

Lesson 2

A Family Relationship

“Our Father”

Matthew 6:9

Prayer must begin with an understanding of who we are. Paul tells us in Romans 12:3, “Do not think of yourself more highly than you should.” This is good advice. The “I Am God” Man makes himself king of everything. He doesn’t feel that he needs to pray. However, if we who believe in God and love Him really understand that we are sons of God, it will give us confidence when we pray.

“The Spirit that God has given you does not make you slaves and cause you to be afraid; instead, the Spirit makes you God’s children, and by the Spirit’s power we cry out to God, ‘Father! my Father!’” (Romans 8:15).

What a wonderful thing it is to be a son of God! What a wonderful thing to belong to a big family in which our brothers and sisters are believers of every race, nation, and tribe! What a wonderful thing to know that our Father loves us, and provides for all our needs!

So, we can come boldly to our Father in prayer. We should, of course, come respectfully and humbly. But there is no need to fear. We know our Father loves us!



lesson outline

The Father of Sons
Faith That Saves
Faith That Keeps

The Fraternity of Sons
The Old View is Gone
The New View Has Come

The Function of Sons
Winning of Men
Worship of God

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

- Understand the importance of prayer in the Christian life and walk.
- State how the basic principle of 2 Corinthians 5:16-17 affects the life and worship of a child of God.
- Determine the most important function of sons of God.

learning activities

1. Read Romans 8:12-17 and memorize verse 15.
2. Think of someone who is not part of the family of God and pray for him, calling him by name in prayer.
3. Read the key word list.
4. Do the lesson development section by section. For multiple-choice questions circle the letter preceding the response which you consider to be the best choice. For each true-false question, circle the letter preceding the statement.
5. After you have finished the lesson development, look back over the lesson objectives to make sure you can do what is suggested there.

key words

believer
culture
fraternity
function

prejudice
renounce
repent
unbeliever

lesson development

THE FATHER OF SONS

Objective 1. *Discuss the importance of prayer at the time of salvation and in our Christian life and walk.*

Our Father! What meaning there is in those words! God created man. At once a warm pleasant feeling comes as we think about God's plan that He has had from the beginning of the world.

God is a God of love. Love cannot stand alone. It must be shared with another, or it isn't real love. That is why God created man in His own image. God made a garden and put man in it. Every evening God and man would walk and talk together. It was wonderful. God wanted to share His love with man. He also wanted to receive love from man. But He wanted man to love Him willingly, so He gave man the power to choose. We call this "free-will."



Then sin came. Satan tempted Adam and Eve. They believed his lie about God, and disobeyed the Lord's command. The fellowship was broken. Sin came between God and man. There was no longer a way to share their love. Man was put out of the garden. He was taught to offer blood sacrifices until the Savior would come who would take away the sin of the world.

1 What stopped the fellowship of God with man?

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The main purpose for worship in those days was the need to make sacrifice for sin. Man's relationship with God was based upon obedience to the Law.

Then the prophets came and told of a Savior who would come. His name would be "God with us" (Immanuel). He would take away sin, then man would once again walk and talk with God. The Savior would make it possible for man to worship God in Spirit and in truth.

2 What was the main purpose of man's worship before Jesus came?



So Jesus came. He lived a sinless life on earth. When wicked men crucified Him, He became the "Lamb" of God. He became the "sacrifice" on which the sins of all men were laid. He became sin for us. He paid the penalty of sin which is death. He died, and they laid Him in a grave. But because He had done no sin, death could

not hold Him. He rose from the grave. He conquered sin and death. Then, He told His disciples to spread the good news. They were to tell all men that love between God and man could once more be shared. God and man could once again walk together!

3 Who paid the penalty of sin for us?

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Faith That Saves

How can this happen to you? The Bible says that if you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved! (Romans 10:9). Praise God! Think of it! If you will believe and call upon Him, you will be saved! But, first you must call.

“Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed. This includes everyone, because there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles; God is the same Lord of all and richly blesses all who call to him. As the Scripture says, ‘Everyone who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved’” (Romans 10:11-13).

