

CPC School of Discipleship
 Fall 2020
 Communion with God, part 2

Communion with God the Father.... in LOVE

From Last Week: "Consider how greatly God has honored us! Human wisdom sees such an infinite disparity between God and man that it concludes there can be no communion between them. But we have in Christ the way into God's presence without fear.
 "Our communion with God lies in his giving himself to us and our giving ourselves and all that he requires to him.
 "May God give you such a taste of his sweetness and excellence in this communion as to be stirred up to a greater longing for that eternal enjoyment of him in eternal glory" - John Owen (1616-1683), *Communion with God*, 2-3.

Question: "You who are in Christ, does God the Father love you when you are sinning?" *This should be a simple question!*

Thesis: "The chief way by which the saints have communion with the Father is love - free, undeserved, eternal love. This love the Father pours on the saints. Saints are to see God as full of love to them. They are to receive him as the One who loves them, and are to be full of praise and thanksgiving to God for his love. They are to show gratitude for his love living a life which pleases him. This is the great truth of the gospel. Commonly, the Father, the first person in the Trinity, is seen as only full of wrath and anger against sin. Sinful men can have no other thoughts of God (Rom 1.18; Isa. 33.13, 14; Hab. 1.13; Ps. 5.4-6; Eph. 2.3). But in the gospel, God is now revealed especially as love, as full of love to us. To bring home to us this great truth is the special work of the gospel (Titus 3.4)" (12).

Foundation

- Does God love us because Christ died? OR Did Christ die because God loves us?
- "It is true that we do not come directly to the Father by faith. We can come only to him by the Son. . . . The light of the sun comes to us by its beams. By its beams we see the sun, and by its beams the sun touches us. Jesus Christ is the beam of his Father's love and through him the Father's love reaches down and touches us" (16).

How God's love for us CONTRASTS with our love to God

- **Sovereign and free** VS. our love, which we are bound to give
 - "There is nothing in the sinner that could arouse love in God. Yet it is as sinners that God loves us. Not only when we had done no good, but when we were polluted in our own blood (Ezek. 16.6)" (23).
- **Constant and unchangeable** VS.... well, obvi!
 - BUT, it appears changeable "in its communication to us"
 - "*Objection.* But you will say, 'This comes near to blasphemy! You are saying that God loves his people in their sinning as well as in their strictest obedience. If this is so, who will bother to serve him or seek to please him?' *Answer.* The love of God in itself is the eternal purpose and act of God's will. This is no more changeable than God himself. If it were, nobody could be saved. But God's love does not change and *therefore we are not consumed in his wrath.* Does **God then love his people while they are sinning? Yes!** he loves his people but he does not love their sinning. Doesn't God's love change towards them? Not the purpose of his will to love them, but the working out of his gracious acts and disciplines towards them is changed. He rebukes them, disciplines them, hides his face from them, smites them, fills them with a sense of his indignation, but **woe to us if he should change his love, or take away his kindness from us!** Those very things which seem to suggest that his love to us changes in fact come to us from his love to us" (25).

"Good, Good Father"

I've heard a thousand stories of what they think
you're like

But I've heard the tender whispers of love in the
dead of night

And you tell me that you're pleased

And that I'm never alone

(Chorus) You're a good good Father

It's who you are, it's who you are, it's who you are

And I'm loved by you

It's who I am, it's who I am, it's who I am

I've seen many searching for answers far and wide

But I know we're all searching

For answers only you provide

'Cause you know just what we need

Before we say a word

Because you are perfect in all of your ways

You are perfect in all of your ways

You are perfect in all of your ways to us (repeat)

Oh, it's love so undeniable

I, I can hardly speak

Peace so unexplainable

I, I can hardly think

As you call me deeper still (x2)

Into love, love, love

A Proper Response: Abiding, Resting and Loving

- “Many dark and disturbing thoughts arise to hinder our walk with God. Few can rise to the height of the Father’s love by faith, so as to rest their souls in his love. They live far below it in the troublesome region of hopes and fears, storms and clouds.

Abiding in the Father’s love, all is peace and quiet. But how to rise up to the height of the Father’s love they do not know. It is God’s will that he should always be seen as **gentle, kind, tender, loving and unchangeable.** It is his will that we see him as the Father, and the great fountain and reservoir of all grace and love. This is what Christ came to reveal. **Christ came to reveal God as a Father.** . . . The believer, being brought by Christ into the bosom of the Father, **rests in the full assurance of God’s love** and of never being separated from that love” (16-7).

- “The response from us that God looks for, in return for his love, is love. God says to us, ‘My son, give me your heart’ (Prov. 23.26). And God commands us to love him with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind” (17).

How to Respond Well: Constant Meditation and Reminders

1. **Consider WHO it is who love us**

2. **Consider WHAT KIND of love is the Father’s love** - eternal, absolutely free and undeserved

3. **Consider that God desires loving fellowship with you!** - “that you should receive him into your soul as one full of love, tenderness and kindness to you. Flesh and blood is apt to think hard thoughts of God . . . Now, there is nothing more grievous to the Lord, nothing that serves the purposes of Satan more than such thoughts as these. Satan rejoices when he can fill your heart with such hard thoughts of God. . . .

1. . . . Set your thoughts on the eternal love of the Father and see if your heart is not aroused to delight in him. Sit down for a while at this delightful spring of living water and you will soon find its streams sweet and delightful” (33).

4. **Run to the Father, regardless of what the world is doing or saying** - “If I am hated in the world, I will go where I know I am loved. Though all others hate me, yet my Father is tender and full of compassion. I will go to him and find happiness in him. In the world I am considered vile. I am frowned on and rejected. **But I have honor and love with the Father whose kindness is better than life itself.** There I shall have all things in their fulness, which others have only in dribs and drabs. There is

in my Father's love everything I desire. There I find the sweetness of all his infinite mercies" (35).

1. "Let the world think as they please, but Christians have intimate, spiritual, heavenly joys, because their fellowship is a fellowship of love with the Father. Christians are looked on as poor, low, despicable persons, when indeed they are **the only great and noble persons in the world** (2Cor. 6.8-10). Consider the company Christians keep. It is with the Father of glory. So Christians are indeed the excellent in the earth" (37).

Our Sinful Responses

- "The greatest sorrow and burden you can lay on the Father, the greatest unkindness you can do to him is not to believe that he loves you" (13).

"Run to the Father"

I've carried a burden for too long on my own
I wasn't created to bear it alone
I hear Your invitation to let it all go
I see it now, I'm laying it down
And I know that I need You

I run to the Father, I fall into grace
I'm done with the hiding, no reason to wait
My heart needs a surgeon, my soul needs a friend
So I'll run to the Father again and again and again and again

You saw my condition, had a plan from the start
Your Son for redemption, the price for my heart
And I don't have a context for that kind of love
I don't understand, I can't comprehend
All I know is I need You

My heart has been in Your sights
Long before my first breath
Running into Your arms
Is running to life from death
And I feel this rush deep in my chest
Your mercy is calling out
Just as I am You pull me in
And I know I need You now

"How Deep the Father's Love for Us"

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure

How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the man upon a cross
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers

It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts, no power, no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection

Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom