

Finding Life in the Father

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[0 : 00] All right. Last week, I put forward that regardless of our circumstances, regardless of the circumstances that we find ourselves in, regardless of the physiological health that we are suffering, that we are enduring, we have one single model for mental health.

We've got one single model for mental health. That's sort of a sacrilegious thing to say in our culture where each person is, you know, one of the doctrines of our culture that is embedded in us is that you have to find your own way, find your own identity. You are your own Lord and Master.

You know, the ancient pagans would have looked at our culture and said, you all think you are gods. You all think you are gods the way you talk about yourself. And yet we are here to proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord. He is our Lord. He is our Savior. He is, and when it comes to mental health, he is our one singular model because Jesus is the full flower of humanity.

Jesus is the perfect expression for what a human being ought to be. He is so good. Jesus is, you know, sometimes we talk about Jesus though he's less human because he's also God. That is unbelievably untrue.

That's one of the biggest lies that Satan wants you to believe. Jesus is, if anything, more human than the rest of us. He is everything that a human being is meant to be. Jesus of Nazareth is the man from heaven, the perfect son of God.

[1 : 39] He is our best model for mental health. And today we're going to examine something rare and precious. We're going to see Jesus. We're going to open up the heart of Jesus.

We're going to have our eyes open to his innermost patterns of thinking, his innermost feelings, his innermost desires. We're going to see Jesus down to the core of who he is as he just gives us a little glimpse into his heart.

We're going to be looking at Matthew chapter 11. That's what Carl read this morning. And here is, in Matthew chapter 11, we are going to see Jesus finding life in his father.

We're going to see Jesus finding life in his father. Now, we'll be doing this for two reasons. Why are we looking so closely at Jesus? Well, first, I want to, the first reason that we're going to look at so closely at Jesus is, I want you to present to you Jesus as our model for finding life in God our father, as that perfect model of mental health.

In other words, Jesus as an example for each one of us to imitate. So that's the first reason. The second reason is this. I want to portray for you Jesus in all his glory as he finds life in his father.

[2 : 56] I want us to see the glory, the beauty of Jesus. I don't want any of us to leave here thinking, you know, oh, I learned a few helpful tips for life from the sermon this morning, right?

I don't want anyone to leave here thinking, well, you know, thanks, pastor, good sermon. I want us to all leave thinking this. Jesus is so wonderful.

I can't stop thinking about Jesus. Who can compare with him? How can anyone not love him? Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.

We grow up with just such poorly developed tastes, don't we? I remember as a kid, you know, I thought, you know, the height of cuisine was going to a fast food restaurant, right?

You know, going to McDonald's or Wendy's, right? You know, but in a nice juicy steak at home. No way. Give me a Big Mac, right? As you grow older, you kind of realize that, man, you know, our taste is messed up by the flashy, you know, commercials, the flashy PR and marketing that McDonald's can put out.

[4 : 05] And the truth is where the real substance is found is not in a Big Mac. Once you look past all the flashy advertisement, the real substance is found in a nice, juicy, delicious steak. Unless you're a vegan and then something soy, I guess, yeah.

No, there's really amazing vegan food, too. But it's true. But just an amazing dinner, right? And we learned that our tastes have been messed up.

And today, I want our tastes to be corrected for us to just taste and see that the Lord, he really is good. This world has been selling you on McDonald's. Right?

Let's look closely at Jesus and see that he is so much better. To understand, to enjoy the real flesh and blood person, the real Jesus in Matthew chapter 11.

You know, you and I need to understand first how Jesus is responding. How Jesus is responding to the situation that he has been placed in. Now, last week, we looked at a diagram.

[5 : 12] You'll find that, again, in your sermon notes insert. So it should be right here if you got handed that when you came in. There's this nice diagram with a big old sun and a couple of trees and a cross and water flowing out from the cross.

And this diagram is borrowed, ripped straight from the book, *How People Change*, by Tim Lane and Paul Tripp.

And so, once again, a link to this diagram is we're going to post this with a sermon audio on our website as well. But last week, we learned how this diagram, as we studied it in depth, we were studying Jeremiah chapter 17, verses 5 through 10, and seeing how this is drawn directly from those verses.

