

THIS is the LIFE

REC
GOSPEL

KNOW
GOD AS FATHER

HONOR
JESUS AS KING

FOLLOW
THE HOLY SPIRIT

LIV
DEEPLY

INVEST
IN THE CHURCH

PURSUE
FUTURE DISCIPLES

RESTORE
THE BROKEN

JOURNAL - KNOW GOD AS FATHER

MAY 1 - MAY 29, 2022

SERIES INTRODUCTION

The most frequently asked human question has to be: Is there a god? Which presumes the more important question: if so, who is 'god?' While a miniscule minority contend there is no god, the vast majority of the billions of people who have ever lived have conjured up some definition of the divine—the greater 'other.' The One who is beyond us and is somehow behind all that plays out on the earth. Welcome to world religions. All nuanced examples of humans defining 'god.' But imagine for a moment...if 'god' were to define himself? In other words, what if instead of being fashioned in man's image, 'god' was to turn the tables and fashion man in his image? And what if this 'god,' instead of shrouding himself in complete mystery, chose to reveal himself so that man could stop guessing and start...knowing him? This is precisely the claim of Biblical Christianity. That the one 'god' is the only God, and He has revealed Himself to be three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. A forever family who is eager to fold us in! In this journal we begin to get to know God as our Father. Let's learn together!

HOW TO USE YOUR JOURNAL

Thank you for joining us in diving into God's Word together! This series is about knowing God as Father. All of us have human fathers that have impacted, and continue to impact, our view of God. We encourage you to give yourself time on the first Monday to think and pray about that. We continue in this journal:

1. **Group Discussion Questions** – If you're not already in a Community Group that is discussing the weekly themes and sermons, we encourage you to join one or form your own. Questions with an asterisk are recommended discussion questions, along with the "For Further Reflection" questions at the end of each week.
2. **"For Further Reflection" Questions** – For those of you who like to do a deeper dive, we've provided questions to take you further into the passage and theme for the week.
3. **Scripture Memory** – We continue to "hide God's Word in your heart" by memorizing Romans 8:15.
4. **Worship Song** - In the Tuesday e-mail, we'll be including a "Song of the Week" that relates to the Scripture theme for the week. We recommend listening to that song on Wednesday as part of your time with God.

REFLECTION ON “FATHER”

WEEK 1: APRIL 25 – 29

Our picture of our Heavenly Father is certainly impacted by our experience of our earthly fathers. Spend some time today prayerfully reflecting on the word *father* in your life. What words or images come to mind (whether you knew your earthly father or not)? What feelings arise? In what ways have your earthly father (or father figures) reflected God’s heart and character to you? In what ways did they fail to do so? How do you begin to see your earthly father through the lens of your Heavenly Father, rather than seeing your Heavenly Father through the lens of your earthly one? Write your thoughts below.

MONDAY

Scripture Memory: Our memory verse for this series is Romans 8:15. Read it slowly multiple times, and reflect on it as you read.

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" Romans 8:15

Read: Ask God to speak to you through His Word, then read John 14:6-14, remembering to check the context as you do.

Reflect: *Identify all the statements that Jesus makes about his relationship with the Father in this passage. Write them below. Are there any new (or renewed) insights for you here?

TUESDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.

Read: John 14:6-14.

Reflect: *Some people say that Jesus never claimed to be equal with God. How would you respond to them, based in part on this passage?

*What have you learned about the Father through the life of Jesus?

WEEK 1: APRIL 25-29

WEDNESDAY

Worship in Song: Check the Tuesday e-mail from Hope and listen to the “Song of the Week.”

Reflect: *Do the “2-10-1” method of reading Scripture. Read John 14:6-14 “2” times, summarize the passage in “10” words or less, and ask the Lord for “1” thing that He wants to communicate to you through this passage. Write your notes below.

Reflection: Pick one or more questions from the “For Further Reflection” list and think/pray about it.

THURSDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Fatherhood of God: Each Thursday in this series, we’ll look at a different aspect of the Fatherhood of God from Scripture. Today, we reflect on how God is our Creator, the One who gave you life. Read Psalm 139:13-14. What does this teach us about God? About us? Spend some time reflecting on the truth that you were God’s idea. How does that make you feel, and why? Talk to your Heavenly Father about that.

FRIDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Read: John 14:6-14 again.

Shapes: *How do you see all four of our “shapes” in this passage?



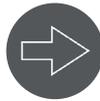
***Receive Gospel Grace:** Where do we see God’s grace in this passage?



***Love God:** What are some main things we learn about God in this passage?



***Love One Another:** How might you encourage a brother or sister in Christ with this passage?



***Love the World:** What does this passage teach us about those who don’t believe in Jesus? Pray for someone outside the faith but inside your reach, that they would come to the Father through Jesus, for His glory and their joy in Him!

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- Consider reading Pastor Stephen's introductory reflections on the Fatherhood of God on pages 103-106 of his book, *Multiply*.
- Many people believe that it's arrogant to believe that there is only one way to God. How would you respond to them, based in part on this passage?
- What does Jesus say in this passage about those who believe in Him? Are those things true of you? Pray to Him about that.
- Why does Jesus say He'll answer our prayers (verse 13), and how does that match (or not match) your motivation for praying? Pray that your motives would align more with Jesus' motives.
- Read Matthew 11:25-30, paying special attention to verse 27. How does this verse and passage support what Jesus said in John 14? What does it add?
- Read earlier passages in John's gospel about Jesus' relationship with the Father: John 1:9-18; 5:17-47, 6:35-51, 7:16-18, 8:16-19, 8:27-29, 8:42, 10:14-18, 12:26-28, 12:44-50, 13:31-32. What do these teach us about Jesus' relationship with the Father?
- There are a couple of teachings in this passage that don't seem to match our experience: receiving anything we ask in Jesus' name, and doing greater works than the works of Jesus. What is your best understanding of these two teachings? Consider checking a reliable source to see what they say about it.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

We encourage you to discuss your reflections with others. Some ideas:

- Refer to this week's questions that have an "*" by them. These are suggested discussion questions.
- Recite the Scripture memory verse together (you can read it together this week if that helps...we recommend using the ESV version so we're all learning the same translation).
- See the "For Further Reflection" section for more ideas.

SERMON NOTES

MAY 1

YOUR NOTES

WEEK 2: MAY 2 - 6

MONDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Read: Take a moment to ask God to speak to you through His Word, then read Galatians 3:23-4:7, remembering to check the context before you read.

Reflect: *What does Paul say was true of us before Christ came? What did God do for us? Which member of the Trinity is doing most of the action (4:4-7)?

*The term “Abba” was an intimate, familiar name for God. How deeply do you feel a sense of intimacy with God as your Heavenly Father? Is there a step the Spirit is leading you to take to grow in intimacy with Him? Ask Him, and write what comes to mind.

TUESDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Read: Ask God to speak to you through His Word, then read Romans 8:12-17, remembering to check the context.

Reflect: *What do we learn about each Person of the Trinity in this passage?

*According to this passage, what impact does our adoption as God’s children have on our lives?

WEEK 2: MAY 2-6

WEDNESDAY

Worship in Song: Check the Tuesday e-mail from Hope and listen to the “Song of the Week.”

Read: Take a moment to ask God to speak to you through His Word, then read John 3:16-21, remembering to check the context before you read.

Reflect: *How does Jesus describe our condition before we trusted Him? What were we like? What did we deserve?

*What member of the Trinity is doing the actions, and what do we learn about His heart in this passage?

THURSDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Fatherhood of God: *Each Thursday in this series, we’ll be looking at an aspect of the Fatherhood of God. Today, we reflect on our Heavenly Father’s affection for us. Read 1 John 3:1-3. Spend some time reflecting on the love of a good parent for their child. If you are one of His children through faith in Jesus, God has that kind of affection for you! Talk to Him about that.

Reflection: Pick one or more questions from the “For Further Reflection” list and think/pray about it.

FRIDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Read: Re-read Galatians 3:23-4:7, Romans 8:12-17, John 3:16-21.

