

Father

Jason Graham: The Disciples Prayer Series

Contents

The Disciples Prayer.....	2
Father	2
Jesus and the Father	2
God is Our Father.....	4
We are Sons.....	4
We are Heirs	5
We are Free from the Law	5
We are Not Slaves	6
But Aren't We Still Servants?	7
The Correct View of the Father.....	8
The Prodigal Son	9
The Father.....	9
The Servant Son	10
Sons of Disobedience	11
The Discipline of the Father	12
A Promise	12
Appendix 1: The Kenosis.....	13
No Omnipresence	13
No Omnipotence.....	13
No Omniscience	13
No Omniloquence (made up word)	14
No Immortality	14
Fully Restored to Glory	14
Appendix 2: Does Gender Matter?	14

The Disciples Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13 (NKJV): In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Father

Why would Jesus use the word “Father?” He wants to:

- Reveal the Father
 - One primary focus of Jesus’s life was to reveal and declare the Father.
- Reveal that we are sons of God
 - When we speak of sonship from a spiritual sense, we aren’t only referring to men. Men and women are sons of God just as men and women are the Bride of Christ. Every member of the Body of Christ is a son and a bride. This is to reveal spiritual realities and has nothing to do with physical gender. And it certainly is not a commentary on the modern confusion of gender ideology.
- Reveal a correct view of God
 - If he is in fact Father, then what kind of father is he? Is he like our earthly fathers?

Jesus and the Father

Let’s see how the scripture describes Jesus’ relationship with the Father.

- Jesus Reveals the Father (He uncovered the Father)
 - **Matthew 11:27 (NIV):** “All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”
 - Strong's Greek: 601. ἀποκαλύπτω (apokaluptó) -- To reveal, to uncover, to disclose
 - This means that Jesus took a previously veiled aspect of God’s being and uncovered it for us to see. He revealed a mystery about God that was not previously understood.
- Jesus Declares the Father (He continues to make the Father known more clearly)
 - **John 1:18 (NIV):** No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.
 - Strong's Greek: 1834. ἐξηγέομαι (exégeomai) -- To explain, to interpret, to declare
 - This means that Jesus continues to make clear understanding of God the Father. He makes manifest deeper revelation of who he is.
 - Some translations, such as the NKJV, word “has made him known” as “has declared him.” I like the way that sounds.
 - The structure of this sentence may feel a little weird at first because the relative clause “who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father” is so long.
 - A rewording of the scripture as three separate sentences may make it clearer:
 - No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son has made him known.

- The Son is himself God.
 - The Son is in the closest relationship with the Father.
- We will discuss more about what Jesus declared about the Father [later](#).
- Jesus is the only way to the Father
 - **John 14:6 (NIV):** Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
- Jesus is the Exact Representation of the Father
 - **Hebrews 1:3 (NIV):** The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.
 - If you’ve seen Jesus, you’ve seen the Father
 - **John 14:7-10 (NIV):** If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? [Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father](#). How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? 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 is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.
- Jesus contained the fullness of God the Father
 - **Colossians 1:19 (NIV):** For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him
 - **Colossians 2:9 (NIV):** For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form
 - In other words, Jesus did not contain a subset of God’s attributes. He contained the full measure of the essence of God, and he possessed it permanently. It was not transient.
 - *Theotes* [teh-ot'-ace]: Deity—the full nature of everything it is to be God
 - [Strong's Greek: 2320. θεότης \(theotés\) -- Deity, Godhead, Divine Nature](#)
 - *Katoike* [kat-oy-keh'-o]: Lives—to take up permanent residence
 - [Strong's Greek: 2730. κατοικέω \(katoikeó\) -- To dwell, to inhabit, to settle](#)
- Jesus obeyed the Father
 - **Philippians 2:5-8 (NIV):** In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!
 - Given the fact that Jesus had the continual and permanent fullness of the full nature of God in him, makes the *Kenosis* (Christ’s self-emptying), in Philippians 2 even more meaningful to us.
 - For more thoughts on this see [Appendix 1: The Kenosis](#).
- Jesus is the Firstborn of the Father
 - **Colossians 1:15 (NIV):** The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
- Jesus is the Only Begotten of the Father
 - **John 3:16 (NIV):** For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
 - **John 1:14 (NIV):** The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- The NIV translates it as “one and only Son.” However, most people will be familiar with the better-known phrase “only begotten Son.”
- *Monogenes* [mon-og-en-ace]: from “monos” (only) and “kenos” (kind).
- This phrase means that Jesus is the only son that is “of the same kind” as the Father.
- In other words, Jesus is the only son who is also God.

God is Our Father

Jesus is the Son of God; however, he is the firstborn among many brothers—all of us.

- **Romans 8:28-29 (NIV):** And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.
- **Hebrews 2:11-12 (NIV):** Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. He says, “I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters; in the assembly I will sing your praises.”
 - Strong's Greek: 80. ἀδελφός (adelphos) -- Brother

What does it mean for us that we have a Father in God?

We are Sons

We are made in God's image. So, we are made to be like him. **However, we are not also God as Jesus is. He is the only begotten.**

So, how are we sons? We have received the Spirit of adoption as sons. We have been grafted into the family.

For more thoughts on gender when using terms like “son” and “brothers” in these passages of scripture, see [Appendix 2: Does Gender Matter?](#)

- **Ephesians 1:3-6 (NIV):** Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.
- **Galatians 4:4-5 (NIV):** But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.
- **Romans 8:14-16 (NIV):** For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.
- **John 1:12-13 (NIV):** Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

- [Strong's Greek: 1849. ἐξουσία \(exousia\) -- Authority, power, right, jurisdiction](#)
- **Romans 9:25-26 (NIV):** As he says in Hosea: “I will call them ‘my people’ who are not my people; and I will call her ‘my loved one’ who is not my loved one,” and, “In the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called ‘children of the living God.’”

We are Heirs

Because we have a Father and Jesus, his firstborn, is our brother, then we have been made heirs and co-heirs with him.

- **Galatians 3:29 (NIV)** If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
- **Romans 8:17 (NIV):** Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.
- Heirs of what? The inheritance of Jesus.
 - Co-heirs: meaning sharing in equal part.
- What is the inheritance of Jesus?
 - For one, we share in his glory.
 - And he is heir of **all things**.
 - **Hebrews 1:1-2 (NIV):** ¹In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.
 - **Ephesians 2:6 (NIV):** And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus
 - We've been given the same seat as Jesus because we are in him.

We are Free from the Law

Galatians 3 (NIV): ¹You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. ²I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? ³Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? ⁴Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain? ⁵So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard? ⁶So also Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” ⁷Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. ⁸Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” ⁹So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. ¹⁰For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” ¹¹Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.” ¹²The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, “The person who does these things will live by them.” ¹³Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.” ¹⁴He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. ¹⁵Brothers and sisters, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established,

so it is in this case. ¹⁶The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is Christ. ¹⁷What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. ¹⁸For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on the promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. ¹⁹Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator. ²⁰A mediator, however, implies more than one party; but God is one. ²¹Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. ²²But Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. ²³Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. ²⁴So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. ²⁶So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

- The Law kept is safe until Christ.
- Now that Christ has come, we are free from the Law.
- We are children of God because of our faith in Christ.

We are Not Slaves

Galatians 4:1-9, 21-31 (NIV): ¹What I am saying is that as long as an heir is underage, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. ²The heir is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. ³So also, when we were underage, we were in slavery under the elemental spiritual forces of the world. ⁴But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. ⁶Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir. ⁸Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. ⁹But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable forces? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?

[...here Paul interjects some personal thoughts about how they treated him in the past and what they are going through now...]

²¹Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says? ²²For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. ²³His son by the slave woman was born according to the flesh, but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a divine promise. ²⁴These things are being taken figuratively: The women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. ²⁵Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. ²⁶But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. ²⁷For it is written: “Be glad, barren woman, you who never bore a child; shout for joy and cry aloud, you who were never in labor; because

more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband.”²⁸ Now you, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise.²⁹ At that time the son born according to the flesh persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now.³⁰ But what does Scripture say? “Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman’s son.”³¹ Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.

- The children of Hagar were born of Mt. Sinai—compared to Jerusalem.
 - This means is allegorical of the Jews of the day that had not received Christ and still lived under the Law of Moses, which was given to the Jews (Jerusalem), specifically to Moses, on Mt. Sinai in Arabia.
- The children of the Free Woman are those born apart from the Law, due to the promise.
 - Those born because of the promise (Jesus Christ) are not under the law, and therefore, are not servants, slaves, or bondservants (however you want to translate the words).
 - These are all words used in the above passage to describe the Hagar-scenario.
 - [Strong's Greek: 3814. παιδίσκη \(paidiské\) -- Maidservant, slave girl, young woman](#)
 - [Strong's Greek: 1397. δουλεία \(douleia\) -- Slavery, bondage, servitude](#)
 - [Strong's Greek: 1398. δουλεύω \(douleuó\) -- To serve, to be a slave to, to be in bondage](#)
- Servants serve from obligation.
- Sons serve from love and freedom.

But Aren't We Still Servants?

Doesn't the scripture say we are slaves or servants elsewhere?

- **1 Peter 2:16 (NIV):** [Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves.](#)
 - [Strong's Greek: 1401. δοῦλος \(doulos\) -- Servant, Slave, Bondservant](#)
- **Galatians 5:13 (NIV):** [You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.](#)
 - [Strong's Greek: 1398. δουλεύω \(douleuó\) -- To serve, to be a slave to, to be in bondage](#) (same root word from above)
- In Christ, living as a slave to God is living as free people.
- You can't serve God rightly until you have accepted your sonship.
- Sons do serve their Father. They do their Father's will, but first they are sons and they submit out of love.
- Notice, in both passages, **the fact that we are FREE was brought up first. Only then does it discuss being slaves or servants to God and man.**
- Both passages use the phrase “but do not use your freedom to...” be evil, sinful, or carnal.
 - In other words, **“Because you are completely free, consciously choose service to God and man. Don't serve your own carnal desires because of your absolute freedom.”**
 - In the same spirit as Jesus did with the Kenosis, as explained earlier.
 - It never says, **“You are slaves, so act like it.”**
 - It says, **“You are free, so live as slaves to God and people.”**
 - Another well know passage says it like this:

- **Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV):** Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’
- If you want to serve God, receive your identity as a Son first, then you will be truly useful in your service to God.
- How do we get free from this idea of being bondservants?
- We get a correct view of the Father

We are sons who serve. We are not servants who are adopted.

The Correct View of the Father

So many people have an incorrect view of Father God because of the poor example set by their earthly Father. This is a tactic of the enemy planned long ago. We need to overcome this plot by understanding that our Father God is different from our earthly Father...especially in the fact that He is perfect and loves us perfectly.

Jesus gave us this story that truly describes what our Father God is like:

Luke 15:11-32 (NIV)

¹¹ Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. ¹³ "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²² "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate. ²⁵ "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷ 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' ²⁸ "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' ³¹ "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always

with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"

- What do we see in this story?
 - First, we have a prodigal son who is uncontrolled and wasteful of his Father's blessing.
 - Second, we have a Father who is completely forgiving and accepting.
 - Third, we have a son who never leaves the Father, but acts more like a servant than a son.

The Prodigal Son

- This son wastes his inheritance
- What he asked for was like saying, "Father, I wish that you were already dead so that I could have what is coming to me when you are gone."
- After taking full advantage of his Father's willingness to give, and then wasting away his life, he comes to his senses.
- He begins to think of how the Servants in his Father's house have it so much better than he does now.
- He plans to go and beg to become a Servant to his Father.

The Father

- This Father loves his son so much that as he sees him coming down the road he runs to him and throws his arms around him in a loving embrace.
- Notice that he completely ignores the son's prepared speech about being a servant in his father's house.
- He wasn't concerned with the son's grumbling and self-pity.
- He was concerned with the son's return.
- The Father's love could not be overcome by rebelliousness.
- The Son's place in the Father's heart had not been demoted
 - He had always still been a son.
 - He didn't have to beg or plead.
 - He didn't have to walk the line to regain his Father's approval.
 - He could have done nothing to try to earn the Father's Love or Blessing because he already had them both.
 - The Father would not have accepted him as a Servant.
- The Father gives his son 4 things:
 - A Robe (**restoration**)
 - A position of Honor
 - A Ring (**acceptance**)
 - A place as his Son—most likely a family ring
 - Sandals (**freedom**)
 - A place to Stand
 - Only freemen wore sandals during this time period.
 - Slaves and servants mostly went barefoot.
 - A Fattened Calf (**celebration**)
 - A celebration of His son's return
 - In ancient Middle Eastern culture, a fattened calf was reserved for moments of special significance and for hosting an honored guest.

THE FATHER SAYS: NO.

So, if you've been gone for a while—physically, spiritually, emotionally, mentally—and you are coming back to the father's house today because you've decided that you just want to serve the Lord...the Father says: NO.

I CAN IMAGINE THE FATHER SAYING:

No son of mine is going to come back to my house to be counted among the servants. I will put a Robe on his shoulders to restore him to a position of honor. I will put a family ring on his finger to show he is accepted as a son. I will put sandals on his feet as a sign of his freedom in my house—he is no slave. I will slaughter the fatted calf in celebration, because I've been fattening up that calf for such a time as this.

He says: Come back, my son, and eat at the table I have prepared for you in the very presence of your enemies. What your enemy meant for evil, I will turn it to your good. You are a son of God. Your brother Jesus is not like the bitter brother from the parable.

Jesus speaks up and says: I do not call you servants either, I call you friends. Because a servant does not know his master business, but I have made the Father and all I have heard from him known to you. I revealed (took the veil away) the Father. I declared (explained clearly and deeply) the Father. And I was the very image of the Father before your eyes. If you've seen me, you've seen the Father, and no one comes to the Father, but through me. You are accepted. You are adopted. You are sons of the Living God.

John 15:14-15 (NIV): You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

- This is what our brother, Jesus, says about us. Note the great difference between him and the brother in the parable.

The Servant Son

- The self-righteous one who had never wandered away in rebellion.
- He was angry that the Father was so accepting of the rebellious one.
- He thought that he had been cheated
 - The Father pointed out that everything of the Father's had been his all along.
 - He was an heir, and didn't even understand that it was always his.
 - This son was living by all the "rules" that he thought he had to live by, but he never lived in the fullness of being a son.

- He was too caught up in earning something. “I’ve slaved away for you.”
 - He was acting more like a servant than a son.
- What did he lack? A correct view of the Father.
- He was working to earn instead of working as a son who loved his Father.
- A thankful heart would have rejoiced with and embraced his brother right along with the Father.

In this story, neither son had a correct view of the Father. Both of them interpreted their relationship with their Father from a place of complete selfishness and self-focus. So much so, that neither could see the Father correctly.

The prodigal’s depravity led to his eyes being made clear when he repented. There’s no indication that the self-righteous son ever did the same. They were both still sons. The difference between them is how they would live out the rest of their days as sons. One recognizing the Father’s acceptance, the other still thinking he had to earn it.

Sons of Disobedience

A sober warning does need to be sounded. You can be a son of disobedience according to the Bible. We don’t need to be like the Prodigal Son when he left. We need to be like him after he returned and realized his place. From there we can begin to serve as sons.

Ephesians 5:1-21 (NIV): Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

- [Strong's Greek: 5207. υἱός\(huios\) -- Son](#)
 - “Sons of disobedience” is a more accurate translation.

- We are God's children, and as such we should live as children of light—not darkness and disobedience.
- Colossians 3:1-17 gives us a very similar admonition
- So, what are we to do?
 - Accept God as our Father
 - Live our lives with a desire to be like Him
- He will do the work in us as we also make the conscious decision to avoid the deeds of darkness.
 - One of the main ways He does this is through discipline.

The Discipline of the Father

God will help us to walk the correct path. This has nothing to do with us having to earn a place as his children. It has to do with us already being his children.

Hebrews 12:5-11 (NIV): And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, “My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.” Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

- What is the discipline of the Father? Hardship that is designed to try our faith.
 - **James 1:2-4 (NIV)** ²Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. ⁴Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.
 - I believe that hardship from the Father refers to things that cause us to grow up and mature spiritually as our faith is tried.
 - It is not “Discipline” from the Father if you lose your job because you could never show up on time or if you get sick from over indulging.
 - The fact that the Father disciplines us should be an encouragement to us.
- This is what keeps us from being sons of disobedience.
- God disciplines us because he has accepted us as his sons.
- Discipline trains us and brings us a “harvest of righteousness.”