This isn't just a diagram that's just been invented by somebody. It's actually drawn directly from God's word. We learned about finding life in the desert. We saw the situation that we face in life. Like all the difficulties, all the hardships, all the temptations, past, present, and future. Those things are represented by the heat, by that sun at the top of the diagram. What is your situation? What's all the stuff you're going through?

[6 : 18] What are you facing? We saw that in response to this situation, there are two paradigms, two ways of responding, two kinds of people.

One is a person whose desires are corrupted by sin, someone with a bad root. This person turns away from the Lord.

They function like a tree that is producing thorns in the heat, bad fruit. They're producing even worse consequences. Yet God has given us all the resources, all the relationships that we need to flourish through what his son Jesus Christ has done.

That's what's represented by the cross. Who is God? What does he say and do in Christ? One of the lies that we tell ourselves under the heat is, I need to do this wrong thing. I have to.

There's no other way. There's no other way. That is such a lie. It's true if you don't have a father in heaven. We function like atheists when we say, I have to.

[7 : 29] The fool says in his heart, there is no God. But when we look to the cross, we see who God is. What does he say and do in Christ? We see all the resources he has for us in Christ and his church.

All the relationships he has in his church. And that's one of the beautiful things about you guys is I know so many of you, I've seen so many of you bend over backwards to offer people help, to offer them another way out when they're facing heat.

To offer, to help them so that they can honor God in the midst of their difficulties. Who God is, what he says and does in Christ, and the Holy Spirit that he gives.

The Spirit is the life-giving water for those who trust in the Lord. And these people flourish. They face the heat and they flourish in the desert heat. Their desires, their thinking are reoriented toward God.

They remember. They produce the fruit. From that good root of seeking God and repentance and faith, they produce the fruit of love. Even in the worst situations.

[8 : 36] This diagram, you can summon in four words. Heat, thorns, cross, fruit. Now let's consider how this diagram directs us to Jesus in Matthew chapter 11.

That's going to be on page 816 if you're using one of the blue Bibles or usher's handout. And last week we focused a lot on the heat and the thorns. This week and next we'll be talking a lot about the cross and the fruit.

Because when you're looking at Jesus as that perfect human being, that perfect model for mental health, that full flower of humanity, he is going to have that amazing good root. He is going to produce fruit and amazing yield no matter what the heat.

No thorns on this guy. So in Matthew chapter 11, first we see the situation Jesus is in. We see the heat that he's facing from two directions right now.

And Jesus faces a lot of different heat over the course of his life. And, you know, in Gethsemane you see just some of the most intense heat Jesus ever faces. Relative to that, this is perhaps at a little bit of a lower, you know, the heat level is perhaps, the temperature gauge is not quite as high as there, and yet this is such a helpful, instructive thing.

[9 : 49] Jesus is facing heat from two different directions. The first heat source is found in verses 2 and 3. Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, and so this is John the Baptist, his cousin, the guy heralding him.

When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?

So John, he was commissioned by God to herald Jesus' appearance as God's Christ, as God's Messiah, his chosen king. John was the first one to really recognize, to publicly recognize him for who he is.

He is, in fact, Jesus' biggest cheerleader, the guy who champions Jesus, who points towards Jesus. And now Jesus' most, his staunchest ally is wavering.

He's questioning Jesus' credentials, and he's doing it in public. This is happening at a very, this is not good timing. Not good timing for Jesus, because Jesus is facing heat from another direction at the same time.

[11 : 00] Jesus is facing more than just, you know, someone who's struggling, someone who has questions. And next, next week we'll just, we'll look at how Jesus, how gently he responds to John. How kind he is.

With a guy who's just struggling with questions. Jesus is not quite so gentle towards the heat coming from the other direction. He is facing criticism.

In verses 16 through 19, here's what Jesus says. To what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their playmates.

We played the flute for you, and you did not dance. We sang a dirge, and you did not mourn. For John came, neither eating nor drinking, and they say, he has a demon.

The son of man came eating and drinking. And they say, look at him, a glutton and a drunkard. A friend of tax collectors and sinners.

[12 : 01] Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds. And Jesus can't win, can he? You ever been in one of those no-win situations with somebody?

His countrymen, they're just playing games with him. And they're just playing games with him and with John the Baptist. They are on a fault-finding mission. Up in verses 14 and 15, when Jesus throws in a couple of little digs, little phrases.

If you are willing to accept it. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Jesus is suggesting something there. And what he's suggesting is that there are people who are hearing his words, but have no interest in understanding him.

They're not there to understand him. They're just looking for a reason to criticize Jesus. A reason to call him out. A reason to find fault in what he's saying. Have you ever been in a situation like that? One where your closest friends are questioning you. Where everyone else is out to get you. Maybe you're in that situation because you did something stupid.

[13 : 14] I don't know. Sometimes we're in that situation because of our foolish and sinful behavior. But sometimes we're in that situation like Jesus is because he's doing everything right. And yet Jesus' closest friends are questioning him.

Everyone else is out to get him. That's the heat that's beating down on Jesus. And it would be very, very, very understandable to us. If Jesus responded with self-righteous anger, how could they do this to me?

Don't they know who I am? Self-preserving fear. I've got to get out of here. I can't handle this.

I need to keep myself safe from all these people. What if Jesus responded with cynical despair?

This is hopeless. Why even bother anymore? Man, look at what people are like.

People are all jerks. What if Jesus responded with impulsive foolishness? Just lashing out foolishly. Just going out and, you know, getting drunk.

[14 : 21] Or going out and doing foolish things. The situation Jesus is facing is significant. But here's the thing. The situation is significant, but the situation is not determinative.

That's something really important to remember about the heat. The situation that we face is significant. The situation we face is not determinative. Jesus doesn't have to respond sinfully. And neither do you and I. Your situation is significant, but it does not determine who you are and how you respond. You don't have to sin. By the way, in your sermon notes on the back side, there's a discussion question about that statement.

Discussion question number two. Over lunch with your family, in your growth groups, that's a wonderful thing to discuss. How might that statement, that truth, the situation is significant. It is not determinative. How might that influence the way that you approach other people in their sin? How does Jesus respond to the heat?

[15:33] Well, we're going to see Jesus bear fruit. Not thorns, but fruit. This week and next week, we're going to focus on verses 25 to 30. And today, we're especially going to narrow our focus to verses 25 through 27.

We'll see how Jesus is finding life in the Father. And here's what we read in these verses. At that time, Jesus declared, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children.

Yes, Father. For such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. And no one knows the Son except the Father.

And no one knows the Father except the Son. And anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. So under the heat of Jesus' situation, Jesus bears the fruit of love.

He produces fruit. Why? Because Jesus has a good root. Jesus has a heart that seeks his God and his Father.

[16:59] There are two things we got to do to form this good root. If we want a good root like Jesus, here's how we form this good root.

First, embrace what God has given. First, embrace what God has given. That's what Jesus does. When Jesus turns to speak to his Father, he embraces what God has given.

Let's focus on verses 25 and 26. Let's ask three questions of these verses. First, what is Jesus doing? Second, what is Jesus believing?

Third, what is Jesus loving, desiring? So first, what is Jesus doing? What is Jesus doing? Well, we can see right off the bat, first of all, what Jesus isn't doing.

You know, we're talking about embracing what God has given. But Jesus isn't just passively accepting his situation. He's not a doormat. Let's get that out of the way first.

[18:01] When we say embrace what God has given, we're not saying, you know, just be a doormat. Take no action. Suffer through a horrible situation. And just be passive. Jesus doesn't do that.

When John the Baptist questions Jesus, Jesus responds. He gives a gentle response to John confirming that he is the Christ. Not only that, Jesus actually reaffirms the ministry of John the Baptist to all the crowds around him.

When Jesus' countrymen from Galilee reject him, Jesus delivers a series of blistering warnings to them. So that they will know the severity of what they are doing.

Jesus is never a passive doormat. Jesus is never a passive doormat in his situation. That's not what embracing God has given means. Yet, while Jesus is actively responding, actively obeying God in his situation.

But Jesus is also embracing the heat, the circumstances he's in. He embraces what God has given. What are the first words out of his mouth in verse 25?

[19:09] What are they? I thank you, Father. I thank you, Father. Jesus' first words are gratitude, praise, recognition.

Gratitude, praise, recognition towards his Father. And you know what? This isn't just some sort of clever mental trick. This isn't some sort of, you know, daily journal exercise where you, you know, three things I'm grateful for just to, you know, because that's supposed to be good for my mental health.

Jesus is not doing this as some sort of trick. Jesus truly sees, truly believes there is good here. He truly believes that there is something to praise God for, something to thank God for.

