

Sept 7th 2008: Names of God: Father: John 14:15-31

As I thought about the Name....that I should preach....I could not go past...**Father**
For us it's a title.....But for God ..like His other names.....expresses...His character

- **God is not called Father very much....OT**

Indeed He is first called.....in Psalm 68:5.....

A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,
is God in his holy dwelling.

And here we are really told more....about what He does.....than who He is as Father
And it's comforting....know that He does care for

Indeed the next line.....tells.....sets the lonely in families.

But it's in Isaiah that the depth of the relationship.....between God's people & God as
...begins to be explored

as Isaiah.....at a time of great peril.....**grabs** hold of the concept of God as Father
even as a drowning man grabs.....a lifebouy

Isaiah 64:8-9

Yet, O LORD, you are our Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Do not be angry beyond measure, O LORD;
do not remember our sins forever.
Oh, look upon us, we pray,
for we are all your people.

- **It's a passionate plea.....**from a child who has done wrong.....to a Father
A cry for forgiveness.....A cry for help

And though the children of.....had to endure 70 years of exile...
God their Father never forgot them.....

- **And it's God as a loving**though disappointed Father.....
who speaks in Hosea 11:1-4

"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.
But the more I called Israel, the further they went from me.
They sacrificed to the Baals and they burned incense to images.

It was I who taught Ephraim to walk,
taking them by the arms;
but they did not realize it was I who healed them.

I led them with cords of human kindness,
with ties of love;
I lifted the yoke from their neck and bent down to feed them.

And then just like many a Father He says in v8

"How can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, Israel?"

- **He couldn't do it**

Because He is God the Father.....and theywith all their failings and sins
Were still His children

In fact it is here we realise that as perfect Father....He goes way beyond the place
That any earthly father can ever go

For He is unable to give up those He calls children....**no** power that can make Him

- **So we read in Isaiah 49:15**

"Can a mother forget the baby at her breast
and have no compassion on the child she has borne?
Though she may forget,
I will not forget you!
See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands

- **Yet it is in the New** Testament....that we gain the fullest idea of God as Father
Because it is there....that God the Son introduces God the Father to us

***I was reading this week**.....**What Is God Like?**.....James Kennedy
Trinity.....**How it is both an impossible concept**.....
But also how wonderful it is.....**that we have a God who is One...yet three***

***For within the Godhead** each person being fully God....**blesses us in unique ways**
The Son took upon Himself the task of redeeming
The Spirit.....**of drawing us to God**.....**and then sanctifying our hearts and lives***

***And the Father**...took upon Himself the joy...**of blessing us with His perfect**
Fatherhood
...**being full of love**.....**mercy**.....**grace**...**forgiveness**....**comfort**....**strength***

- **Isn't it wonderful**.....that the one parable.....pictured Him as Father....prodigal
For the Father in that story.....is so badly treated
yet is shown as yearning so much...to forgiveand to welcome....re-clothe
AND to draw back into the joy of family.....the son who.....

But by far the greatest understanding of God as father.....**that Jesus gives**
Comes through the relationship He Himself enjoys with the Father

- **Especially we see this in chapters 14-17 of John's Gospel**

As I read themit is though Jesus is saying to us

Look what its like to have God as Father.....

Because that's the relationship...that is open to you

You can pray to your Father.....as I prayed to him in John 17

And even as he heard me.....so will He hear you

And in those low times....when you find it so hard to do what is right

And you open your heart to Him as I did in gethsemene....He will listen..as he listened

And though at times He will need you to take up your cross too

He will be there with you as your father

And one of the most wonderful promises Jesus gives us about His Father....14:23...

"If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him,

and we will come to him and make our home with him".

God the Father.....loves us who love the Son.....and comes to live by His spirit in....

And He becomes our Father

- **For as Jesus said to Mary.....**on the day of His resurrection

"Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father.

Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father

and your Father, to my God and your God.' "

Is God your father today? I trust He is

And because He is your Father.....will you today...commit yourself anew

To living your life for Him...as his child ?

For He is truly a wonderful Father.....

And I want to end.....by sharing....A love letter

From God the Father to you