- 4 Circle the letter to the left of the best answer.**
 Men become sons of God by
- a) passing the test for new believers.
 - b) ceasing to do their sinful deeds.
 - c) believing in the living Son of God and confessing Him as Savior.

Salvation starts with prayer. It comes to those who call out to the Lord for help. It starts when you confess your sins to the Lord and repent. Salvation starts when you believe that Jesus is the Savior, the Son of God who rose from the dead. It starts when you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart. It starts when you pray the prayer of faith! Hallelujah!

5 What is the function of prayer at the time of salvation?

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Note that Romans 10:12 says, “This includes everyone . . .” God is no respecter of persons. He wants everybody to be saved. He wants everybody to call upon Him. God wants everybody to pray the prayer of faith!

We need to discuss more of God’s plan here. It did not end at the cross or at the resurrection. That was only the first part. You see, Christ’s death and resurrection make it possible for all who believe to become the sons of God. “Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God’s children” (John 1:12). Sons of God! That is what the plan is all about! God wants children who will love Him and call Him “Father! My Father!”

6 Read John 1:12. What right does God give to those who receive Jesus?

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What God wanted in the beginning, He wants today. He wants to share His love with man. He wants to have fellowship with man. That’s what makes worship so important. God wants sons who worship Him and love Him. Only sons of God can worship God. Only those who believe on Him can pray the prayer of faith. So prayer starts with confessing and believing, and leads to worship of God, our Father.

7 Circle the letter preceding each TRUE statement.

- a** We can have salvation without Jesus.
- b** God hates sinners.
- c** Anyone can be a son of God.
- d** Only sons of God can worship God.

At the end of this world, all who have believed and are sons of God will be gathered together in heaven. A loud voice will proclaim, “Now God’s home is with mankind! He will live with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them, and he will be their God” (Revelation 21:3). That’s it! That is the plan God has had from the beginning. That is the plan that has already started for those who believe. All who call upon Him in faith can begin to fellowship with God right away. They can talk together with Him in prayer and worship. They can share the love of God right on this earth. They don’t have to wait until they get to heaven!

Faith That Keeps

A wonderful thing about God’s love is that it never fails. He loved us when we were yet sinners, but He could not have fellowship with us because we did not love Him. But when we believe that Jesus is God’s Son who died for us and rose again, then we can once more share love with God. We can once more

worship Him and talk with Him. Faith makes it possible for us to be sons of God. As long as we keep our faith in Him, nothing can break the love between us.

- 8** Fellowship between God and man is restored by
- a) man trying his very best to be good.
 - b) man offering blood sacrifices for his sins.
 - c) man receiving Jesus Christ as his Savior.

Of course, if we renounce our faith in Him it will break the fellowship we have with Him. Love must be given willingly. God willingly gives His love to us, but if we cease to believe in Him, our love for Him will be gone. Fellowship with God will be gone.

We are saved by faith and we are kept by faith. If we keep our faith, we keep our salvation. If we forsake our faith, then the basis of our relationship with God is gone. When faith goes, our love for God leaves us and we are sinners and unbelievers once again.

- 9** A believer loses his salvation when he
- a) ceases to have faith in Jesus Christ.
 - b) commits a sinful act.
 - c) leaves his church and joins another.

It is by prayer that we call upon God to be saved. It is by prayer that love is restored once again between us and God. And it is by prayer that we keep alive our fellowship with God. Love must be shared, and when we stop sharing our love with God, our relationship with God dies. But by prayer and worship, our faith and love remain strong.

THE FRATERNITY OF SONS

Objective 2. *Explain the meaning of 2 Corinthians 5:16-17, and tell how it affects a child of God.*

The title of this section is “The Fraternity of Sons.” *Fraternity* means “brotherliness” or the “the state of being brothers.”

What makes it possible for believers to be brothers? This is possible by having the same “Father,” of course! The day we repented of our sins and confessed Christ to be our Savior, that day we became sons of God and a member of a fraternity of brothers!

All who are sons of one father are brothers. When we say “Our Father” we are confessing that all His children are our brothers. “Those whom God had already chosen he also set apart to become like his Son, so that the Son would be the first among many brothers” (Romans 8:29). Think of it! All true believers are our brothers and sisters. God’s plan from the beginning has been that He might be the Father of “many brothers” among whom Christ is the “Elder Brother.”