You know, Jesus here, he is perfectly modeling these commandments in 1 Thessalonians chapter 5. 5. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

That's what God wants for you. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances. This doesn't mean that Jesus isn't filled with sorrow. He is a man of sorrows, despised and rejected by men.

[20 : 24] But even as Jesus is in sorrow, even as he is forsaken by his countrymen, Jesus is always rejoicing, even in the middle of sorrow.

Jesus is turning and speaking to his father. Jesus is giving thanks. Jesus is praising him for whatever is taking place. To Jesus, this situation has become an amazing opportunity to praise his father, to recognize his goodness.

This situation he sees as an opportunity. Isn't Jesus marvelous? Who does this? How many people do you know who could be questioned and criticized and hated for all the good they do?

And then the very first words out of their mouth are, thank you, Father. Thank you, Father. Don't we serve a beautiful Savior? Isn't he good?

This would be a good time to ask a question. When you face the heat, when you face a situation that stirs up difficult emotions, powerful temptations, who do you talk to first?

[21 : 43] Do you talk to yourself first? That internal dialogue, where you speak to yourself first about it, you turn inwards, you're talking and talking and talking, you're spiraling downward with anxious thoughts.

Maybe you call a loved one first. And you vent. Or gossip with someone else. Are you trusting in man and making flesh your strength?

The heart that turns away from the Lord. Or do you, before talking to anyone else, before you even talk to yourself, do you talk to God about what you're facing?

Do you share with the Lord your thoughts, your feelings, your desires, your fears? Do you tell him what in this situation you see that is good?

What in it that you, do you see that is bad? Who do you go to first? Who do you talk to first? Whom do you fear? God or man? Jesus goes first to his Father.

[22 : 55] That's how Jesus embraces what God has given. That's what Jesus is doing. So then what is Jesus believing? What's Jesus believing? We see in verse 25, Jesus speaks to God his Father and he addresses him with a title.

Lord of heaven and earth. Lord of heaven and earth. Jesus isn't just throwing that in there because it sounds nice. It sounds like a really nice and religious thing to say. Jesus believes this.

This is a poetic way of saying that his Father is master. His Father is Lord of everything in the universe, of everything that he has created. Now why would Jesus say this now?

Why would Jesus bring that up? Jesus is saying this to reaffirm something that you and I quickly forget. Jesus knows how important it is to remember.

To remember. To reaffirm. We quickly forget that God is sovereign. He is in absolute control. He is Lord.

[24 : 05] That God is in absolute control over the entire situation. In your sermon notes here on this diagram, if you've got a pen or a pencil out, here's what I want you to do.

Draw a nice big frame all around that. A nice big, you know, rectangle or circle or whatever you want all around the whole thing. And I want you to write there underneath the frame.

What God has given. What God has given. This whole thing God has given. Your entire situation is superintended, overseen by the living God.

He is overseeing it all. He is in absolute control. That's what Jesus is believing. Jesus sees the hand of God in everything that has taken place in Matthew chapter 11.

Maybe he remembers the prophecy about the Messiah from Isaiah 53. The prophecy that says, He was despised and rejected by men.

[25 : 14] A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised and we esteemed him not.

And sure enough, that's exactly what's happening. Jesus sees the hand of the almighty God. He sees God's hand firmly in control of all that is happening to him.

And he says, Thank you, Father. Thank you, Father. Why? Because Jesus knows, Jesus trusts, that his Father is working in it for his good.

Jesus knows and trusts that his Father is working in all of this for his good. Isn't it marvelous? Isn't it amazing how much comfort Jesus finds in this?

How content Jesus is that his Father is Lord. Isn't it amazing how loved Jesus feels? How loved he feels by God the Father.

[26 : 20] What a wonderful Savior. The Puritan author Jeremiah Burroughs, he writes, Grace gives a man an eye. He can see the love of God in every affliction as well as in prosperity.

Grace gives a man an eye. He can see the love of God in every affliction as well as in prosperity. That's how Jesus embraces what God has given.

That's what Jesus is believing. What about you? Is that your God? Lord of heaven and earth? Do you really believe it? So we have seen what Jesus is doing.

We've seen what Jesus is believing. What then is Jesus loving? What is he desiring? What is he passionate about right now? We find out what Jesus is loving when he expresses what he is thankful for in verses 25 and 26.

