

## Chapter 6

### Embracing the Father's Love

#### From Slavery/Orphans to Sonship

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#### The Religion of Fear – God is misunderstood

**During your growing up years, when you failed, messed up, made a mistake, or broke something, what did the Father's presence represent to you?**

Did he have a harsh, angry, stern faced ready to punish you with a beating?

Or was he a parent who was kind, loving and understanding, comforting you, bringing joy back to your heart. You couldn't wait to spend time with him, and he couldn't wait to spend time with you.

Christians cringe with fear of an angry God, waiting to get us, to punish us. Instead of envisioning like Luke 15: the father running toward us with arms wide open embracing us, kissing us again and again, welcoming us back into His Presence.

- **The Religion of Fear: Deception, Lie, wrong pictures (ideas) of God:**
  - Jesus: kind, compassionate, died on the cross to appease an angry God (Wrath to punish)
  - Christ as the high Priest, ever lives to make intercession, pleading with His Father to spare us the punishment we deserve.
  - Have a deep and meaningful relationship with Jesus. But at a loss with Father God.
  - No intimacy when there is Fear.
  - Like Adam, when we feel shame, we run and hide behind anything we feel safe: e.g. addiction, food, alcohol, porno, instead of running to God for forgiveness and comfort.
  - For others: Hyper religious activities to bring a sense of penance and false relief and security.
  - What pattern do you follow?

**Hiding or hyper-religious activities?**

☐ ***God is not Your father:***

- How our earthly parents treated us affect our conception and attitude toward God.
- See "Beliefs and Attitudes as a result of ungodly parenting"
- Examples:

If parents rejected you, your attitude toward God: "I am worthless. God doesn't want me or like me."

If parents are abusive - "God is not safe; He is cruel, I can't trust Him"

If parents are neglectful – “God doesn't care about me”

If parents are harsh – “God punishes me, everything is my fault”

If parents are distant – “God isn't interested in me”

If parent abandoned you – “I can't trust God, He will hurt me and let me down also.”

### **YOU NEED A NEW GOD! YOU NEED A NEW IMAGE OF GOD!!**

- What is your attitude when you petition Him for something?  
    Begging?      Pleading?

#### **☐ *Jesus Came to Show Us His Father:***

- **John 14:8-10**

*Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.”*

*Jesus 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, so now can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”*

- **John 1:18; 8:14**

*No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him... I know where I came from and where I am going*

- **John 1:3**

*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

- **John 5:19-20**

*Truly, Truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing... For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.*

☐ **What is God really like?**

**God is Love**

- **I John 4:16**           *... God is love...*
- **I Corinthians 13:4-8**  
*Father is patient, Father is kind... Father does not take into account a wrong suffered...  
Father bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Father  
never fails.*
- *In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request the Father  
on your behalf; for the Father Himself love you....*
- *I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore I have drawn you to myself with loving  
kindness (i.e. you have never not been loved by Him) **(Jeremiah 31:3)***
- He loves you so much that He gave His only Son to die for you so you might know His  
love. **(John 3:16)**
- He did not come to judge nor to condemn you but to save you.  
**John 3:17-18**  
*For God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world  
should be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged.*
- He loves you just as much as He loves His Son, Jesus.  
**John 17:23**  
*..... and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and **have loved them as You  
have loved Me.***
- Even when you sinned, He loves you and asks you to sit beside Him with Christ.  
**Ephesians 2:4-6**  
*Instead, immense in mercy and with an incredible love, he embraced us. He took our sin-  
dead lives and made us alive in Christ..... Then he picked us up and set us down in highest  
heaven in company with Jesus, our Messiah.*

- Even when you are wounded, He sees you as beautiful and takes pleasure in you.

**Psalm 149:4**

*For the Lord takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation and adorn the wretched with victory.*

- His thoughts toward you are always good and filled with hope for you.

□ **Jeremiah 29:11**

*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*

- He thinks of you many, many times a day.

**Psalm 139:17-18**(New International Reader's Version)

*God, your thoughts about me are priceless.*

*No one can possibly add them all up.*

*If I could count them, they would be more than the grains of sand.*

*If I were to fall asleep counting and then wake up, you would still be there with me.*

- He is so pleased with your being His child that He will never leave you. He wants to meet all your needs.

**Luke 15:31**, *And the father said to him, Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.*

- He likes being with you so much that He made His Home with you. *(John 14:23) 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.*
- He is not ashamed to be your Father.

**Hebrews 11:16**

*Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*

- He has redeemed you and forgiven all your sin.

**Colossians 1:13-14**

*For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.*

- You have been adopted and placed in His Presence.

Ephesians 1:5

*Long, long ago he decided to adopt us into his family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure he took in planning this!) He wanted us to enter into the celebration of his lavish gift-giving by the hand of his beloved Son.*

- He is always for you, never against you.

