they have a wrong idea of what the Father is like. They know what Jesus is teaching and say, "Wow, that is amazing!" but then think, "but this cannot really be real!" But Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled with shame; believe what I am going to tell you about the Father. The Father is the perfect picture I gave you in Luke 15." That is the perfect representation of what the Father is like.

2. The truth that Jesus most emphasized here is that God rejoices as He forgives and restores His people (Lk. 15: 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 23, 32). In other words, He enjoys relationship with His people even in their weakness.
3. In the parable of the prodigal son (Lk. 15:11-32), Jesus taught how the Father responds to a son who rebels against Him and then returns to Him.

17When he came to himself [repentance], he said, ¹⁸“...I will...go to my father, and will say, ‘Father, I have sinned...’” ²⁰He...came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father...had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. (Lk. 15:17-20)

When the prodigal son repents, verse 18, he said, “I have sinned.” He has acknowledged it. It’s real and not fake. Verse 20, the Father has compassion; the Father runs towards him.

Beloved, if you take one step towards God, He will take ten towards you. There is no one in their thinking and narrative of life who imagines this to be true, but Jesus said, “Believe that I told you the truth about the Father.” The Father embraced his neck and kissed him and gave him the ring and the fatted calf for the dinner. Read Luke 15.

The point is this: this guy had repented, and though he had not gone through all of the classes yet, nor had he been on probation for three years, he was fully in first-class status in the Father’s house. Like how could this possibly be? The Pharisees were so angry when He taught this about sinners, because there were tax gatherers and harlots there as well as the Pharisees. He was looking at the Pharisees and said “This is what the Father is like!” and they were like, “Grrrrrrrr!”

“Beloved Pharisees, this is good news for you grouchy old guys too! This is how God will treat you, so get that frown off of your face!”

4. Jesus told the Pharisees to go and learn that God desires mercy (Mt. 9:10-13).

¹⁰...As Jesus sat at the table...many tax collectors and sinners...sat down with Him...

¹¹The Pharisees saw it and said..., “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors ...?”

¹²He said ...¹³“But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’” (Mt. 9:10-13)

He called Matthew the tax gatherer. The tax gatherers were probably the greatest sinners in Israel because they took money from their own people to give to the Romans, and the Romans were cheating the people. The Romans said to the tax gatherers, “Hey, if you will squeeze your family members for more money, we will give you a bigger cut!” I mean, it was the ultimate betrayal, I tell you, a tax gatherer against their own family members. Everyone hated them, and Jesus had dinner with them. The Pharisees said, “What on earth are you doing? It looks like you like them! That is what it looks like.”

Jesus said, “Look here,”—this is the teaching of Jesus, verse 13—“Go and learn, Pharisees. Learn the Father desires mercy! Go learn that!”

Jesus is now saying in John 14, the passage that we are on, “Go back to My teachings. They are not just stories. My Father wants you to know He will embrace tax gatherers and sinners!” A lot of times we think of the prodigals as the gang leader who gets saved. Beloved, the prodigals were family members who squandered their place in the kingdom and went away, and then came back. The prodigal sons were children; they were in the family. They were not the unbelieving gang member. It was the guy that knew the Father’s table and walked away from it and then wanted his way back. Jesus said “Do you understand the mercy of My Father and what He is like?”

5. The Father delights in showing mercy to His people (Isa. 62:4; Mic. 7:18).

¹⁸He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. (Mic. 7:18)

6. The Lord delights in and rejoices over His people (Deut. 30:9; Isa. 62:4; 65:18-19; Jer. 32:41; Zeph. 3:17). The view of many is that *God is mostly mad or mostly sad when He relates to us.*

*⁴...But you shall be called Hephzibah...for the **LORD delights in you...**⁵as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your **God rejoice over you.** (Isa. 62:4-5)*

7. Our spiritual immaturity does not affect the way He feels about us. He never loves us less in this age than He will love us in heaven, when we will live in the perfection of the resurrection state. We *experience more* of His love as we mature spiritually, but He does not love us more.