Jesus is thankful that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children. Jesus is saying, yes, Father. Yes, Father.

[27 : 31] For such was your gracious will. Jesus is saying, yes, Father. To the situation his father has placed him in, he says, yes.

Yes, Father. What pleases you is pleasing to me. What pleases you is pleasing to me. And what is it that is pleasing to his father in this situation?

Two things. His father is hiding truth. His father is revealing truth. Hiding truth, revealing truth. Now, that's something that you and I might, there's a lot of stuff in Matthew 11 that we could get into that we're like, whoa, this is, I don't know about this.

If we're being honest, it's troubling. Jesus definitely has a very different way of looking at the world than you and I do. We find no difficulty in praising God for revealing truth.

Jesus praises God not only for revealing truth, but hiding truth as well. You have hidden these things from the wise and understanding. I mean, Jesus, we've seen in Matthew 11, his mighty works, his miracles, they've not been hidden.

[28 : 41] People have seen them. That's not what God is hiding. God is hiding truth. He hasn't given many of Jesus' countrymen eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to understand.

He hasn't given that to them. God is hiding truth from these counterfeit wise and understanding people, the people playing games with Jesus, the people who think they've got Jesus all figured out, the people who are talking big talk about obeying God and believing he's going to send his Messiah and following his law, but they reject Jesus as their Lord.

And Jesus looks at this whole situation, them in their self-proclaimed wisdom, and God hiding the truth from them, and Jesus sees this as an act of judgment from God, and he actually sees that there is something good about this, something praiseworthy about this.

Perhaps Jesus remembers this line from Proverbs chapter 3. Toward the scorners he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor. So this proverb that's about the Lord, toward the scorners he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor.

It's quoted a couple times in the New Testament as, God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Jesus is embracing his father's judgment on the proud, self-reliant scorners, the ones who are wise.

[30 : 12] You can just see Jesus, you know, doing air quotes as he says, wise and understanding. Jesus is embracing his father's judgment on these self-reliant scorners, because alongside this judgment, there is a sharp contrast here for these proud, self-reliant scorners.

God is showing judgment. One of the worst things, you know, Romans chapter 1, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against man, and what's the phrase over and over and over? The way the wrath of God is revealed, it's revealed in handing people over to their passions, handing people over to what they want to do.

One of the worst things God can do for you is to say to you, okay, you want to do that? Go right ahead. Go all in. That's one of the worst things God can do to you, and that's what God is doing here, handing people over to their wisdom, shutting their eyes, stopping their ears, giving them hearts that don't understand.

They feel more and more righteous, more and more right, more and more wise. The deeper they go, the more they reject Jesus. And alongside that judgment, here's where this is beautiful.

God is showing favor to the humble, to the humble. Jesus thanks his father that you have revealed these things to little children, to little children.

[31 : 32] Oh, Jesus, he's just loving the irony here. This remarkable way that his father is turning the tables. Think about little children, right? So, parents, what's that question, that three-letter question, that little children are always asking, the one that drives you, that drove you nuts?

Everyone knows it. Why? Why? Why? Why? Let me ask you my own why question. Why do children ask why? Sorry?

Because, yes. But, yes. But, yes. They're curious. They don't know. Something about children is they know they don't know. They're not like adults. We don't know that we don't know.

We think we know when we don't. Children know they don't know. Why is the grass green? They'll stump you with that one, right? Why is the sky blue? Why is the grass green?

Why did that man say that? You know, why? Why? Why? Why? Why? They don't know. Every time that child is asking a why question, they're admitting their lack of wisdom.

[32 : 44] They're admitting their helplessness. They're admitting, I don't understand this world. I don't really understand what's going on in this world. I need your wisdom and guidance, mom, dad.

Jesus loves the fact that there are people who know their neediness. People who know their lives are messed up.

Who know they need massive help. They don't have it all figured out. They're stuck in sin and desperately crave help. You know, they need, need, need help.

And they don't know the way out. And they want help. And so they are willing to surrender their lives without condition. To surrender themselves without condition to him.

Jesus loves that God has shown favor to these little children. He has revealed his Messiah to the last people on earth who should recognize them.