Shapes: *How do you see all four of our “shapes” reflected in these passages?



***Receive Gospel Grace:** Where do we see God’s grace?



***Love God:** What do we learn about God, and how we love Him?



***Love One Another:** What do we learn about how we are to love our brothers or sisters in Christ, particularly at Hope? Or how might God want us to encourage a brother or sister in Christ with these truths today?



***Love the World:** What do the passages say about those who are outside the faith? How are we called to view them and love them? Is there a way you can pray for them based on these passages, or a step the Spirit is calling you to take?

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- Consider reading Pastor Stephen's reflections on our adoption by our Heavenly Father on pages 107-111 of his book, *Multiply*.
- Galatians 3:23-4:7
 - What is the activity of each member of the Trinity?
 - What role did the law play in our lives before we knew Christ? What about now?
 - Reflect on what it means that we are heirs of God! Write out your thoughts.
- Romans 8:12-17
 - What is the activity of each member of the Trinity in this passage?
 - What are the ways you used to live "according to the flesh"? Are there ways you are still tempted to live according to the flesh?
 - Who are the people in your life who are still living according to the flesh (as best you understand)? Pray for them, that they will know the joy of living by the Spirit!
- John 3:16-21
 - A major theme of the passage is "believing in Jesus." What does it mean to "believe in Him"?
 - What does Jesus say are the differences between those who believe in Him and those who don't?
 - Reflect on the shocking truth of verse 19. Pray for people you know who fit that description.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

We encourage you to discuss your reflections with others. Some ideas:

- Refer to this week's questions that have an "*" by them. These are suggested discussion questions.
- Recite the Scripture memory verse together (you can read it together this week if that helps...we recommend using the ESV version so we're all learning the same translation).
- See the "For Further Reflection" section for more ideas.

SERMON NOTES

MAY 8

YOUR NOTES

WEEK 3: MAY 9 - 13

MONDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Read: Take a moment to ask God to speak to you through His Word, then read John 1:11-13 and John 3:1-8, remembering to check context for each passage before you read.

Reflect: *What do we learn about being “born again” in these passages? (The Greek can also mean “born from above.”)

*How would you explain the concept of being “born again” in a sentence or two? Write it below, or on a Notes page.

TUESDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Read: Again, take a moment to ask God to speak to you through His Word, then read John 3:1-8.

Reflect: *Some people believe that Jesus’ teaching here may have been a reference to Ezekiel 36:24-27. What similarities do you see between the passages? Does it add any insight into what Jesus was teaching here?

*For a beautiful (and slightly embellished) portrayal of this passage, look up “The Chosen scene: John 3:16” on YouTube.

WEEK 3: MAY 9-13

WEDNESDAY

Worship in Song: Check the Tuesday e-mail from Hope and listen to the “Song of the Week.”

Read: Romans 6:1-11, 2 Corinthians 5:14-17, and/or Ephesians 2:1-10.

Reflect: *How do these passages add to our understanding of the new birth?

THURSDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Fatherhood of God: *Each Thursday in this series, we’ll be looking at an aspect of the Fatherhood of God. Today, we reflect on God’s grief over the wandering of His children. Read Hosea 11:1-9. What do we learn about the Fatherhood of God in this passage? Spend some time reflecting on that and talking to God about it.

FRIDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Read: Look back through the passages we read this week.

Shapes: *How do all four of our “shapes” show up in these readings?



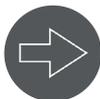
***Receive Gospel Grace:** Where do we see God’s grace?



***Love God:** What do we learn about God, and how we love Him?



***Love One Another:** What do we learn about how we are to love our brothers or sisters in Christ, particularly at Hope? Or how might God want you to encourage a brother or sister in Christ with these truths today?



***Love the World:** What do the passages say about those who are outside the faith? How are we called to view them and love them? Is there a way you can pray for them based on these passages, or a step the Spirit is calling you to take?

