

Show us the Father

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Date: 26 January 2025

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[0 : 00] It's not so much of a question I think, it's more of a heartfelt longing.

! In verse 8 Philip said, Lord show us the Father and that will be enough for us. In the middle of John chapter 14, on the night before he will be crucified, Jesus is teaching his disciples about his leaving, his going away.

He will die and rise and return to his Father in heaven. And the truth of verse 6 on its own is wonderful for Jesus' disciples and us.

As Jesus declares, I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me. He's saying that through his death and his resurrection, Jesus will open the way to the Father.

Come to Jesus today. Come through Jesus and believe in him. And one day you will be with God the Father in heaven for all eternity.

[1 : 06] Because Jesus is the way and the truth and the life. That is wonderful in and of itself. But in verse 7, do you see, Jesus says even more.

If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. And from now on you do know him and have seen him. Do you see that?

Put so simply. Not just now, one day in the future you will be with my Father, wonderful though that will be. But from now on, right now, in your present life and experience, you know the Father and have seen him.

What do you make of that? I think Philip's reply in verse 8 to this extraordinary statement expresses the kind of human longing that so many of us will be able to connect with in our lives.

Lord, show us, Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us. To catch a glimpse of God right now.

[2 : 16] To see something of God in all his beauty and glory. To know and experience his presence in our lives today. That will be enough for us.

Don't you think? It may be you're here this morning and you would not yet call yourself a Christian believer, but you're here and you're listening in. And my guess is that you have this longing inside you.

If only I could see God now, that would be enough. Many of us this morning follow Jesus already and we believe that one day Jesus will come and take us and we will see God's face and all will be well.

Yet surely we long to know and experience him now. Don't we? Show yourself to us, Father, and it will be enough. Well, in verses 9 to 21, Jesus answers Philip and he answers all who long to see God.

In these very deep words, Jesus speaks absolute truth. He cuts into our uncertainties. He speaks to our human longings and he tells us how it is that we can see and know and experience God the Father.

[3 : 35] I've got four things I would love us to see from these verses together. Here's the first thing. See Jesus and you've seen the Father.

As Philip looks into Jesus' face and says, could you please show us the Father? Jesus' answer at the beginning is tinged almost with sadness, almost frustration.

Do you see? In verse 9, Jesus answered, don't you know me, Philip? Even after I've been among you for such a long time, don't you know me?

Haven't you seen what I've done? Haven't you heard what I've said these past three years? Because it should be clear, says Jesus, that anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.

I don't have to tell you, that is a massive claim that Jesus makes. It makes the person of Jesus a total one-off, unlike any other religious leader around the world, for sure.

[4 : 42] In the introduction to his gospel, John wrote, verse 18 of chapter 1, no one has ever seen God. Because that's true, you haven't and I haven't.

But the one and only Son, who is himself God and in the closest relationship with the Father, has made him known. Philip, surely you saw you were there when Jesus turned water into wine and healed an official's son and cured a paralysed man's legs and fed 5,000 with five loaves and two small fish.

You saw Jesus walking on water, making a blind man see, raising Lazarus from the dead. Philip, surely you heard, as Jesus said, before Abraham was born, I am.

And I and the Father are one. You know, whatever God the Father does, the Son also does. Philip, I've been among you, says Jesus.

You've seen me and heard me and touched me. How can you say, show us the Father? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father, says Jesus.

[6 : 04] I was 18 years old when I first really started reading the Bible and the Gospels. I remember very, very clearly coming to see that the things Jesus said about himself, he backed up so publicly and obviously by what he actually did.

Jesus isn't trying to manipulate Philip here, pick up a cult following. Hey, come on, I'd love you to believe that I can show you the Father.

Would you follow me? And then he says, don't you know me? Have you not seen me in action, doing what the Father does and saying what the Father says?

If you see Jesus, you have seen the Father. I think this is so good to get to grips with. If you're a human being and you know that you've been made for God, and you long to connect with and see God the Father, you do not need to go on a desperate, fruitless search, as though God is hiding and you have to find him.

Mountaintop moments, meditative music, a trip around the world. You don't need to do that.

Mind-bending drugs, or mystical experiences, or visits to echoing cathedrals, or hoping somehow to get a sense of the God who might be there.

[7 : 35] You don't need to bother with that anymore. It doesn't work. Carefully comparing the teachings of different world religions and trying to work out if there is something in common.

You don't need that. Jesus has made the Father known in history. If you see him, you've seen the Father.

There's more to say, though. Because, well, you could wonder whether Jesus is exaggerating a bit, or overselling himself.

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. Surely, were you to be there 2,000 years ago, you wouldn't actually see God the Father, who is in heaven.

Maybe in Jesus, you see a good copy of the Father, like a son often can be. But you don't really know and see the unseen Father, surely.