E. Expression #4 **The Father encourages and affirms His children:** The Father speaks words of affirmation to His children to help them not to quit in the face of condemnation and failure. Our Father does not relate to His children based on their failure. The Lord sees the budding virtues in His people. He sees the intention of their heart and their budding virtues, just as they begin to grow. He sees the early stages of our longing to obey Him and values it. Fathers speak in ways to help their children overcome temptations to quit. **Fathers build confidence.**

Expression #4: the Father's encouragement and affirmation: There is such a powerful spirit of accusation that the Bible makes clear in Revelation 12:10; the enemy is going to be spewing out accusation, night and day. He is going to give it directly to people's minds. He is going to give it directly to people through the lips of people around them. The spirit of accusation attacks you through the lips of others. He will give it to you through dreams and visions. You will have a horrifying torment dream that you are a loser and it is gone!

It is a lie! It is not the Father! He does not talk that way to His children! Believe what Jesus says about the Father! He said, "I never talk to anyone that way! I am the perfect picture of the Father. I am going to be gone. You have to believe He is like Me or you are going to get in trouble as the years unfold when the troubles emerge and even your own failures and disappointments or pains. You are not going to know how to navigate those difficult things if you do not believe that the Father is like Me." Go back and read the gospels and connect the dots with the Father's leadership.

F. Expression #5 **The Father trains and teaches His children:** The Father both equips and coaches His children in every area of their life in which they ask Him to teach them.

The Father trains and teaches His children. Beloved, the Holy Spirit knows everything about everything! He knows everything about you. He knows everything about the future. He knows everything about God's will for you. Talk to the Holy Spirit! "Show me! Teach me! Teach me, Holy Spirit, what the Father wants!" and it is really the Father speaking to us through the Spirit. What do I do with my money? What do I do with my health? What do I do with energy? What do I do with this difficult relationship? What do I do with this opportunity? What do I do here? Talk often, and the Father says, "I will give you more if you ask for it!"

Many people ask for occasional direction on what city they are supposed to move to or who they are supposed to marry, or what ministry or what job to take. And maybe they do not ask much more, but we all ought to be asking, day after day, constantly asking the Father. The Father loves to train. He loves to teach. He teaches through the Holy Spirit. He will teach you about your money. He will teach you about your health. He will teach you about your weaknesses.

He will teach you about your future. He will tell you how to reinterpret your past. He will teach you everything, but a lot of folks do not think of the Father as wanting to teach them anything besides what city they are to go to, or who they should marry, and what ministry to do, and blah, blah, blah, which are really good issues. They

are not “blah, blah, blah” points, but I mean we understand those points. They are important. However, we could be having these conversations throughout the day, “Lord, teach me how to enjoy the Bible. Teach me how to relate to this guy who is in the internship that bugs me; teach me how to relate to him.”

- G. Expression #6 **The Father corrects and disciplines His children:** The Father chastens His children to highlight blind spots that hinder them from their destiny. His correction is not rejection.

The Father corrects and disciplines, and He disciplines. He disciplines and disciplines His children. His correction is not rejection.

⁶For whom the LORD loves He chastens...⁷If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons...¹¹No chastening seems to be joyful...afterward it yields...righteousness... (Heb. 12:6-11)

¹²Whom Lord loves He corrects, just as father the son in whom he delights (Prov. 3:12)

⁶For whom the LORD loves He chastens...⁷If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons...⁸But if you are without chastening...then you are illegitimate and not sons...¹¹Now no chastening seems to be joyful...but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Heb. 12:6-11)

¹⁹As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. (Rev. 3:19)

- H. Expression #7 **The Father provides for and blesses His children:** The Father promises to provide for His children in His way and time.

²⁵...do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink...²⁶Look at the birds...for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. (Mt. 6:25-26)

Expression #7: He provides and blesses. Jesus talked about the Father and said, “Do not let fear dominate you!” He said, “Food and clothing.” I mean, we are in an hour of history where people are really nervous about food and clothing in the years and decades ahead, or whatever. Jesus said, “Do not let fear dominate you.”

When that fear rises up, it is normal to have the fear, but say what God says! “Lord, You said You would provide! You would help! You said the birds do not work for their food and You give them the food!”

