

My Father

by H.J. Vine

Jesus' top priority was always to honor and glorify the Father, and He came to prepare a place for us in the heavenly Father's house.

Scripture: Luke 2:49, John 5:43, John 10:33, John 14:3, John 17:23

Topics: "Jesus Christ", "Gods Will"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches about the deep devotion of Jesus Christ to honor His Father, contrasting it with Absalom's rebellion against King David. Jesus always sought to bring glory to God, obedient even to death on the cross, while Absalom sought to seize his father's authority. The Gospel of John emphasizes the relationship between Jesus and the Father, highlighting the importance of John's writings in revealing this intimate connection. Jesus' entire life, works, and sacrifice were dedicated to fulfilling His Father's will and bringing glory to His Name, ultimately preparing a place in His Father's house for believers.

Transcript

Exceedingly dear to the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ were the things which He spake of as "My Father's." Those who contemplated His glory on earth, afterwards said, when the Holy Spirit was given, it was "a glory as of an only-begotten with a father." That was what distinguished Him in their eyes, as in devoted love He ever sought to honour His Father, doing that which was well-pleasing in His holy sight.

What a contrast the Spirit shows us in Absalom, the son of King David! Outwardly attractive to men, he was inwardly a rebel against his own father's authority. He first "stole the hearts of the men of Israel," then he sent spies through the land, and when the trumpet sounded, it was proclaimed, "Absalom reigneth!" The rebellion was so strong that the royal father fled before the lawless son, and all the country wept with a loud voice when the king went toward the way of the wilderness, and "passed over the brook Kidron" (2 Sam. 15:23).

Absalom sought to seize for himself what was his father's, it was the opposite with our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father. Obedient even to the death of the cross, He always sought and brought glory to God. He also went forth over the brook Cedron" (John 18:1), and entered personally into all the deep depths of suffering and judgment necessary for that. He offered Himself spotless to God through the eternal Spirit. He had said, "I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do." That commandment was treasured in His heart and carried out in His death and resurrection. When the hasty sword of Peter would fight on His behalf, He said, "Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which

My Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?" Although the Father loved Him with an eternally perfect love, yet this devotedness supplied Him with a fresh motive to love His Son, to love Him in a new way, to love the Son who thus proved His love for His Father, and for what was His Father's.

The Gospel of John names THE FATHER far more than any other book of the Bible. Matthew mentions Him 44 times, Mark 5, Luke 17 but John 122; adding John's Epistles and Revelation, the Father is altogether named 144 times by John alone, whereas all the rest of the Bible mentions God the Father but 139 times. This shows the divinely inspired reason and importance of John's writings. The Old Testament may speak of God as the Father of a special nation, Israel, bought and put in responsible relation to Him; also of a typical and favoured King on the same ground; but only fifteen times in all. The first three Gospels may speak of the Father "which is in heaven" and of the "heavenly Father," also of the character of "sons," but the expressions do not occur in John, where the Father and the Son are brought so intimately before us and the nature of "children" specially, begotten of God, loved sovereignly and unchangeably, so that Jesus said in resurrection, "My Father, your Father; My God, your God." And again, when in holy converse with His Father, "Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me" (John 17:23). Among the last words of an honoured servant of the Lord were, "My beloved brethren, I do add, let not John's ministry be forgotten in insisting on Paul's."

The Lord Jesus spoke of "the Kingdom of My Father"; but this is suitably recorded in Matthew 26:29. In John, however, we read of His Father's will, His Father's hand, His Father's love, His Father's commandment, His Father's works, and His Father's word; also of the cup which the Father gave Him; and it is here we read of Jesus speaking concerning "MY FATHER'S NAME" (5:43; 10:25); likewise of "MY FATHER'S HOUSE" (2:16; 14:2). We will refer to these two later, if God permit.

First of all the wondrous word of Luke 2:49 may well claim our attention. There the earliest recorded words of the Son of the Father on earth are given. They show how entirely He was devoted to what He spoke of as "MY FATHER'S." That was what engrossed Him. Blessed be His Name. "I must be about MY FATHER'S BUSINESS," He said. In the temple, the place of Jehovah's Name, with the teachers there, He heard and asked questions; while His own answers and understanding astonished the hearers. And even honoured Joseph and Mary understood not when Jesus spoke of His Father's business. Many there are today who are astonished at the teaching of Christ, but have not themselves received Him as their own Saviour! Likewise many who have truly been saved by Him, little understand the vast business He came forth to carry out for His Father's glory. What other concern in the universe is comparable to that?

His very words, "My Father's," indicated His conscious relationship with God. His business involved the ministry of the truth, the manifestation of the invisible God, and the revealing of the Father; also the redeeming work, demanding His life's blood and the consequent reconciling by Him of all things in the heavens and on the earth.

It involved the putting away of sin, the salvation of sinners, and the commendation of God's love; also the administration of grace now and of glory soon to the praise and pleasure of God; likewise the completion of His mediatorial work and the putting of all things into the hand of Him who is God and Father in flawless suitability, that God may be all in all. What holiness and love, glory and blessedness, shall then obtain! His Father's business will be carried out faithfully and perfectly. Who He Himself is and what He has already done, leave us without one doubt. His life here, His words, His works, His death, His resurrection, His bodily ascension to His Father's throne, and the giving of the Holy Spirit, fully prove Him able to do so. Moreover, our own experience of the salvation which is in Him not only gives peace and joy, but causes

praise and thanksgiving to abound already.