[8 : 40] And think of it like this. If I asked you this morning, if you know Alan Lowe, who lives in the west of England, my guess is you would say, no, I don't know him.

Or, not really. The person you can see and get to know is Chris Lowe. I'm the son.

For sure, slightly scarily, as I get older, I speak like my dad, and act like my dad, a bit more. I'm turning into quite a good copy of him.

But it isn't true, is it, that by seeing me, you actually see and know this man. You don't know him, do you?

You see, just because here today, I'm standing with you, and you know me, it doesn't mean that you've seen or known him. Just because you see Jesus, I mean, it doesn't mean you've seen or known or experienced the Father, surely.

[9 : 51] Take a deep breath, come with me into some slightly deeper water. As Jesus insists here, that through him, you really can see and know the Father.

So firstly, Jesus says, you see him, you've seen the Father. Secondly now, very, very tightly linked, listen to Jesus, and see the Father in him, at work.

In verse 9, Jesus says, anybody who has seen me, has seen the Father. Now verse 10, listen to these words, don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me?

The words I say to you, I do not speak on my own authority, rather it's the Father living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me, when I say that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me. So don't think of Jesus being separate from, and distant from God the Father, like me, and my dad, like two physical persons, one here, Jesus the Son, we see him, but the other up there, beyond God the Father, we don't see him.

[11:13] Rather, Jesus says here, that the Son and the Father are, in one another, so totally united, so bound together in their being, that they indwell one another, you cannot separate them.

Jesus in the Father, and the Father living in the Son. My guess is you hear that, I read that, I think, is that mysterious?

Is it somehow, beyond us? It is. But what Jesus is saying here, is that God the Father, is not, beyond Jesus, and so beyond us.

Because here's what their being, in one another means, second half of verse 10, the words I say to you, says Jesus. I do not speak of myself, rather it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. As Jesus stands, in front of his disciples, and speaks, with the Father, living in him, not only are his words, from God the Father, but in his words, God the Father is present, and working, in power.

[12:33] Philip says, verse 8, I know you're in front of us, Jesus, I can see you, but would you show us the Father, please?

Says Jesus, look at me, and you've seen the Father, listen to me, and see the Father in me, doing his work. We are meant, to try and grab hold of this, says Jesus in verse 11, believe me, when I say that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, believe me.

Or if you're finding this hard to understand, at least believe on the evidence, of the works themselves. And all through John's Gospel, the great work of God the Father in heaven, is to act in power, and to give people like us life.

To raise up people who are dead, dead in their sins, and give them life, eternal life with him. How does God the Father do his work?

In and through the words of Jesus Christ. To a royal official in chapter 4, Jesus said, your son will live. It's done.

[13:51] To a paralysed man, chapter 5, get up, he is cured at once. To a four day old body, dead in a tomb, chapter 11, Lazarus come out, he does, alive.

In John chapter 5, Jesus says, a time is coming, has now come, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear, will live.

we are meant to believe this then. That you see and experience God the Father with us, and working in power, giving life, through the life-giving words of Jesus.

So don't go searching around for God the Father elsewhere. Listen to Jesus. this too is really good for people who hunger for God, who hunger for the Father.

Do you know this? Here in John's Gospel, and on into the New Testament, these words that you're holding, we have in our hands, the words of Jesus, recorded for us, and spoken to us.

[15:11] And so the truth is, this isn't a dry and dusty book. It's not a dead religious manuscript, what we hold in our hands. Oh, the Bible. We will see God the Father doing his work, giving spiritual life to dead people.

As we hear the voice of the Son of God, hear the words of Jesus. We're meant to take these words, and read them.

We're meant to have someone read them to us. My friend Mark isn't here this morning, he's not very well, but he and I get together every Thursday morning, and we're reading John's Gospel at the moment.

It's not flashy. We sit in our kitchen, it's a bit of a mess. We have a bacon sandwich and a cup of tea, and we pray, and we ask for God to help. And then we listen to Jesus' words, and talk about them.

And we see God the Father working in us. And we're talking this morning, just to recap, in this very deep passage, about seeing God the Father, knowing and experiencing him, what our hearts long for.

[16:26] How about a one-word summary of everything so far? Are you ready? Jesus. See Jesus. Listen to Jesus.

And you will see and know the Father. In verses 12 to 14, we're going to touch on this just very briefly. Jesus goes on to say, I mean, this is remarkable too, that if anyone, that if you believe in

Jesus, you will do his works.

Very truly, I tell you, says Jesus, whoever believes in me, will do the works I've been doing. And they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

What does that mean? What Jesus-like works, will those who believe in him do? What greater works than his? Jesus isn't promising that we who believe in him will heal the paralysed, I don't think, or call dead friends out of their tombs.

But rather, just as the great work of God the Son is to give eternal life to people through his word, so now with Jesus returning to the Father, his earthly work complete, we can now do the yet greater work.