[33 : 49] These are not the people who should be the ones recognizing Jesus. These are the ones who have no idea. Should be the wise and understanding ones. But God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Jesus just loves, he loves that God has shown favor to these little children. Revealed his Messiah to them. And not only to these little children.

Remember what we learned in verse 19. Jesus is a friend of tax collectors and sinners. You know, else earlier in Matthew he talks about how I came not to call the righteous.

And once again, the air quotes, the righteous but sinners to repentance. The righteous people who think they're doing what's right and they don't need to repent. Jesus says, I haven't come for you.

The sinners who say, I know I'm sinning. I know I'm wrong and I want and I need to turn from this. I need to live the way God has called me to. And Jesus says, yes, that's your qualification. You're humble.

[34 : 46] You're humble. You're submitting yourself to me. Come without conditions. Come to me. God is turning the tables here. He is saving the worst, the least of the people.

And he's exposing the best and the greatest of the people to be the fools that they are. Do you love Jesus for this? Do you love Jesus for this?

Or does Jesus make you uncomfortable? By the way, if Jesus never makes you uncomfortable, you're not paying attention. Jesus does a lot of stuff that just makes me cringe.

And I think that shows that you and I don't see things the right way. In this case, I think we don't see the rottenness of self-reliance the way that Jesus sees it.

To Jesus, it's disgusting. It's rotten. Jesus is absolutely passionate. He is so passionate. White hot passionate. That his father's glory be revealed.

[35 : 48] Both in his judgment and in his mercy. Jesus sees this whole situation. Here's what he sees that's so good about this. He sees that his father's character in all of its glory is coming to light.

Oh, how beautiful. Thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. And Jesus is delighted that helpless little children, hopeless sinners are getting special access to him.

Granted by his father. That's how Jesus embraces what God has given. That's what Jesus is just loving. Jesus not only embraces what God has given.

But here's that second way that that good root is formed. Jesus not only embraces what God has given. And he embraces God himself. That's the second way to form the good root that produces good fruit.

You not only embrace what God has given. You embrace the God who has given it. You embrace the God who has given it. Look at how Jesus does this in verse 27.

[36 : 53] All things have been handed over to me. By my father. And no one knows the son. Except the father. And no one knows the father.

Except the son. And anyone to whom the son chooses to reveal him. So let's ask this one question. Where is Jesus grounded?

Where is he rooted? We see here that Jesus isn't trusting in man and making flesh his strength. He isn't turning inward into his own self.

Into his own abilities and his own resources. He isn't turning to self-love. Jesus is also not turning outward. Jesus is not turning outward towards other people to their approval and abilities.

Jesus isn't turning to the love of other people. If I can just get them to love me. If I can just get them to approve of me. If I can just find life in them. Or if I can just get them their wisdom. You know this is going to solve everything. Jesus really never puts much trust in man.

[38 : 00] That is one extremely consistent thing about Jesus. He just never really puts a lot of trust in human beings. Jesus never makes flesh his strength. Where is Jesus grounded?

Jesus is grounded in his father's love. Jesus is grounded in his father's love. He turns outward but not to man. He turns to his father. It is Jesus' relationship with his father.

That takes center stage in his prayer. Jesus understands the heart of God. He knows him through and through.

Jesus is God the son has always been known and loved by his father. And God the son, Jesus Christ. He wants you and me to see this.

He longs for us to see his father-son relationship. That's why he prays to his father in John chapter 17. Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me.

[39 : 07] That's his disciples. They also whom you have given me. May be with me where I am. To see my glory that you have given me. Because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

That is remarkable. You know, that question, what was God doing before the foundation of the world? Before he ever created the world, what was God up to? And Jesus actually tells you, You loved me before the foundation of the world.

That is the fundamental nature of God in eternity past. That is who God is. The author Michael Reeves puts it this way. This is who God has revealed himself to be.

Not first and foremost creator or ruler. But father. Before he ever created. Before he ever ruled the world.

Before anything else. This God was a father loving his son. If before all things God was eternally a father. Then this God is an inherently outgoing, life-giving God.

[40 : 20] It's the beauty of a Trinitarian God. That in eternity past he is father, son, and spirit. In eternity past there is love. That's something that's so different from the God of Islam or any other religion.

Where God is alone in eternity. Fundamentally a God without relationship. A God without love. A God that always kind of stays distant from his people. This God in eternity is a father loving his son. From eternity the very existence of God the son is grounded, rooted in his father. In eternity the son is proceeding from the father. And now as the God-man named Jesus.

