

God our Father May 24-25, 2008

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! ... 1 John 3:1 NIV

Introduction: In Old Testament times God chose the Israelites to be the people of God. With the coming of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, the church became the people of God. The church, however, is more than just the people of God; it is the family of God. The Bible explains how those in the family of God are related to one another, and how they should relate to one another. Our relationship to one another as Christians begins with having God as our spiritual Father.

1. God as Father is easily overlooked
 - a. We are accustomed to the term
 - b. Only 14 times in the Old Testament is God called Father or likened to a father
 - c. God as Father is presumed by Jesus and the New Testament writers
 - d. The surprise for John is not that God is our Father but that we are his children
2. The Father's love is easily overlooked
 - a. John wants us to stop and see how much God loves us
 - b. The verse begins with the imperative *ἴδετε* (see, behold) which is not translated in the NIV
3. The Father has lavished his love
 - a. He created us
 - i. *Is [the Lord] not your Father, your Creator, who made you and formed you? (Deut 32:6)*
 - ii. *Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? (Mal 2:10)*
 - b. He provides for us (Gen 22:14, Ps 111:5, 9, Matt 7:11)
 - c. He protects and comforts us (Prov 2:8, 2 Th 3:3)
 - i. *... Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name... (Jn 17:11)*
 - ii. *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort (2 Cor 1:3)*
 - d. He sent Jesus (Jn 3:16, 1 John 4:9-10)
 - i. *We have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. (1 Jn 4:14)*
 - e. He allows us to be his children
 - i. *... to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. (Jn 1:12-13)*
 - ii. *You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:26)*
4. Not everyone is in the family of God
 - a. While God created everything and everyone, not everyone honors him and his son Jesus
 - b. John makes it clear that only Christians are in the family of God
5. Proud of the father
 - a. We are God's children and we have the privilege of relating to him
 - b. We should take pride in our status as the Father's children

Conclusion: Those who have placed faith in Christ have been adopted into the family of God. God as Father of our spiritual family lavishes his love, empowering the family members to more fully love the Father, other family members, and those outside the family.