10 Circle the letter before the TRUE statement.

- a) All men are our brothers.
- b) If God is our Father, then Jesus is our “Elder Brother.”
- c) We become a son of God by being good.
- d) God does not want to become our Father.

The Old View Is Gone

God divides men into two groups. Only two! Those who are of His family and those who are not of His family. God does not look upon the world as men do. He does not say, “That is an Indian, that is an African, that is a white man, that is a black man, that is a rich man, that is a poor man, that is an educated man, and that is an uneducated man.” Not at all! This is how the world classifies men. But God does not judge by human standards. He only sees two groups—those who are His children, and those who are not. So He looks at men and says, “That one is my child. That one is also my child. But that one is not my child.” We are the ones, though, who make the choice.

11 In God’s eyes there are only two kinds of people. What are they?

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We should look at people as God looks at them. There is no room for prejudice in the family of God. The world divides men into nations, races, tribes, and cultures. We should see only two groups—those who are our brothers and sisters, and those who are not.

12 Circle the letter to the left of each TRUE statement.

- a** God loves all men.
- b** All men are God’s creation.
- c** All men are sons of God.
- d** All men are brothers.

The New View Has Come

You say, “How can this be? We can’t all be alike in the family of God.” That is true, and God never intended to remove the things that make people different from each other. What God wants to do is to fill our hearts with His love until the differences make no difference!

The American will continue to be an American. The Indian will remain an Indian. The black will remain black, and the white man white. God does not ask us to change our nationality, race, or tribe. He does make it possible for different kinds of people to live together in love and peace. How can this be? By being a family—a family united by the Holy Spirit and by prayer. It is a true saying that the family that prays together stays together. It is true in a single family of two parents with their children. It is also true of the world-wide family of God which is made up of many races and nations. Prayer changes things!

13 When 2 Corinthians 5:16 says that we should not judge by human standards, it means we should

- a) not expect different kinds of people to live together in peace.
- b) try to remove the differences that divide men.
- c) accept believers as brothers despite our differences.

Many are not sons of God because they refuse to believe in Christ as their Savior. They cannot pray to God and say, “Our Father.” Neither are they brothers of those who believe. When a believer meets a man who is an unbeliever, he cannot call him “brother.” Why? Because he does not have the same Father, and he is not one of the family. Jesus told those who refused to believe in Him, “You are the children of your father, the Devil” (John 8:44).

On the other hand, if a believer meets another believer, even if he is of a different race or nationality, he immediately feels a love for him because he is a brother. He is a member of his own family. For the child of God, the thing that separates him from other men is not race or nationality, but rather the fact that they are unbelievers. He cannot feel “at home” with them.

14 What separates the child of God from other men?

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THE FUNCTION OF SONS

Objective 3. *State the function and responsibilities of sons of God in worship and service.*

Winning of Men

What do sons of God do while on earth? Why does God keep them here? There is a good reason. The family is not yet complete. God is not willing that any should perish. He wants everybody to be a part of His family! But only those who hear what Jesus did for them can believe. So God has given His sons a job to do. He has told them to go into all the world and tell the good news about Jesus to every creature. What a job! What a responsibility!

But we are not alone in doing the task. Jesus sits at the right hand of God praying for us. When we fail, He is there to hear our cry for help and talk to God about our need. He pleads our case!

The Holy Spirit makes us aware of who we are. He causes us to worship and rejoice because we are sons and daughters of God. This knowledge makes us sure that what God has asked us to do, we can do. Without fear we cry, "Father! My Father!"

The Holy Spirit prays for us when we don't know how to pray as we ought. When the plan of God is unclear and His will for us seems uncertain, the Holy Spirit prays for us with groans that words cannot express. What a helper He is!

15 Name an instance when the Holy Spirit prays for us.

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As we pray for men to be saved, the Holy Spirit will often pray through us in an unknown tongue, lifting our burden and helping our prayer. The Holy Spirit will, in known and unknown tongues, encourage us and give us strength to go out with spiritual power to witness and win men to Christ. The Spirit helps us pray. The Spirit helps us worship. To what purpose? To help us get our job done!

