

The Father's Love
Mother of God Community
February 14, 2021 (Valentine's Day)
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"This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Listen to him" Mt 17:5

1. *"This is my beloved son"* also in Mt 3:17

- "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks". Mt 12:34. If you ever wonder what's on God's mind or in his heart *this is it*. The Son is his beloved one. The Heavens opened and Divine Love came into the world and settled on Jesus. If you want to know the Fatherhood of God you have to come to Jesus. (Giving of Valentine example) He is the *Agapetos*, the one the Father loves. All experience of the Father's love starts here.
- There is no knowledge of God the Father- the Faithful God of merciful love- except through Jesus. Jesus alone offered perfect human love to the Father. All of our offerings, however commendable, come from a heart that is damaged and unable to offer an acceptable offering.
- We are unable to bear fruit that will last, because our access to living water is blocked.

2. *"In whom I am well pleased"*

- Jesus' human heart is not damaged. And he offered his sinless life on the cross in an act of love to the Father for our sake. (image of Tsunami) Jesus offers an acceptable offering- he is the only one who could- on our behalf. " If anyone thirst let him come to me and drink"(Jn 7:37)
- Because of His victory on the cross, our heart is healed. Now he pours Agape into our new hearts. His Spirit teaches us to say "Abba, Father".
- On a natural level I avoid the cross. It means admitting a shortcoming in me. It means acknowledging my humility and need before God. But I cannot deny that is where Jesus had to go to take my sin and exchange it for love. Without Jesus I have no acceptable love to offer God. Jesus alone pleases the Father. When we join with him- take on his yoke- our small offerings delight the Father! It was always his plan that he would delight in us through the Son.
- I have come to know the love of the Father through the Cross: In trials I have seen God the Father provide for me when my own father left the family. I have seen God provide money, big and small. He provided friends for support and guidance when I could not stand on my own.
- Like a good Father I have seen him form my personality through the Cross. Over and over again I bring my brokenness to him and he heals me. By being honest and seeing my sin in a conflict or a deception or an omission, he forgives me and points me in a new direction.
- In place of my implacable resentment he has taught me to forgive. In place of pride in my own ways of thinking and doing, he has taught me humility. In the face of my messing up and falling short he has taught me not to excuse myself but to take responsibility. Sounds like a dad doesn't it? In the face of perceiving that I have been slighted he has taught me to give others the benefit of the doubt. At the cross he has taught me to trust him even when I don't understand him and my heart is broken.

- Like a good Father he is teaching me the family business- to love. This happens at the cross when I bring the remnants of my broken image of God to be formed into Christ. Don't be like me. Don't avoid and procrastinate meeting the Father at the Cross.

3. *"Listen to him"*

- In Mt 6: 9-13 Jesus teaches us how to pray. He begins by teaching us to say "Our Father" in v. 6. (he shares his Father with us). Then in v.12 he talks about "our trespasses" (he identifies with our sin.). In between, in v 10 there is this "thy will be done". This is where this beautiful exchange – my sins for his Father- happens, at the level of the will.
- What makes us a child of the Father is not the revelation or the spiritual gifts. What makes us sons is our obedience. To love the will of God more than our own and to follow it. And the will of God is not unknown to us. There is one rule to follow that keeps us in the Father's will. And that is the rule of Love.
- Knowing the Father's love through Jesus and loving him in return means embracing the cross where all that transfer of love takes place. All I want is to share in his sufferings so that I may "know him and the power of his resurrection" Phil 3:10.

Follow-ups: This week come to the cross of Jesus to form a new channel in you into which the Father's love can flow. Bring these scripture verses to your prayer time. Jot down your insights and consider sharing next week.

John 6:32-33 *"My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."*

John 20:17 *"I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."*

John 17:24 *"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world."*

Galatians 6:14: *May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

Romans 8: 15-17 *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. 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.*

1 John 3:1 *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.*

Ephesians 1:5 *He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.*

1 John 4:9 *By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.*