

# The PAPA Prayer – Part 2

**Aim:** The aim of this message is to help people develop a closer relationship with God by understanding who God is, what blocks our relationship with Him, and how to make Him the 'First Thing' in our lives.

## ***The God We Pray To***

We have a God who created us in His image and is seeking to form us into His likeness. He is our Father and sees us as His children. He knew before the world began that we would chose Him and He has adopted us into His family. He knows us deeply, so deep that he knows every thought and still loves us and seeks to help us shed all that keeps us from becoming all He created us to be. He sees all our pain, hurt and sorrow and understands and desires to bring healing into our lives. He truly does hear us and invites us to call Him "Abba", our Papa. - Genesis 1:26, Ephesians 1:5, Revelation 2:17, Psalm 44:21, Isaiah 42:3, Psalm 65:2, Galatians 4:6-7

## ***Entering Into His Presence***

### **Present Yourself to God (presented last week)**

Relate to Him! Be real, know your inner person and be honest with God. Come to God exactly as you are, no excuses. Simply say, "God I'm not the loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, gentle, self-controlled person I should be. I am not a Spirit controlled person, I'm a self-controlled person." He says, "I know, let's work on it."

### **Attend to How You Are Thinking of God (presented last week)**

Understand that "real spiritual maturity means to enjoy God's delightful unpredictability." We need to study and seek to know all the attributes of God. We need to seek to understand the truth about God like Lucy from the Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis did when she said, "Then he isn't safe?" said Lucy.

'Safe?' said Mr. Beaver; 'don't hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you.' "

### **Purge Yourself of Anything that Blocks Your Relationship with God**

#### **God Lives Within Us - Romans 8:9, 2 Corinthians 1:22**

Deep within us God, through His Spirit, is saying, "I'm here, I've made My home in your heart. Yes, I know all the thoughts and fantasies you have, I know all your failures and embarrassing moments. But, guess what? Because of My Son you are fully accepted and I love you, you are Mine and I rejoice over you! And guess what? I have a wonderful plan for you to advance My Kingdom. Won't you come follow Me?"

But we don't hear it very often, why not?

#### **What Blocks Out the Voice of God?**

It's so important to understand that we need to recognize and confess the obstacles we have created between ourselves and God.

The problem is we don't see the obstacles – we are blind to them! Your know where it shows up? Are you ready? It shows up in how we relate to other people. The hard truth is all of us are living with relational sin we do not see. We hurt people and we don't even see it. We think we're close when we really aren't.

We're afraid to really fully trust God and follow Him and to trust other people. Therefore we put on a mask and pretend we're okay and create barriers. If there is something wrong then it must be him or her who is wrong, not me!

So, what can we do?

### **Abandon Yourself to Holiness**

First, we must truly be open to the truth that there is something wrong with me. And then to understand that beneath all the wrong things I do think and say that hurts others is a deep desire to truly love God and to love others well, but we do it our way and not God's way (pride). We need to come to God with a true heartfelt desire to really want to know what's wrong with how I relate to Him and to others. To do this it's vital to abandon ourselves to holiness.

A professor once said, "in this age as in every age people are looking for happiness not realizing that they are longing for holiness." If you pursue happiness (self-centeredness, me first) you will never find it. If you pursue holiness you will find deep relationships and joy and happiness as a byproduct.

We know we are pursuing holiness when:

- We come to God wanting to see where we're wrong in the way we relate to Him and others more than we want someone else to admit how they're wrong in the way they relate to us.
- It's when we want not only to see where we're wrong but also to claim the privilege of letting others experience how God relates to them by the way we relate to them.

In Leviticus 11:44-45 and 1 Peter 1:15-16 God tells us to be holy as He is holy. Can we make ourselves holy? No! But look closely to the Leviticus passage. God is saying here that we are to set ourselves aside to our most important relationship – our relationship with Him. Leave behind all the world and our own efforts offer that never satisfies and look to Him for total satisfaction no matter what your circumstance are. Pursue Him above all and let Him live His life through you. God is calling us to totally abandon ourselves to Him, to allow Him to be the center of our lives and to abandon ourselves to self sacrifice and humble love and service.

### **Approach God As the "First Thing" in Your Life**

#### **Desiring the Best**

As Christians we say we put God first in our lives, but do we really? In your own minds honestly answer these four questions. Who do I relate best with? Who do I enjoy most? Who do I know best? Who do I love the most? If we truly put God first in our lives we would have legitimately answered God to each of these questions. That doesn't mean we don't enjoy, relate with, love and know others, we most certainly should. But, if we are honest God probably is not first on our list.

Look at joy for example. We were created for joy. God wants us to enjoy all He has given us. What we enjoy we go after. But, if we truly had our deepest joy in God then in stressful or hard times we wouldn't go to the refrigerator, the shopping trip, the pornography, etc, etc, the things that bring pain and guilt into our lives and the lives of others, we would flee to God.

Take love for example. The Bible tells us that if we love God we will obey Him. How many of us have known God wanted us to do one thing and then did something else? Doesn't that prove we don't really love God? Not deeply enough to always trust and obey Him.

It truly is possible to have your deepest relationship with God, to love Him above all others, to enjoy Him more than anyone or anything, to know Him deeply. It's possible for God to be more real to you than anyone or anything; to know His voice and walk in loving obedience to Him.

Yes, you can hear God's voice (probably not audibly). But we won't hear it until we discover the empty place deep within us that passionately desires to truly know God. Until we admit the truth that all the good things God gives us won't ultimately satisfy and until we look beneath all the pain, sorrow and heartache this world brings and see the emptiness in our hearts that we won't allow God into we won't discover the beautiful sound of our Father's voice. It's a voice we begin to hear more clearly when we admit that we need Him and we want Him more than anything else.

Let me ask a question. If you were Job and your property, job, children, friends and health were suddenly taken away would you still be joyful and content because you know your Father and nothing can take Him away?

### **Removing the Mountains – Matthew 21:18-22**

I want to finish by taking a look at a commonly misunderstood and terribly misused scripture. Turn to Matthew 21:18-22 and Hosea 9:10. Here we see the joy of God finding a people who want Him. It's like being lost in the wilderness and being hungry and suddenly you find some big, juicy grapes. It's like finding the first fresh figs on the fig tree. It's a delight and joy.

What Jesus seems to be saying here is, "My Father made you for himself, He takes great delight when His children want Him and enjoy Him above all else. But they have become like fig trees with no fruit. Yes there are a lot of showy leaves. A lot of religious activity. A lot of worldly success. But there is no fruit. They don't want Me above all this other stuff.

I won't let this happen! I will come into your life, I will live in your heart, so that you can know and please My Father. I'll help you get close to Him, Ask Me and I'll remove all the mountains in your life that come between you and My Father. Do you want to enjoy Him? Do you want to know Him deeply? Do you want to have His fruit in your life? It's what you were created for. Deep down it's what you really want!"

### **Memory Verse:**

Galatians 4:6-7 "Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." <sup>7</sup> So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir."



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