Worship of God

What is prayer? It is a relationship with God, sometimes spoken and sometimes unspoken. Since we have mentioned it separately from worship, we can say that prayer has more to do with the needs of people, while worship has more to do with the praise of God.

Words like “repent, ask, seek, knock, cast out, claim, believe, thank, and petition” would describe the idea of prayer. Words like “praise, thanks, meditation, study, honor, glory, and rejoice” would describe worship. These are the activities of the sons of God in prayer and worship. When add the reading of the Word of God to the above, you have two ways in which members of God’s family communicate with Him.

<u>WE COMMUNICATE WITH GOD</u>	
PRAYER	WORSHIP
REPENT	PRaise
ASK	THANKS
SEEK	MEDITATION
KNOCK	STUDY
CAST OUT	HONOR
CLAIM	GLORY
BELIEVE	REJOICE
THANK	
PETITION	

- 6** Circle the letter before each TRUE statement.
- a** We can communicate with God by reading the Bible.
 - b** Prayer can be spoken or unspoken.
 - c** Worship is usually praise to God.
 - d** God does NOT want to communicate with man.

Prayer brings us into the very presence of God. Prayer strengthens our faith to claim the promises of God. Prayer will bring Jesus, the One who pleads our cases, to our side when we have sinned. Prayer will bring us power when we need deliverance. Above all, prayer will keep the love flowing between God and us as we worship Him. We will learn later how to “pray always,” but it is enough to say here that prayer should be as natural as breathing to the child of God.

One more thing before we end this lesson. We don’t have to be afraid when we come before God. Remember, He is “Our Father.” A child may be afraid of strangers, but he does not fear his father. Therefore, when we pray, we are told to come boldly. We are told to come into His presence with singing, and into His courts with praise. Read this for yourself in Psalm 100. We are to be thankful unto Him and bless His name. The presence of God doesn’t sound like a place of fear, does it? It sounds more like a home—like a family gathering. And that is just what God wants it to be, for He is “Our Father” and we are His sons!

17 How does Psalm 100 say we should come into God’s presence?

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self-test

SHORT ANSWER. Write the correct answer in the space provided.

1 What relationship did God desire to have with man from the very beginning?

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2 Name five ways that a son of God can come into the presence of God.

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3 In God’s eyes all men are divided into only two groups. What are they?

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4 Name three ways in which the Holy Spirit helps us in prayer.

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MULTIPLE CHOICE. There is only one correct answer for each question. Circle the letter of the correct answer.

5 When 2 Corinthians 5:16 says that we should not judge by human standards, it means

- a) we should accept all men as brothers.
- b) we should try to remove the differences that make men unique
- c) we should accept believers as brothers despite our differences.

6 TRUE-FALSE. Circle the letter before each TRUE statement.

- a** Prayer alone saves us.
- b** We pray because we are saved.
- c** We can worship God while walking.
- d** We can worship God by singing.

7 Put the letter **P** before the words that best describe prayer and the letter **W** before the words that best describe worship.

- **a** Ask
- **b** Glory
- **c** Praise
- **d** Petition
- **e** Honor
- **f** Repent
- **g** Seek
- **h** Thank
- **i** Exalt
- **j** Claim

answers to the study questions

- 9 a) ceases to have faith in Jesus Christ.
- 1 Man disobeyed God.
- 10 a False.
b True.
c False.
d False.
- 2 To make sacrifices for sin.
- 11 Those who are sons of God.
Those who are not sons of God.
- 3 Jesus Christ.
- 12 a True.
b True.
c False.
d False.
- 4 c) believing in the living Son of God and confessing Him as Savior.
- 13 c) we should accept believers as brothers despite our differences.
- 5 Calling upon God in repentance and faith to be saved.
- 14 The fact that they are unbelievers—not a part of God’s family.
- 6 The right to become God’s children.
- 15 When we do not know how to pray as we should.
- 7 a False.
b False.
c True.
d True.
- 16 a True.
b True.
c True.
d False.
- 8 c) man receiving Jesus Christ as his Savior.
- 17 With singing, praise, and thanksgiving.