

The Way of the Lord

10. Your Relationship With Your Father (Part 1)

In this segment we're going to focus on THE most important relationship any person on earth can have. It's the spiritual intimacy our Father in heaven longs to have with you. As you've seen previously in our Restoration Diagram, all other relationships you have FLOW out of the quality of your relationship with your Father and His Son, Jesus.

God's Word makes clear that we have a HOLY and LOVING heavenly Father Who created everything there is. Only humanity is made in His image, with the capacity to know, to love and to serve our God! As we speak about Him, try to perceive what we discuss from HIS perspective. That's how you define WISDOM: seeing all of life, and especially yourself, through HIS eyes.

Make sure in your relationship with your heavenly Father that you understand Him as He has revealed HIMSELF in the Scriptures. It's all too easy to create our OWN idea of what God should be like — an idea that has NOTHING TO DO with how He has made HIMSELF known.

It's NOT that you sought Him to be your Father, as much as HE sought YOU to be His child! He initiated this wonderful, love-based relationship that's made possible through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus.

- "This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1John 4:10).
- "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!" (1John 3:1).

If you're our Father's child, it's because HE sought you first. That's the kind of love that flows out of His character, the love He wants YOU to personally experience. Alongside His love is His holiness. He NEVER sets aside His holiness in His relationship as your Father.

We know that Adam and Eve shattered the loving fellowship they'd enjoyed with Father God when they chose to sin against Him. Because of their defilement, they could no longer be in His holy presence. But out of His amazing love, our Father brought into being His eternal purpose so that sinful humans could once more become His children.

Because of God's holiness and justice, a PRICE had to be paid for the sins of mankind. That price was a death penalty, because the wages of sin is death. This is what the LOVE of Jesus accomplished on the cross for us. Because He is both God and man, He alone is the only One Who could be the sinless sacrifice. By His death Jesus paid for the sins of mankind once and for all: "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world" (1John 2:2). And by His resurrection, we who trust that His death has paid for our sins can also be assured that we will rise again to be with Him forever.

EVERYTHING our Father desires in His relationship with you as His child is made possible by the Spirit of Jesus within you. The Spirit's dwelling within us is the

Source of our intimacy with our Father: “Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father’” (Galatians 4:6). That Aramaic word, “Abba” means “Daddy.” How intimate a relationship is that?!!

Let’s look at some key foundational elements of your relationship with your heavenly Father. How DO you RELATE to a Father Who is God, the Creator of all that is? We’re talking about a relationship between you and your unseen, yet very real Father.

Let’s define the word “relationship” so you can clearly understand our Father’s loving plan for you with Him. A relationship is the WAY in which people are connected, and how they behave toward each other. Let me repeat this. A relationship is the way in which people are connected, and how they behave toward each other. The deeper you’re committed to someone, the stronger and more personal your relationship is with that person. And, the DEPTH of your commitment will determine how you treat each other.

With this understanding of relationship, let’s take a look at your relationship with our Father from HIS viewpoint. Father is seeking an intimacy with you that far surpasses just believing that He exists. Our Father wants your *emunah*, your trust-filled faith! *Emunah* is a Hebrew word that’s charged with emotion. It reflects your heartfelt confidence and unwavering trust in your Father as His loving and grateful child.

Intertwined with your trust in our Father is your LOVE for Him. The kind of love He calls for comes from His Spirit within us and pretty much encompasses all our life! “LOVE the LORD your God with ALL your heart and with ALL your soul and with ALL your strength” (Deuteronomy 6:5).

The Hebrew word for love that’s used here is *ahav*. *Ahav* means that you’re filled with desire and delight and passion for the One you love. You long to be in His presence. That kind of devoted love is so important to our Father that the word *ahav* appears 250 times in the Older Testament. The Hebrew letters that make up *ahav* mean “a window into the Father’s heart.” If you yearn to love Him the way He desires, He reveals His very HEART to you.

In Peter’s first letter he writes, “To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder.” As an older man I want to take a moment to make an appeal to you older men, and to ALL you men who want to lead your family in the way of the Lord. Let me ask you: Has our Father shown you the WINDOW into His loving heart? That’s something you can experience daily, IF you sincerely want that kind of relationship with Him.

Society today is pretty cold-hearted and self-absorbed. Your family needs more than ever to see your Father’s love reflected through YOU. But instead, you may be hurting your family because you’re more beset by FEAR than governed and guided by the love of our Father. You fear confronting your children with their sin, so your family is filled with tension and discord. You fear having to ask your children for forgiveness for your past failure for not leading them into the love and trust our Father calls you to.

WHY does our Father want you and your whole family to experience the window of love into His heart? Because of this: “There is NO FEAR in love. But perfect

LOVE drives out fear” (1John 4:18).

I want to affirm what Mike has just shared. You men, especially you older men, can be THE BEST source for those around you to experience the love of our heavenly Father. Or, you can be the greatest hindrance. There IS no middle ground.

Our earlier segments in this series laid a foundation. In order for you to experience our Father’s love, you and your family ALL need to be free of demonic strongholds. And, make sure you’ve replaced your toxic memories with healthy ones through the power of Jesus.

Everything we’ve said about TRUST and LOVE in this segment is summed up in John 3:16: “For God so LOVED the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever TRUSTS in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John3:16). You need to first experience that love, and THEN share it with those around you. That’s the WAY our Lord would have you live in Him.

For Further Study:

- The Gospel of the Covenant Is the Pilgrimage to Salvation
- Lifebyte 40. Do You Confront For Jesus? Or, Placate For Satan?

Each is a free download from our website: Restorationministries.org