

## Jesus, Connecting Us to the Father – John 14:1-11

During last week's closing message on the grace of God, we looked at some of the words of Jesus recorded for us in Matthew 7. Perhaps you will remember from that message, I used verses 7-11 to teach about how God extends His grace to His children in immeasurable quantities. And, of course, He does this because of His immeasurable love for us. This collection of verses is also frequently used by pastors on Father's Day because it contains information on the attributes of our perfect Heavenly Father. Jesus knew exactly what He was talking about when He delivered this message as part of His Sermon on the Mount. And, if the perfect attributes of God are important enough for Jesus to cover in His most important sermon, then, it would be perfectly acceptable to take the time to review them each year on Father's Day. I'm not going to spend much time on this, but I do want to summarize what the perfect Son tells us about the perfect Father. Jesus teaches us that God is our redeemer, our protector, our provider, our comforter, our healer, and our disciplinarian. These verses also help us understand what entering an intimate relationship with the Father can be like. It is the work of His Son Jesus that paved the way for each of us to have access to Him and to daily experience what it's like to be in a healthy, loving relationship. Instead of focusing on these attributes, perhaps we should also consider how Jesus is the connection that makes all these things available. Jesus is the model, He is the perfect example, and He is the messenger that we need to draw near to.

When we take the time to look deeper into what Jesus teaches us about His relationship with God, then we can learn what it takes for us to connect with the Father and what can help us cultivate our relationship with Him. Let's begin with a couple of obvious things. Jesus is the way to the Father. Look with me at John 14. **Read John 14:1-11.** When we focus on the familiar words of verse 6, we learn a few things about how important it is to believe in Jesus. Jesus lays out an eternal invitation here when He says, "*I am the way.*" He's simply stating that access to God can only come through a special path. Jesus teaches us that He is that special path. Many people will say they believe in Jesus, but to truly accept Him as Savior and Lord is the only way a person can step into a connection with God the Father. If you want to know God better, then get to know Jesus better. As He points out, this is the only way! When you decide to get closer to Jesus, you'll soon discover that His ways are the Father's ways. Jesus' life on earth shows us how to live like Him while we are here.

Jesus also says, He is "the truth and the life." Truth keeps you from listening to the lies of Satan and keeps you focused on the perfect attributes of the Father as mentioned previously. To understand that Jesus is the truth, protects you so that your thoughts and your perceptions about interacting with the Father remain based on His truths and not someone else's. Many people miss out on a good relationship with the Father because of lies they have been taught and unfortunately have also believed. Their view of God is broken. The truth, which of course is Jesus, destroys the lies and brings life into your interaction with the Father.

Another consideration from our passage today is that Jesus demonstrated the Father's heart for us. Look back at verse 9. Jesus says, *"Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."* When you look at Jesus, you'll see the heart of God. You'll discover how God looks at people and our situations. Studying the way Jesus interacted with people helps us know what the Father is really like. How? Because, as Jesus teaches here, He and the Father are one. This means that every time we look at something through the lens of Christ, we gain the ability to see it the way God sees it. We cannot live an authentic Christian life without being connected to the source. If we do not remain connected to the heart of Christ, things such as arrogance, cynicism, traditionalism, and legalism can creep in. Everything we are as a believer is based on our connection to the heart of the Father. When we experience all that the heart of God has for us, then it will change how we see the world around us.

Connecting to God in this way also helps us understand the simplicity of our relationship with Him. We are good at complicating things that are not overly complicated. I feel as if I teach this concept frequently, but it's an important concept for us to know. When you accept Christ, it's not just your rescue from an eternal separation. Jesus desires to lead you into a personal and intimate relationship with the Creator of the universe. Jesus gives you access to Him without any confusion or any interference. As a believer, God grants you the opportunity to be children of God. You are either His son, or His daughter. When you accept and receive the work of Christ you are now a child who can talk to your Father. Jesus simplified it for us when He taught about prayer, which is how we communicate with our Father. Remember His words from **Matthew 6:9**. *"Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven.'"* Cultivating your relationship with God begins with something as simple as addressing Him, not as the complex infinite, otherworldly being, but simply as FATHER. If you want a deeper relationship with God, simply begin by speaking to Him. Let Jesus lead you into a comfortable prayer life and get ready to experience what God has in store for you.

If you truly desire a better relationship with your heavenly Father, then it is recommended you seek to understand the connection He has with His Son. **Read John 5:19-20**. Jesus did what He witnessed the Father doing. He didn't act on His own volition. He acted out of the intimacy He has with His Father. John goes on to teach us that God is love. **Read 1 John 4:7-12**. Jesus was in tune with the Father's love for Him and for others. Because of this, when we see Jesus, we see the truth of these verses. Many people want the love of the Father but miss out because they spend a lot of time trying to earn it instead of just accepting it. We must stop viewing God as this heavenly boss, whom we perform for and attempt to be religiously perfect. Instead, we need to see God like Jesus saw Him. Jesus walked in the love of His Father, connected to Him, and poured out His love to as many people as possible. If you desire to be like this, then you need to get accustomed with what a loving Father is genuinely like. You need to receive His love instead of trying to earn it.

Finally, Jesus, even though glory also belongs to Him, always gave credit where credit is due. Jesus sought to always glorify His Father. Mark captured this concept for us in **Mark 10:18**,

where Jesus said, *“Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.”* Jesus models the perfect life for us. He was sinless because of the work of the Father. Jesus was good because the Father is good. What a wonderful way to close our Father’s Day, with a remarkable example and reminder that, without the Father, we have no hope of doing good or being good. And His goodness can only be found in us when His Son is found in our heart. Like here in this verse, when God does good works in us and through us, we, just like Jesus, need to direct the focus off us and point it to the goodness of the Father instead.