

Who Is Your Father?

Introduction

Scripture Reading: John 8:37-47

1. In our society today many are guilty of the error of denying clear alternatives even when they do exist.
2. One very clear alternative presented to us in scripture has to do with whether our "Father" is God or the Devil.
 - A. Also, whether we are growing in the likeness of one or the other.
3. When religious individuals are asked "who is your father?", they will usually respond with God.
4. Truly, God, our Father in heaven, should be our Father.
 - A. However, when we investigate the Word of God we find that many religious people are not living as children of God, but rather the as children of the Devil.

There are Two Possibilities

1. Jesus bluntly said that whereas He was from "above" and "not of this world," those who rejected His will were from "beneath" and were "of this world."

John 8:23-24 And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

- A. Jesus meant more than that He was from heaven while His hearers lived on the earth.
2. Consider the following clear alternatives presented to us.
 - A. We have the choice to live "for the will of God" or "for the lusts of men."

1 Peter 4:1-2 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, **arm yourselves also with the same mind**, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, **but for the will of God.**

- B. We decide to be led either by the "Spirit" or by the "flesh."
Galatians 5:16-25
 - 1) The "fruit of the spirit" and the "works of the flesh" are the results that follow from two distinct dispositions.
- C. We are either "of God" or "of the world."
1 John 4:4-6

John 15:19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, **therefore the world hates you.**

- D. We either love “the Father” or we love “the world.”
1 John 2:15-17
- E. We are either the “children of God” or we are the “children of the Devil.”
1 John 3:8-10

3. It is impossible to combine the alternatives that are presented to us!

Matthew 6:24 **No one can serve two masters**; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

James 4:4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that **friendship with the world is enmity with God?** Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

The Two Hearts

1. The Rebellious Heart

- A. Jesus taught that the Devil is “the ruler of this world.”

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

- B. Those who are under his influence are described in the Scriptures in stark language.

John 8:42-47

- C. Those whose “father” is the “ruler of this world” are his children because they share his basic disposition:

- 1) self-will — resulting in darkness of mind and disobedience

Romans 1:28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, **to do those things which are not fitting**;

Romans 1:32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that **those who practice such things** are deserving of death, not only do the same **but also approve of those who practice them**.

Ephesians 4:18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, **because of the ignorance that is in them**, because of the **blindness of their heart**;

2 Peter 2:10 and especially **those who walk according to the flesh** in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,

2. **The Receptive Heart**

- A. In contrast to the Devil, Jesus had a loving receptiveness to the will of God (John 5:30).

Matthew 26:39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, **but as You will.**"

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, **but the will of Him who sent Me.**

- B. Those whose Father is God have this same attitude.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, **that we keep His commandments**. And His commandments are not burdensome.

Ps 40:8 **I delight to do Your will**, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.

Differences Between the Two Possibilities

1. The basic thing that distinguishes the person whose Father is above is that he is honestly willing to obey everything he can learn in order to obey God's will.
2. Our attitude toward obedience determines:
 - A. How much of the truth we are trying to understand.

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, **because they did not receive the love of the truth**, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- B. Whether we will be drawn toward the likeness of God or the likeness of the Devil.

John 3:19-21

John 6:44-45 No one can come to Me unless **the Father who sent Me draws him**; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

3. None of us are standing still – we are moving in God's direction or we are moving in Satan's direction.
 - A. It is important that we be moving in God's direction.
 - B. Spiritual growth is vitally important! (2 Peter 3:18).
 - C. If we neglect obedience or fail to take advantage of the sources of spiritual growth – we WILL grow in the wrong direction.

Conclusion

1. Our basic disposition about obeying God right now has us headed in one direction or the other.
2. We must be completely honest with ourselves about how eager we are to obey ALL of God's will that we know to obey.
3. While life lasts, it is not too late to change our direction

Romans 6:16-18 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Who is Your Father? God or the Devil?

