



“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.” (Matt 6:9)

In what sense is God our Father?

First, by the benefits of our Lord and Savior: If we belong to that blessed Elect in Christ, God is our Father in a similar manner in which He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. *“14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”* (John 1:14) Of course that similarity applies with one great exception: we are the sons and daughters of God by adoption, whereby our Lord Jesus Christ is the Son by natural descent. He is of the very same substance with the Father. Claiming Christ as our dearest brother, we may claim His Father, as well, as our own. *“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.”* (Heb 2:11-13) Also, *“3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:”* (Eph 1:3-4)

Secondly, God is the Father of Adam and of all his natural offspring with respect to Creation and Ownership. The legal genealogy of Joseph is given in Luke 3: *“38 Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.”* (Luke 3:38) The spiritual fatherhood of God to Adam (and mankind) ended at the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Those who are the legitimate spiritual children of God today are those who are called and chosen in Christ. Being ‘IN’ Christ, we have become ONE ‘WITH’ Christ, and with the Father: *“One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”* (Eph 4:6) Christ is our wholesome Tree of Life.

Thirdly, He is the Father of Mercies which we have received from His abundant storehouse. *“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.”* (2 Cor 1:3)

Fourthly, God is the Father of all righteous men and women in respect of adoption and regeneration wrought in them by the power of His grace. *“15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry,*

Abba, Father.” (Romans 8:15) “6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Eph 4:5-6)

Now we come to, not only the entitlement of our claim on God as our Father, but the responsibility owed to make the claim valid. The sons and daughters of one father usually bear a strong resemblance to that father – not only in appearance, but in conduct and character. The latter is due to being raised under that father’s tutelage and observing his behavior day-to-day. The sons and daughters of God are no different. We must bear a strong resemblance to the One in whose image we are made – not just in physical attributes, but in spiritual ones as well. We are able to think like our Father because we have surrendered our incorrigible wills for His, and we remain close by His side to observe Him all the day along. Since we are the sons and daughters of the King of Kings, we must deport ourselves as princes and princesses in order to avoid bringing shame or disgrace upon His Holy Name.

Even the term, ABBA, evokes a curious affection. It is pronounced the same way whether read forward or backward. This indicates to me that the love of the Father must be a two-way channel. Our love, though merely an echo of His, must flow up-current to His. The word for Father in Romans 8:15 (see also Mark 14:36 & Gal 4:6) is Abba. It only appears in three places, as mentioned above, in Scripture. It is a combination of the Hebrew word ‘Ab’ meaning to will or acquiesce, and the Greek word for father, the ending ‘ba’, or ‘bar’, which seems to suggest that God is the Father of both Gentiles and Jews – no division of racial claims – consistent with the Father’s Will.

From ancient days, the father has been the one who provides food, lodging, and protection for the family. Our Father in Heaven is no different. He provides us with our needs, but not necessarily our wants. Like the fathers of old, God is willing to die for the salvation of His sons and daughters – and God has done just that in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Lord’s Prayer of Matthew 6:9-13, we not only have the ‘model’ for prayer, but also the very ‘form’ our prayers should take. We must remind ourselves that this is not only an example of a prayer, but is a genuine prayer itself. We are told by some that we must not repeat a FORM prayer since it is “written down”. May I inquire whenever it may be wrong to pray the very words of Holy Scripture? This prayer summarizes every point essential to sincere prayer, and leaves off the trifling begging for ‘things.’ It omits the will of the suppliant in favor of the sole will of God to be done. Christ would not have given us a prayer that was vainly uttered.

The Lord’s Prayer begins with “OUR Father” not “MY Father”. This indicates that the prayer is a communal prayer to be repeated by all worshippers to the same end – His Will be done. The only thing asked for in this prayer is for our daily bread. That will always be sufficient to the petitioner. If God gives greater measure, that will be His business. Though a communal prayer, the Lord’s Prayer also serves as a personal prayer. I have uttered it many times when under threat or danger, and it has availed the purpose.

The fact that we refer, in worship, to God as “Our Father” means that we are collectively One Body in Christ (the Church). We must be agreed on the points of the Gospel and upon the full Fatherhood of God to us. If we are One in Christ and, therefore, One in God the Father, how can we be divided by a thousand different preferences about the work, décor, and table of the Church? Christ is One with the Father. That means there is no difference in operation, purpose, or intent between the two and the Holy Ghost. If we are One with Christ, and therefore One with each other, why do we have such dissension and division in churches?

Reader, you are my brother or sister because we have the same Father. We may be many, but we are One Family in God. We are, in a perfect sense, blood related because we are joined in love by the sacrificial and redeeming blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. I consider a fellow believer of far greater blood relations than a brother or sister of the world who has not placed his/her trust in my Lord. Christ gave us a sound example of this principle when His mother, Mary, and His brethren came to see Him on a matter unrelated to His preaching: *“19 Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press. 20 And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. 21 And he answered and said unto them, **My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.**”* (Luke 8:19-21) It seems that the brothers of Jesus, and even His mother, Mary, did not come to listen to His wonderful teaching, and may have doubted much of what He taught until AFTER the resurrection.

Well, Friends, we live in a time in which it is very easy to have faith (AFTER the resurrection). The Faith of Abraham (Before the Advent of Christ) looked forward to the coming Redeemer with a measure of faith that far exceeds our own. Can we who profess faith not agree on the historical fact of our Lords death, burial and resurrection and conduct ourselves accordingly as sons and daughters of our Father God?