Romans 8:31-32

*What then shall we say to all this? If God is for us, who can be [successful] against us? He who did not spare [even] His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?*

❑ **The Prodigal Father (Luke 15)**

1. Jesus is showing both the Pharisees (the religious, self righteous church leaders) and the sinners what is God like: gracious, forgiving, loving, generous, humble, extravagant, merciful, kind, tender hearted, forgetting our faults, happy, fun loving, loves to celebrate to have happy parties. (he is not a joy killer)
2. In the first two parables, both the shepherd and the woman were **seeking** out the lost **until**.....
3. **The 3<sup>rd</sup> parable:**

**The Father toward the younger son:**

- Was not angry when the younger son asked for inheritance before he dies.
- Already forgiven him
- Did not chew him up but let him go, taking all the money with him.

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- Probably heart broken everyday worried for him
- Probably standing outside his house waiting for the younger son to come everyday.
- When he saw someone coming from afar, he knew that was his long lost son.
- His heart was filled with compassion and tenderness
- He did not wait for his son to walk up to him, but he ran to his son.
- He was so happy that he did not care what his son had done, he did not care that his younger son should repent and ask for forgiveness first then he embrace the son and welcome him home.
- No, he ran to him first with wide open arms and kissed his son again and again.
- When his son was asking for forgiveness, he couldn't wait, he told his servant, hurry, hurry, put the best robe on him (cover his shame and defilement); the ring on his finger (his sonship, inheritance) and the sandal on his feet. (to honor his son, to restore his position as son, inheritance) kill **that** wheat-fatted calf.(that one special fatted calf)
- Let us eat, drink and celebrate, be merry. (restore the fellowship)

***A Picture of Total restoration as in Isaiah 61:3,7  
(That is the Father's Heart and thought for you)***

- **Bestow on them a crown of beauty**  
Instead of ashes,
- **The oil of gladness**  
Instead of mourning,
- **And a garment of praise**  
Instead of despair.
- **My people will have double honor**  
instead of shame.
- **They will rejoice in their inheritance**  
Instead of confusion
- **And so they will inherit a double portion in their land  
And everlasting joy will be theirs.**

The Father has been waiting with open arms, has long forgiven the son, ready to restore him of his sonship-intimacy with the Father, which he forfeited, his inheritance, his ministry.

But the son must leave the Far Country, leave the pig-pen and go back to his Father in order to be restored.

What is your pig pen?

Where is your Far Country?

(If we were the parents, especially Chinese parents, we probably will react like this:)

Do you have the face to come back to see me, you are a shame to me in our whole village.

You deserve it. You disobeyed God' law, this is what you get!



God is punishing you for dishonoring your parents. I knew it, I knew it! I knew you would turn out like this! Where is all the money you took? You are dirty and you stink. (pinching my nose; calling the servant,) "Take him aside, scrub him down with Lysol, before I would see his face." Or, simply we would have disowned him.

**The Father toward the older son:**

- The older son did not want to go in to join the party
- The father went to him (lower his position),
- Pleading with him even though the older son spoke to him in accusation and disrespect.
- "Son, (lit. child, a tender word) you are always with me, and everything I have is yours."

**The younger son, (the Prodigal): Slave to Sin (Rebellion)**

Rebellious, dishonoring, selfish, little love for God, little fear of God.

Slave to sin, left the father's house, wandering, alienated, lonely, no feeling of belonging (outside the family), shame, guilt, bondage, even though a son but in misery and poverty, feeling unworthy.

**The Older son: Slave to Law (Religious Spirit)**

Hard heart, cruel, self righteous, judgmental, disrespect, dishonoring, jealous,

Comparison, slave to law, hard working, faithful but not out of love but out of duty, joyless. stop

**Both are orphans:**

The younger son left the father's house.

The older one lives in the house physically but the heart is far from the father.

**Both are slaves:**

The younger son was a slave to Sin;

The older son was a slave to Law

**❑ Isaiah 30**

**The Israelites – running on horses to Egypt, to Pharaoh.**

**God's crying and pleading – vs 15 (Amp)**

“In returning (to me) and rest (in me), you shall be saved.

In quietness and confidence shall be your strength. But you would not.”

**❑ Ask the Lord:**

- **“What has been my Pharaoh? My Egypt?”**
- **“What cover I have run to protect myself?”**
- **“What strength have I been seeking?”**
- **“Why am I running away?”**

**❑ God is longingly waiting to give you grace – v18 (Amp)**

*“And therefore the Lord [earnestly] waits [expecting, looking, and longing] to be gracious to you; and therefore He lifts Himself up, that He may have mercy on you and show loving-kindness to you. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed (happy, fortunate, to be envied) are all those who [earnestly] wait for Him, who expect and look and long for Him [for His victory, His favor, His love, His peace, His joy, and His matchless, unbroken companionship]!”*

**When did *You* cease to be the son to your father and became an Orphan, a Slave?  
The day when you close your heart to your earthly father because he has wounded  
you. (a wall of self-protection)**

**☐ The Thinking, Attitude and Behavior of Orphans:**

- You decided that no one is going to hurt you anymore.
- You built up a wall around you to protect yourself. You have just stopped loving others and stopped others to love you. (But to give love and to receive love is your destiny, which is the highest calling of your life)
- You became independent, self-reliant, isolating yourself.
- You became a slave/servant
- You see God as task master
- You are legalistic
- You strive to perform to succeed.
- You often compare yourself with others.
- You are competitive
- You are jealous and envious of others who are in the same line of your work.
- Everything to you is "I have to"
- You subconsciously seek the praise of men
- You feel insecure and threatened when others doing a better job. You are afraid to be replaced.
- You are critical of others.
- You can not rejoice with others when they succeed.