Jesus said “Your heavenly Father, He provides, and He blesses His people!”

- I. Expression #8 **The Father protects and guides His children:** The Father promises to protect and guide His children from danger and into safety.

Expression #8: He guides and protects. Now, I do not do this enough. I do this a lot, but not enough though. But, regularly, I just drive from here to there, and I just whisper to the Lord, “Just protect me, Holy Spirit, by the blood of Jesus.” Or I go into a situation, and I say, “Just show me Your favor and guidance,” and He says, “If you will ask Me more, I will do more! I will guide you to go here and there.”

I have a number of examples where it just seemed like randomly I went here instead of there, and I missed a huge negative. And I thought, “I did not even know I was doing anything wise! I just randomly did it!”

And the Lord would whisper back and say something—not that I really heard this but—“Hey, you have been talking to Me, and you have asked Me, and I will! I will guide you, and I will protect you!” And there are plenty of verses. So talk to the Father about them.

- J. Expression #9 ***The Father rewards and honors His children***: Jesus emphasized that the Father will openly reward His children in His time and way (Mt. 6:4, 6, 18). Eternal rewards are God expressing how He feels about the way we loved Him, though it seems so small and weak to us.

⁴***“Your charitable deed...your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly...”***

⁶***“When you pray...your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly...”***

¹⁷***“When you fast...¹⁸your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” (Mt. 6:4, 6, 18)***

1. Some of the rewards are ***external***, as circumstances are changed by God’s power. Some are ***internal***, as our hearts encounter Him and are tenderized. Some are ***eternal***, affecting our destiny in the age to come.

⁶***...he who comes to God must believe...He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Heb. 11:6)***

2. Jesus taught more on eternal rewards than any other man in Scripture (Mt. 5:5, 12, 19; 6:4-6, 18-20; 10:41-42; 16:27; 18:4; 19:21, 28-30; 20:16, 27; 22:14; 23:11; 25:21-23; Mk. 9:41; 10:21, 42-43; Lk. 6:23, 35; 9:48; 12:21, 33; 14:11; 16:11; 18:14, 22; 19:17-19; 22:26-30; Jn. 12:26; Rev. 2:7, 10-11, 17, 26-28; 3:4-5, 9, 11-12, 18, 21; 11:18; 16:5; 19:7-8; 22:12).

Expression #9: He rewards and He honors. Jesus talked most about the Father rewarding the people. Somewhere in the body of Christ there is this really distorted view of eternal rewards that I have heard over the years where people say, “Well, I do not care about rewards!”

I say, “I think you do! I just do not think that you know enough about them to care, and so that is why you do not care about them.” Jesus knew more about the Father’s rewards, rewards in this age but mostly in the age to come. He knew more and taught more about rewards than anyone in the Bible because He knew more about them. And He said, in effect, “You really do want these!”

And the reason people put them down is because they think, “I do not want to be over a bunch of people and be their boss!”

I say, “That is not what rewards are. That is a secular view of rewards. Rewards are Jesus or the Father expressing how they feel about the way you loved Them in this age. The Father is so rich, He is so generous, and He is so kind. He says, “I want to show you how I feel about the way you loved Me. And you are going to want this. You are going to have garments, and you are going to wear your love for Me in the age to come!” Rewards really matter. Jesus mentioned the Father and rewards a number of times.

- K. Expression #10 ***The Father plans for and calls forth His children to their divine destiny***: The Father prepared the kingdom for His children. He calls forth the destiny of His children by helping them see themselves as He does. He does this through the Word and by speaking through others. Jesus called Peter, “a rock” (Mt. 16:18) and John, “a son of thunder” (Mk. 3:17).

³⁴***“Then the King will say...’Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Mt. 25:34)***

⁹***But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” (1 Cor. 2:9)***

Expression #10: the Father prepared the kingdom from the beginning of the world. The Father calls us forth, like Jesus called Peter, “You are the rock!” and then Peter denied Him before a little servant girl. You know He

told John and James, “You are sons of thunder!” and they had arrogance and pride in their life, but they were thundering in the love of God before it was over. He told Gideon when he was afraid, “You are a mighty man of valor!” He told David when he was a boy shepherd, “You are a man after God’s own heart!” God names us. He calls us forth. He plans things for us. Those are things that the Father does.