The son continues to look to his father for life. He says, All things have been handed over to me by my father.

That's what he says in Matthew 11. All things have been handed over to me by my father. What things? What are the all things? We look at the four gospels. We see that is true. Everything's been handed over. The father has given his own spirit to the son.

[41 : 32] Matthew chapter 3 we read. When Jesus was baptized. Immediately he went up from the water. And behold the heavens were opened to him. And he saw the spirit of God.

Descending like a dove and coming to rest on him. And behold a voice from heaven said. This is my beloved son. With whom I am well pleased.

Wouldn't you love to hear that word from your father? That word was not just at that moment but in eternity. This is my beloved son. With whom I am well pleased.

And he gives his spirit. Along with his spirit. The father gives his son the words of life. That he will speak. The good news. The gospel of the kingdom of God.

Which he speaks to his disciples. That's why Jesus tells his father in John 17. Now they know. That everything that you have given me. Is from you.

[42 : 30] For I have given them. The words that you gave me. His father has entrusted his words. To his son. His son has become his spokesman. Carrying these precious words of life.

From his father. And then these disciples that Jesus is speaking of. They are the beginning of a new nation. A new people whom the father has given the son. Again in John 17.

Jesus tells his father. I have manifested your name. To the people whom you gave me. Out of the world. Yours they were. And you gave them to me.

And they have kept your word. You know who you are? You are fundamentally. A gift from a father to a son. That's you.

If you are a disciple of Jesus Christ. That's who you are. The father's gift to his son. We talk about salvation. As though it's primarily about God loving you. It's actually primarily about a father loving his son.

[43 : 32] Not only over this people. But over all the people of the earth. The father has given authority to his son. Again in John 17. Jesus says. Father the hour has come.

Glorify your son. That the son may glorify you. Since you have given him authority. Over all flesh. To give eternal life. To all whom you have given him.

In other words. All the people. That the father has given his son. The son has been given authority. And he gets to give them eternal life. And in fact. Jesus has authority over all people of the earth. He is the true God man. The second Adam. The one who has been given dominion. Over all creation. The father is continuing to give. And to give.

And to give to his son. He gives him authority. He gives him a people. He gives him his words. He even gives his very very own spirit. And that's what Jesus means when he says. All things have been handed over to me.

[44 : 29] By my father. Jesus grounds himself. In his eternally loving. Life giving father. Jesus is grounded. Rooted. Planted deep in his father's love.

Jesus knows that this relationship is special. It's unique. It's like no other relationship. In heaven. Or on earth. Look again at Matthew 11 verse 27.

Look at it. Jesus not only says. That all things have been handed over to me. By my father. But then Jesus goes on to say. No one knows the son. Except the father.

No one knows the son. Except the father. This is certainly proven true. Hasn't it? In Matthew chapter 11. Jesus has not been well recognized. Throughout the gospels.

People completely fail to recognize him as the Christ. The son of God. And even when they do. They completely misunderstand his purposes. His heart for the world. That's what's happening in Matthew 11.

[45 : 27] These other. His countrymen are refusing to recognize him as the Christ. They don't know him at all. John the Baptist. Kind of recognized him as the Christ. But he's really confused by what Jesus is doing. He doesn't understand.

He doesn't quite get everything that Christ is going to be. Here's how his apostle John puts it in John chapter 1.

He. That's Jesus. Was in the world. And the world was made through him. Yet the world did not know him. He came to his own. And his own people did not receive him.

They didn't receive him. Didn't understand him. Wouldn't listen to him. But Jesus was content.

Jesus was content. In this difficult situation. Jesus was able to find life in the desert.

Because Jesus was rooted. Grounded. In his father. No one knows the son. Except the father. He says. His father knows him.

[46 : 29] And that is enough. His father knows him. And that is enough. And then Jesus then says that the converse of that is true as well. No one knows the father. Except the son.

No one knows the father. Except the son. When you put these two halves together. No one knows the son. Except the father. No one knows the father. Except the son. What you get is Jesus saying something like this.

Nobody knows me like my dad. And nobody knows my dad like I do. There's a unique. Extraordinary depth.