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- You can't stand it when others are acknowledged but not you.
- You are motivated by a need for personal achievement.
- You are a perfectionist.
- You have no peace, restless.
- Burdens, anxieties
- You must be holy, disciplined
- Accusation and exposure
- Bondage
- Distant
- Seek counterfeit affection – addictions, compulsions, busyness, escapism, Hyper religious activities
- Expressions of love to others are guarded and conditional

### **The Pains and Cry of an Orphan**

***The orphan spirit cannot be cast out!***

***It can only be displaced by the Father's Love***

#### **Which one are you?**

The older son with a religious spirit?

The Rebellious, the restless, the wandering, far away from his father?

The Orphan, abandoned, fatherless?

#### **Some of us have the mixture of all three.**

### **There is the third Son – The True Son**

The Lord Jesus: His example of His relationship between Him and the Father.

❑ **Being A True Son:**

- **Image of God:** Seeing God as loving Father
- **Position:** Being His son/daughter
- **Dependency:** Interdependent and submissive – out of a willing and loving heart.
- **Theology:** Law of love.
- **Security:** Rest and Peace.
- **Need for approval:** Rest in Father's acceptance and being justified by grace.
- **Motive for Service:** Love precedes service – motivated by deep gratitude for being loved and accepted unconditionally by the Father.
- **Motive behind Spiritual Discipline:** Pleasure and Delight
- **Motive for purity:** “Want to” be holy; do not want anything to hinder intimate relationship.
- **Image of yourself:** Fully loved and accepted as you are.

❑ ***It's time to come home!!!***

But the Father is waiting for our hearts to turn to Him and come home to Him and be His Sons.

John 14:18, “I will **not leave you as orphans**, I will come to you”.

John 14: 16, 17, “ He will send you another Helper ( [paracletes] Advocate, Comforter, Counselor, Intercessor, Strengthener, Stand-by.) ... who will lives with you constantly and will **be in you**”

In Luke 15, Jesus describes the Father's heart, He is **seeking** you out **until** He finds you.

He is longing and waiting for you, the homeless, the orphan, the prodigal to come home to him.

***Where are you? What is your Pigpen? Leave your pigpen!***

His arms are opened wide to welcome you

To kiss you again and again

To put the robe of honor on you

To put rings on your finger.

To put sandals on your feet

He wants to kill that special fatted calf waiting just for this day.

He wants to call everyone to come, to have the biggest party,

to eat, to drink, to dance and to be merry,

To laugh, to have a great time, to celebrate your home coming.

Come home, my son, my daughter, just as you are.

Leave your "pig pen", leave your "far country"

Come, if you are the older son, if you are the fatherless orphan child

Who has never enjoyed the Father's Love, His tender embrace.

Never enjoyed all the Father has for you:

the Peace,

the Joy part,

the Fun part,

the Celebration part,

the "free as a bird" part

the Dancing part

the Abandonment part.

The overwhelming love...

**The Father is pleading with you:**

*"In returning to me and rest you shall be saved.*

*In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." (Isaiah 30:15)*

*I, your Father, [earnestly] waits [expecting, looking, and longing] to be gracious to you; and therefore I lift Myself up, that I may have mercy on you and show loving-kindness to you. Because I am a God of justice and Love. Blessed (happy, fortunate, to be envied) are you when you wait for me in that confident, trusting rest in Me – Your Home, sweet home, expectantly looking and longing for Me [for My victory, My favor, My love, My peace, My joy, and My matchless, unbroken companionship]!"*

"Son, come, all I have is yours.

I have been always with you.

But you have chosen duty, ministry, hard work.

You have built up that wall.

You have lived as orphans, as if you don't have a loving father.

Son, will you break down that wall?

Come out of that wall of Self-protection,

Come out of that wall of hiding

Come home to me! I have been waiting!

Come home!

I want to lavish my love upon you.

I want to kiss you again and again and hold you tight in my arms.

All the angels of heaven have been waiting for this moment.

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We, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, want to celebrate your home coming.

We have prepared a feast just for you.

We want to celebrate, We want to dance and sing over you with our unquenchable love....

- ❖ Bucket down to Well/belly
- ❖ Yield/Surrender to the Christ within
- ❖ Receive His Love and Forgiveness
- ❖ Ask Jesus to take you to the Father's Hand before He released you to your mother's womb.
- ❖ In the Father's Hand:
  - Your Identity: Ask Him to show you who you are (your identity) and what do you look like in His eyes.
  - What is your purpose and calling to be sent to earth
  - Stay there and enjoy His love