- L. The Father feels about you the same way that He feels about Jesus. This is the ultimate revelation of our worth. John 17:23 beckons us to become lifelong students of how the Father loves the Son and, thus, gain insight into how the Father loves us. The Spirit will teach us about God’s love. Pray, “Holy Spirit let me see and feel what You see and feel about the Father’s love for me.”

²³“...that the world may know that You [the Father]...loved them as You have loved Me.”
(Jn. 17:23)

1. The Father always loves us in the way that He loves Jesus because He only loves in fullness. He does not withhold His love when a sincere believer stumbles or struggles with sin.
2. The Lord always loves in fullness because He is always 100% true to who He is. Never for one moment is He less than 100% loving or 100% wise or righteous. He cannot ever be less than who He is; if He did, He would deny Himself—even if He was 1% deficient in one attribute. He will never diminish or grow in love because His love is infinite in measure and eternal in duration.

IV. BEHOLDING GOD’S LOVE BY TALKING TO GOD ABOUT IT

- A. We are to *behold* or be attentive to the quality of the Father’s love for us (1 Jn. 3:1).

¹**Behold what manner** [quality] of love the Father has bestowed on us... (1 Jn. 3:1)

I am going to take just two more minutes to look at Roman numeral four, even though I say this every time, but I cannot say this too many times: We have to behold the love of God. This is John, John the apostle, a few years later; he is writing this after he wrote John 14. He says, 1 John 3:1, “Behold, the quality of love the Father has”—when it says manner, put the word quality. When John says “Behold,” he is saying “Pay attention! Stay attentive! Stay engaged with the quality of love” like these ten things. However you could have twenty of these expressions. I have given you ten, and I just did most of them rapid fire. Behold these things. Stay engaged in them. Study them out. Talk to God about them.

- B. We “behold” or engage with the Father by speaking the truths about Him back to Him. Talking with God is the core activity of abiding in Christ. Bible study is to lead us into conversation with God by giving the “conversational material” for our prayer life. It is simply speaking the truths of the Word back to Him as we read it. (**For free notes on How to “Pray-Read” the Word**, see mikebickle.org)

²**Take words with you**, and return to the LORD. (Hos. 14:2)

How do we behold? How do we stay engaged with the Father on the manner or the quality of love that He has? Beloved, the simplest way—this is not the only way, but—this is the main way: by simply saying those things back to God! Put them in your mouth and into the conversation, and they will grow in your heart and mind. Get them in your mouth with God. In Hosea 4:14, Hosea says, “When you return to the Lord, bring words with you when you come to God.” When you say words to God, your mind and emotions get touched, ever so slightly, but

they do get touched, incrementally, but you are moving in that direction when you speak what God speaks. Speak it back to God.

- C. In Deuteronomy 30, Moses taught that the command to love and obey God was not *too mysterious* (too hard to understand), nor was not it *far off* (outside their ability), nor did they need to *ascend to heaven* (have a heavenly encounter), nor *go overseas* (to receive it at a revival center) to do it.

¹¹This commandment [30:6]...is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. ¹²It is not in heaven, that you should say, “Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us...?” ¹³Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, “Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us...?” ¹⁴The word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it. (Deut. 30:11-14)

I have looked at this passage so many times over the years, and I love it! It is Deuteronomy 30, and when you read it in its context—which is in verse 6 which I do not have written here but—that is when the Lord says, “And my people are going to love Me with all of their heart in that day, and their children will love Me too.” Then a few verses later in verse 11, Moses says “The commandment, it is not too mysterious!”

I hear from people all of the time, “I don’t know how to love God! I don’t understand it!” No! Actually it is quite simple! It is not hard to understand. You are complicating it, as you are imagining that there are twelve secret steps to loving God. No, it is quite simple. It is straight forward. It is challenging to do, but it is not confusing. It is not mysterious.