To their father son relationship. And Jesus makes it very. Very. Very clear. That there is not a man or a woman on earth. Who can know God truly. There is not a man or woman in this room.

Who can truly know God. Unless they know Jesus as the Christ. The son of God. You can't know the father. Unless you know Jesus. As we read in John chapter 1.

[47 : 27] No one has ever seen God. No one has ever seen God. You can't just. You can't just gain access to him. No one has ever seen God. The only God. Who is at the father's side.

He has made him known. He has made him known. Only God the son can make his father known. No one else can do that. And so Jesus tells the disciples in John 14.

I am the way. And the truth. And the life. No one comes to the father. Except through me. If you had known me.

You would have known my father also. From now on. You do know him. And have seen him. To know Jesus is to know his father. Because he is the perfect image of God.

Every. If you want to know. What's God like. Just sit down. Open your Bible. And learn. About Jesus. Come to know him. Where is Jesus grounded?

[48 : 27] Jesus is grounded in his father's love. Jesus is the only one who knows his father. Jesus is convinced. That his father knows him. And loves him. If we could only see.

That beautiful love of the Trinity. The love that binds father, son. And spirit together in eternity. The love that overflowed. And created our world. The love of a father.

Who created the universe for his son. To give him as a gift. The love that set apart. And saved a people for his son. To reign over his king. To embrace as his bride. A people whom the son.

Will give back to the father. Father. That's what this is all about. Your whole life. Our church. Our world. What's it all about at heart?

A father loving his son. It is in the father's love that Jesus is grounded. So what about you? What about you?

[49 : 27] Where are you grounded? Are you grounded? In self-love? Are you grounded in the love someone else has for you?

The way they make you feel? Or are you grounded in the love of God the father? At the end of Matthew 11. In verse 27. Jesus says.

No one knows the father except the son. And. This is the amazing part. And anyone to whom the son chooses to reveal him.

Guess what? You've got an invitation. What Jesus is saying is that his marvelous, intimate, loving relationship with his father is one that you can have too.

You're not locked out. Jesus is able to reveal his father to you. He is beckoning you. Inviting you to come. To belong to the family of God. To join him in knowing his father.

[50 : 26] Finding life in his father. Jesus even prays to his father in John 17. I do not ask for these only. But also for those who will believe in me through their word.

That they may all be one. There may be a unity. A oneness among them. Just as you, father, are in me. And I in you. That they also may be in us.

This oneness. We're welcomed into that same relationship. What if? What if you had a father in heaven who knows you fully?

Knows everything about you. More about you than you know about yourself. What if? What if that same father who knows you also loves you? Through and through.

What if your father were willing to surround you with his own family? With a people called by his name? What if your father has adopted you into his family?

[51 : 27] What if your father has given you words of life? Because he isn't content to just leave you as you are. In your orphan relationship. We function as orphans so much.

Like we don't have a father in heaven. Like we don't have a family. What if your father has given you words of life to save you from the power of sin and death? What if your father has given you his own spirit?

To make you holy? To empower you? To obey him? To live the way we're called to live in the family of God? To minister to one another?

What if God is everything that Jesus believes him to be? What if Jesus is actually telling the truth? Isn't that good?

Maybe then we could speak to our father with confidence. Maybe then we could have a healthy mind. Maybe then our prayers would change. One of the prayers that I think just best exemplifies this relationship is just this beautiful hymn that's written by a woman named Ann Steele.

[52 : 34] And she wrote in the 1800s, she wrote this hymn. My God, my Father, blissful name. Oh, may I call thee mine?

May I with sweet assurance claim a portion so divine. This only can my fears control. And bid my sorrows fly.

What harm can ever reach my soul beneath my father's eye? Whatever thy providence denies, I calmly would resign.

For thou art good and just and wise. Oh, bend my will to thine. Whate'er thy sacred will ordains, Oh, give me strength to bear.

And let me know my father reigns And trust his tender care. Thy sovereign ways are all unknown To my weak, erring sight.

[53 : 43] Yet let my soul, adoring, own That all thy ways are right. Our God, we come to you.

You are the blissful name. I believe in me. And the truth wound, What have you seen in the Bible
We come to you. Amen. I've got a mystery dream. And the truth wound, I do not believe that sed
■■■ it is vain.

I am very sorry to bear. I am very harmful object. I wish I could be able to show you You are being transmitted