[17 : 47] spreading out through the world, sharing and proclaiming the words and the work of Jesus, and seeing millions upon millions of people turn to Jesus, and come to know the Father, and receive eternal life.

Which is happening in Cambridge today. Not in our own strength, but through his as we pray.

And I will do whatever you ask in my name, says Jesus, so the Father may be glorified in the Son.

You may ask me for anything in my name, ask Jesus.

Please work through us, that our colleagues and friends might see you and receive forgiveness and new life, and I will do it. I said that bit would be swift.

See Jesus, and you see the Father. Listen to Jesus. See the Father in him at work. Believe in Jesus, and you'll do his works. Now, finally, verses 15 to 21.

[18 : 57] I don't know if this has sprung into your mind as we've gone through. With all this focus on Jesus, see him, listen to him, and you'll know the Father. What happens when Jesus goes?

Do I have a connection with God the Father? For us today in 2025, with Jesus no longer with us on earth, but now with his Father in heaven, how might you and I ongoingly see Jesus and know God? Fourthly, lastly this morning, love Jesus, and God the Father will give you the Holy Spirit. Follow this through with me.

Look, verse 15. If you love me, so this morning, will you love Jesus? If you love me, keep my commands, and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever, the Spirit of Truth.

So with Jesus returning to heaven, he asked the Father to give us another advocate to help us. Just notice all these words, about God the Holy Spirit, given to all who love Jesus.

[20 : 14] He is an advocate to help you, a helper, a counsellor, a strengthener. He is another advocate to help.

Because if Jesus helps and counsels and strengthens, the Spirit is another like him. He will be with you forever. He is the Spirit of Truth, just as Jesus is the truth, making God known to us.

Jesus says to his followers in verse 17, the world cannot accept him, it neither sees him nor knows him, but you know the Holy Spirit, for he lives with you and will be in you.

Think if you've never heard this before, it should just blow your mind. God the Holy Spirit in me, God in me, and I know him.

The thing is, the Holy Spirit sounds very much like Jesus, another helper given by God with us, speaking truth.

[21 : 24] But that is exactly the point. Because look at verse 18, as Jesus says, I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you. Before long the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me.

Because I live, you also will live. For sure, after his resurrection, Jesus will come to his first disciples in the flesh, briefly, but beyond that moment, through the Holy Spirit given to us, Jesus will be with us, and in us.

Verse 20, on that day you will realise that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

Verse 21, finally, is a promise for whoever, for anyone 2,000 years ago, and today, who loves Jesus.

Let me read this. Whoever has my commands, and keeps them, is the one who loves me. The one who loves me, will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them, and show myself to them.

That is so precious. Do you see what is being held out to us here today? A relationship of the most loving, and open closeness, through the Holy Spirit in us.

[22 : 58] A living and real relationship with God the Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ, showing himself to us. Let me ask, do you love Jesus today?

If so, you could put your name in verse 21. The Father loves you. Jesus loves you. And he will show himself to you.

I mean, this past 15, 20 minutes, I feel like all I've done really, is walked us through these verses, nothing more.

It is, it should be the deepest longing, of the human heart. Do you not think? Show us the Father. Show us. And Jesus says, so very boldly, see me, and you've seen the Father.

Listen to me, and see the Father in me at work. Believe in me, and you'll do my works. Love me, and the Father will give you the Spirit.

[24 : 05] So today, whatever your starting point, and whatever you've understood from John 14, whatever you feel you know, wherever you've come from, will you come to him?

To Jesus? Don't search anywhere else. Don't turn to anyone else. All of us are invited to see Jesus, and listen to his words, and believe in him, and love him.

And God the Father will work in you, and love you. And Jesus will love you, and show himself to you. And with God the Holy Spirit in you, and the words of Jesus before you, you will know and experience God the Father in your life, and you will live.

You will even have the great privilege of doing Jesus' works, and making the Father known to those around you. You'll see and know God the Father right now, today, and forever, and all of that through Jesus.

And so we should say to one another, isn't that enough? Isn't that enough for you, and for me, to see and know the Father through Jesus?

[25 : 21] And we should say, it is, it really is. And we praise and thank you, our God. Let me lead us in a prayer. I'm going to pray.

Amen. Lord, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us.

Don't you know me, said Jesus, anyone who has seen me, has seen the Father. We praise you, almighty Father in heaven, that you have made yourself known, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you for all that he said, and all that he did. Thank you for his words in front of us, through which you do your work.

We praise and thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit, God in us. Thank you that to all who love Jesus, you love us, and Jesus loves us.

[26 : 31] And we can be bound into you, and know you are God forever. Please help us, all of us here this morning, to value knowing you, more than anything else.

If we have not yet, may we seek you and find you, and then know you, and rejoice in you, and live for you with all our hearts. We pray, in Jesus' name.

Amen.