It is not far off. You do not have to get on the plane and fly to the revival center on the other end of the world and have the famous evangelist lay hands on you to give it to you. It is not far away. You do not have to go somewhere to get the grace of God to love and obey God. It is not in heaven, like, “Oh man, if I was like that prophet and could have a heavenly encounter!” No! it is not in heaven! No one has to have a heavenly encounter on a chariot and come back and lay hands on you so now you got it! No! It is not beyond the sea. It is not beyond the sea. And that is the one I am talking about that you do not have to get on a boat and go or a plane and go far away and get it from somewhere else.

He says in verse 14, “The ability to love and obey God is very near to you. It is in your mouth.” Say it to God and your heart will grow. It is that close to you; it is in your mouth! And there are a hundred verses that back this up, but I find that this is one of the most fundamental Bible truths that many people do not get around to: when God gives a promise, say, “Thank You, show me more!” When God gives a commandment, say, “Yes Lord, help me to do it!” and then just talk to Him a little bit more, pray in the Spirit a little bit, pray for 30-40 seconds or two to three minutes and move to the next verse. You just do that regularly and I am telling you that your mind and your heart will grow under the influence of the peace of God. God will give you supernatural ability to enter into these things. It is not far off. It is not out of your ability. It is not, “When I go through fifteen programs, finally I will get my heart connected.” Get these promises in your mouth and in your conversation with God and I tell you, your heart will line up, little by little. It is slow, at least my experience was slow, but it is real.

- D. There is a connection between what we say with our mouth and what our heart believes, or is moved by, with confidence. In Romans 10, Paul referred to what Moses said in Deuteronomy 30:14.

⁸The word is near you, in your mouth...that is, the word of faith...⁹that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart...you will be saved [from the penalty of sin].

¹⁰For with...the mouth confession is made unto salvation [freedom in this age]. (Rom. 10:8-10)

1. When we speak God's promises back to God, and they get into our conversation with the Lord, it releases the power of God a little bit on our heart. It is near us.
 2. Start talking to the Spirit about it—engaging in conversation with Him—you will experience small measures of insight and inspiration on your heart. Over the years it increases. But we must get His promises into our mouth in our conversation with God. You will find out that you do not need to cross the sea, or wait for a heavenly visitation.
- E. Our words are powerful in causing faith or fear to grow in us. If our words agree with God's Word, we release His power in our life. If our words agree with lies, we allow darkness to continue. Many have "faith" in the devil's words. The war of words determines who has dominion in our heart.

Amen and amen! Let's stand before the Lord.

Oh Jesus, we love Your leadership! And, Lord, we are alerted that You have been with us for so long, yet we still do not connect the dots about the Father's leadership, after all of these years. But, Lord, we are saying yes to You in this House, and with many across the earth we are saying, "Yes, Father, we trust Your leadership. We are saying Yes to You!"

You know these things that I shared are just so, so simple. Someone asked, "What are you sharing tonight?" I said, "It is really simple." There is just nothing confusing about it, but, you know, it is easy to lose sight of it. And so we just want to keep reminding ourselves to take some of these phrases and talk to the Lord and open it up and say "Lord, is this really true? Is this really how it works?" And I tell you that you will find that it really does.

Father, here we are before You. And, Holy Spirit, we ask You to just come and rest on us. Come and rest on us, Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit. I ask You to come and rest on us.

I take authority over lies. The biggest thing that the enemy hits us with is not even the temptation of lustful things whether sexual things, or alcohol or lust. There are all kinds of lusts, you know. There are like five or ten types of lusts. The most challenging thing I think is Satan's narrative about our life. And the Lord says, "Trust what I say about you!"

And so, Father, I am asking You to wash our hearts with the water of the Word. Come and wash us! Father, we love You. Father, You're just like Jesus! You think and feel and do the things He did in the gospels, and that is what You are really like. No matter what troublesome things get, we are in good hands! Father, I ask for the Spirit of grace to come and rest on us. Lord, we say yes! We want to believe You for these ten things in our life. Your leadership in our hearts and in our lives. We behold what quality of love we have in You! Thank You, and show us more, Lord. Come and wash our minds with the water of Your Word.