Coming into a world where all had sinned and come short of God's glory, He appeared among those to whom the oracles of God with the promises were given. All was in disorder among His people Israel. The law was not kept. There were two high priests instead of one. They were under a foreign power instead of being the head of the nations. The city of the great King, Jerusalem, was ruled by an Edomite and governed by a Roman. The opening of Luke 3 shows this. John the Baptist cried, "REPENT!" as he prepared the way of the Lord. And coming in the ordered way, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of God, began early with His work, which He will carry right on to its glorious completion, the work which he called, "MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

It is in the Gospel of John, as we have said, we find our Lord Jesus speaking of "My Father's Name" and of "My Father's house." Both were precious to Him beyond telling.

A great imitator of Christ will capture the wonder of the religious world soon. He will come "in his own name" as the Lord foretold (John 5:43). By blowing the trumpet of his own importance the many will accept him at his own valuation. His wicked career will be quickly ended by final judgment, at the appearing of Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords. In the verse quoted, Jesus said, "I am come in MY FATHER'S NAME." His Father's honour was pre-eminent in all His thoughts and doings. That made all the difference. Self praise and glory will be the other's governing motive and object, displacing God's absolute authority as far as possible. The result of Jesus carrying out His Father's business will be found in the rest and rejoicing of all blessed through that authority, and responsible worship flowing to Him fully made known by the Son.

Unregenerate religionists said the Lord Jesus was "making Himself equal with God" (John 5:18), and they therefore sought to kill Him. He was here doing His Father's will, in dependence upon Him, and He explained that nothing was done by Him independently. Truly He did work which clearly proved who He was; "The work which the Father has given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me," He said. But again, "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He does the works." It was for the Father's honour, and in His Name His works were done.

On another occasion they would have stoned Him, saying, "Thou, being a Man, makest Thyself God" (John 10:33). The Lord Jesus had said, "I am the Son of God," also, "Before Abraham was, I am"; but it was His Father's glory He ever sought. He had come in His Name. Doubtless His own glory was manifested also. It could not be altogether hid, and faith discerns what was made known. The Father honoured Him and the Spirit honours Him. The false Christ, who will come in his own name, honours himself, even "showing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. 2:4). The Son never thus acted, but "humbled Himself," becoming obedient to the Father who sent Him, speaking and doing what His Father commanded; yea, and rather than evade the awful hour of the cross with all that it meant, He said, "FATHER, GLORIFY THY NAME."

To His persecutors He said, "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not." They could not deny those works of mercy, grace, love and power, done by the Righteous, Just, Holy and True. They manifested the Father's Name. They made manifest what the Father is to those who had eyes to see, as also to our faith today; for, as we have said, He came in His Father's Name. And again, concerning the wondrous miracles which He accomplished, Jesus said, "The works I do in MY FATHER'S NAME."

Beyond all His toil on earth for God's glory and our blessing, beyond all the sufferings of the cross, our Lord Jesus Christ ever looked onward to His Father's house and to preparing a new place there for us. He said, "In MY FATHER'S HOUSE there are many abodes" (14:3). He was well acquainted with that house. He spoke of it familiarly. With holy intimacy and affection He termed it, "My Father's."

He had used those same words before of the temple, of Jehovah's house (2:16). It was there, too, as we have seen, He was found hearing, questioning, and answering the teachers (Luke 2:47), when He said, "I must be about My Father's business." The revisers translate this, "My Father's house," but the context is against it. Still a man's business is carried on from and to his dwelling, and certainly the Son came thence and returned there; not to the earthly but the heavenly. He always had His Father's house in view. There is His loved abode.

It is helpful to observe carefully that Jesus called Jehovah's house, "My Father's house." It shows that Jehovah was His Father, while other Scriptures show that He Himself is also Jehovah, confirming His own saying, "I and the Father are one." Moreover, what is said in the Psalms, Chronicles, Ezekiel, and elsewhere, concerning Jehovah's earthly house (past and future), showing something of its temporal beauty, magnificence and splendour, bespeaks abiding and unfading glory and blessedness where Jesus has gone, since He completed on earth the work His Father entrusted Him to do."

When leaving His disciples to go to His Father, Jesus tenderly turned their thoughts thitherwards. He told them of that place. From the earthly temple, so dear to the Jew, He lifted their faith to the heavenly home. There are many abodes there, but He said, "I go to prepare a place for you." What could surpass a place in that home of unsullied bliss?

Nevertheless, our precious Saviour added still more, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (14:3). Here we find the climax of our glorious hope! Received to Himself by Him who suffered and died for us! To dwell eternally with Him! His Father's house now our blest abode! Where He is we are to be also! What more could our happy hearts desire?

Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! And meanwhile may the things which were so exceedingly dear to Thee, the things Thou didst call "MY FATHER'S," become increasingly dear to us.

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