

Session 8 The Glory of the Father as Vinedresser

I. THE NEED FOR THE REVELATION OF THE FATHER

- A. A theological premise of the forerunner ministry is focused on the Spirit's emphasis on the end-time revelation of the Father. There is great need for understanding God the Father.
- ⁵Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. ⁶And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse. Mal 4:5-6***
- B. One of Jesus' primary aims in Jn. 13-17 is to equip His disciples to grow in the knowledge of the Father by confidently engaging with as well as receiving His Person and leadership. Growing in our understanding of the glory of the Father is essential to our faith. Jesus' revelation of the Father is His primary strategy to equip the church in the 1st commandment.
- ²⁶And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them. Jn 17:26***
- C. The revelation of the Father was the primary focus of Satan's assault against Jesus in the wilderness when three times He questioned His identity. The revelation of the Father is supreme. It was part of the hidden mystery. God was known in the Old Testament as King, Judge, Bridegroom, Master, Warrior, Provider, Healer, etc. In the law, the prophets, and the Psalms we can see God's fatherly attributes, however, the revelation of God as Father was not known until the Son, Jesus, came and made Him known to Israel.
- ¹God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ²has in these last days spoken to us by His Son... Heb 1:1-2***
- ²¹"I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden ... and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. ²² All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." Lk 10:21-22***
- D. Understanding God as father is not merely therapeutic, rather, it is all-encompassing and transcendent. The heart of the Father is greater than filling the vacuums created by the failure of our natural fathers. The limited therapeutic perspective of the Father heart of God can leave those with great natural fathers with greater difficulty in recognizing their need for the revelation of the father. We need to resist sentimentalizing our understanding of the Father.
- ¹³If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him! Lk 11:13***
- E. The understanding of the Father was climatic in the mind of Paul the apostle and foremost on Jesus' mind both in His relationship with God and His messianic mission.
- ¹"Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You." Jn 17:1***

II. THE FATHER, THE GARDENER

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.” Jn 15:1

- A. In John 15:1, Jesus declares both His identity and His position under the Father’s leadership. The Father as the Vinedresser determined the plan that the Son of God, as the vine, would be the divine life source of the redeemed. Under the Father’s leadership, only through coming under Jesus’ leadership can redeemed humans be recipients and vessels of life flow to others.
- B. The Father as the vinedresser is the only description of the Father in Jn. 13-17. We are invited to look into this description of Him and receive increased insight into the knowledge of God. Gardeners work in close proximity with seeds, soil and vegetation. The Gardener evokes the image of one who works with His hands in the dirt, thus pointing to the humility of the Father.
- C. Some characteristics of a gardener (<https://theheartygarden.com/gardening-personality-traits/>): 1) Patience 2) Determination 3) Hope 4) Kindness 5) Wisdom and understanding.
³A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. ⁴He will not fail nor be discouraged ... Is 42:3-4
- D. Good gardeners have thorough knowledge of the vegetation and soil they work with and cultivate. The Father is deeply acquainted with our emotional frame, ways and body.
³You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. Ps 139:3
¹⁴For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. Ps 103:14
⁷But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. Lk 12:7
- E. The divine Gardener’s goal, through the process of pruning and taking away, is to produce the love of God in and through the people of God to those around us. The Gardener seeks to cultivate mature followers who are fully committed to His leadership. This brings Him glory.
²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Jn 15:2
⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. Jn 15:8
- F. The Father through the gardening process leads us towards the fullness of joy that ultimately comes from responding to His leadership through loving obedience of His commandment.
¹⁰If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. ¹²This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Jn 15:10-12

III. JESUS THE VINEYARD: HOPE FOR ISRAEL AND HOPE FOR THE WORLD

²In that day— “Sing about a fruitful vineyard: ³I, the Lord, watch over it; I water it continually. I guard it day and night so that no one may harm it. ⁴I am not angry. If only there were briars and thorns confronting me! I would march against them in battle; I would set them all on fire. ⁵Or else let them come to me for refuge; let them make peace with me, yes, let them make peace with me.” ⁶In days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will bud and blossom and fill all the world with fruit. Isa 27:2-6

- A. Jesus declares Himself as the true Vineyard. This truth has many layers. It is a truth that is filled with hope and a promise of grace to come into the fullness of what the Father has planned. It is the Father’s desire to fill the world with the full expression of His power, personality and purpose. He spoke to Abraham of His plan to bless all the nations of the earth.
- B. Vineyards were commonplace in the ancient world. The Lord’s mention of Israel being a vineyard speaks of His aim to see her provided for, prospering as well being a society that is filled with great joy. This aim goes beyond Israel. It extends to the nations of the earth as well.

¹¹“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.” Jn 15:11

³I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Gen 12:3

⁶In days to come Jacob will take root, Israel will bud and blossom and fill all the world with fruit. Isa 27:6

- C. John 15 is properly understood through the lens of our individual discipleship. I believe this to be its primary application. However, the passage likely has eschatological applications as well. Jesus declares Himself as the True Vine in contrast to the vineyard called Israel.

¹Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard On a very fruitful hill. Is 5:1

⁶“Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Like the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give up the inhabitants of Jerusalem; ⁷and I will set My face against them.’” Eze 15:6-7

- D. In Isaiah 1-5 the prophet gives a summary that gives an overview of the major covenantal themes, God’s commitment and discipline of His people and the eschatological purpose of Israel. In Isaiah 5 as well as Ezekiel 15, Israel is portrayed as a vineyard that is under divine judgment unable to respond to the God of Israel in order to come into her covenant promises.
- E. When Jesus declared that He was the True vine, He is pointing back to the passages where Israel is prophetically called the unfaithful vineyard. Jesus is the true Israel through whom the Jewish people will inherit full covenantal promises. Israel will abide in Jesus the True vine.

⁷For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice... Is 5:7