A Promise

Because we have been made into sons we will one day be just like him.

1 John 3:1-3 (NIV): See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

Appendix 1: The Kenosis

Kenosis: emptying—translated in the NIV as “made himself nothing” in **Philippians 2:7**.

Philippians 2:5-8 (NIV): In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

- [Strong's Greek: 2758. κενώω \(kenoó\) -- To empty, to make void, to nullify](#)
- Jesus contained the full nature of God in his bodily form (**Colossians 2:9**), yet voluntarily never used that nature to his own advantage.

No Omnipresence

He could only be one place at a time.

- **John 11:14-15 (NIV):** So then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”
- This narrative makes it clear that Jesus was constrained by place in his human form.
- Not that he would have handled the situation with Lazarus differently, but from his own words we see that he couldn't have done anything differently because he wasn't physically there.

No Omnipotence

He only did what the Father showed him to do.

- A key aspect of the omnipotence of God is that he can and does do whatever he wants to do. Jesus never followed his own will.
- **John 5:19 (NIV):** Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.
- **John 5:30 (NIV):** By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.
- **John 6:38 (NIV):** For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.
- **John 17:4 (NIV):** I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.

No Omniscience

He only knew what the Father told him (**no omniscience**).

Mark 13:32 (NIV): “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

No Omniloquence (made up word)

He only spoke what the Father told him to speak. Omniloquence is not a real word, but I like it as a play on words (i.e. all speaking).

- **John 8:28 (NIV):** So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.
- **John 12:49-50 (NIV):** For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.”
- **John 14:10 (NIV):** 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 is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

No Immortality

He obeyed the Father—even to the point of death on the cross. His bodily form was not immortal. He was fully man, not just fully God.

Philippians 2:8 (NIV): And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Fully Restored to Glory

For this obedience he was again glorified to his original state, although he does still live forever in bodily form.

- **Philippians 3:20-21 (NIV):** But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.
- **Philippians 2:9-11 (NIV):** Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- **Hebrews 1:3-4 (NIV):** The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.
- The whole chapter of Hebrews 1 paints a clear picture of Jesus’s glorified position forever.

Appendix 2: Does Gender Matter?

Children and *sons* can be used interchangeably throughout the New Testament to express the concept of us being a part of God’s family. There are at least four words that are used often in scripture to discuss this topic.

- [Strong's Greek: 5207. υἱός \(huios\) -- Son](#)
 - Some translations replace “son” with “children” for this word, which is not as accurate of a translation. NIV 2011 is one of those translations.
- [Strong's Greek: 5206. υἱοθεσία \(huiiothesia\) -- Adoption as sons](#)
 - The root word here is *huios* (son) from above. So, it is correctly translated as “adoption as sons.”
- [Strong's Greek: 5043. τέκνον \(teknon\) -- Child, offspring](#)
 - This word is correctly translated as “children.”
- [Strong's Greek: 80. ἀδελφός \(adelphos\) -- Brother](#)
 - This word is used when the scripture says that Jesus calls us his “brothers.” The NIV 2011 incorrectly translates this as “brothers and sisters” for the purpose of inclusion.

Galatians 3:26-29 (NIV): So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

So, does physical gender matter? *Absolutely not.* Although, I disagree with inaccurately translating a word for more inclusive language, the witness of scripture makes it clear that the actual physical gender of the believer has no impact on the spiritual reality of these truths about the “adoption as sons” to men or women.

- Women are Sons of God just as men are the Bride of Christ.
- These are concepts that express a spiritual reality apart from physical gender.
 - At the time and in the culture of biblical authorship, daughters could not be heirs. That is why the language of “sons” was so important to convey the concept of us being heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.
- This is in no way a validation of the modern ideology of gender identity or gender politics, which fall under the category of doctrines of demons.
 - I say that because modern gender ideology leads people further from their true identity.
 - Recognizing our adoption as sons leads us closer to our true identity in Christ.
- I’ve also heard people use the passage in Galatians 3:26-29 to justify living a homosexual lifestyle. That is clearly a perversion of the scripture. First, that idea has nothing to do with the context of the passage. Second, that idea is opposed to other scriptures on the topic.