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- John 1:11-13
 - Based on these verses, how would you respond to someone who (speaking of all humans) said, “We’re all children of God”?
- John 3:1-8
 - Nicodemus was a Pharisee. What do we know about the Pharisees? Consider looking up a description from a trusted Bible Dictionary.
 - Read more about Nicodemus in John 7:45-52 and 19:38-42. How do you think the story ended for Nicodemus?
 - What does Jesus mean when He says that we must be “born of water and the Spirit”?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

We encourage you to discuss your reflections with others. Some ideas:

- Refer to this week’s questions that have an “*” by them. These are suggested discussion questions.
- Recite the Scripture memory verse together (you can read it together this week if that helps...we recommend using the ESV version so we’re all learning the same translation).
- See the “For Further Reflection” section for more ideas.

SERMON NOTES

MAY 15

YOUR NOTES

WEEK 4: MAY 16 - 20

MONDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Read: Ask God to speak to you by His Spirit through the Scriptures, then read Matthew 6:11 and 19-34, remembering to check the context as you do.

Reflect: *"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." What have you been treasuring in your heart lately? What do you believe God would say to you today about your relationship with money?

*In what area of your life are you struggling to trust God's provision right now? Consider finding some object that represents that area of your life (a picture, a wallet, a calendar, a Band-Aid, etc.), lay it down before God, and say a brief prayer, entrusting that area and all of yourself to Him.

TUESDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Read: Again, take a moment to ask God to speak to you through His Word, then read Matthew 6:19-34.

Reflect: *List all the reasons Jesus gives for not being anxious about physical needs.

*What does He call us to instead, and what does that mean? How do we do it? Ask Him to show you, then write what comes to mind.

WEEK 4: MAY 16-20

WEDNESDAY

Worship in Song: Check the Tuesday e-mail from Hope and listen to the “Song of the Week.”

Reflect: *Do the “2-10-1” method of reflecting on Scripture. Read Matthew 6:19-34 “2” times, try to summarize the passage in “10” words or less, then ask God to put “1” thing on your heart that He most wants to communicate to you through it.

THURSDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Fatherhood of God: Each Thursday in this series, we’ll be looking at an aspect of the Fatherhood of God. Today, we reflect on God’s pursuing love for His children. Read Luke 15:11-32. What do we learn about the Fatherhood of God in the way He relates with both sons in this passage? Spend some time talking to God about that.

Reflection: Pick one or more questions from the “For Further Reflection” list and think/pray about it.

FRIDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Shapes: *How do all four of our “shapes” show up in this chapter?



***Receive Gospel Grace:** Where do we see God’s grace?



***Love God:** What do we learn about God, and how we love Him?



***Love One Another:** What do we learn about how we are to love our brothers or sisters in Christ, particularly at Hope? Or how might God want you to encourage a brother or sister in Christ with these truths today?



***Love the World:** Imagine reading Matthew 6:19-34 aloud with someone who is “outside the faith but inside your reach.” How do you imagine they might respond to this teaching? What might they find compelling? What questions or objections do you think they’d have?

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- Consider reading Pastor Stephen's reflections on the provision of our Heavenly Father on pages 111-115 of his book, *Multiply*.
- In Matthew 6:11, what does Jesus mean by teaching us to ask for daily bread (can also be translated "our bread of necessity")? How does that differ from how we pray?
- How do we store up for ourselves treasures in heaven?
- Why do you think Jesus says we can't love both God and money?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

We encourage you to discuss your reflections with others. Some ideas:

- Refer to this week's questions that have an "*" by them. These are suggested discussion questions.
- Recite the Scripture memory verse together (you can read it together this week if that helps...we recommend using the ESV version so we're all learning the same translation).
- See the "For Further Reflection" section for more ideas.

SERMON NOTES

MAY 22

YOUR NOTES

WEEK 5: MAY 23 - 27

MONDAY

Read: Ask God to speak to you through His Word as you read, then read Philippians 4:4-20, remembering to check context as you do.

Reflect: *What would your life look like if you lived according to these commands? Write a description below.

*What does Paul teach us (implicitly or explicitly) about God in this passage? What does he teach us about prayer?

TUESDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Read: Matthew 6:9-13, remembering to check the context first.

Reflect: *How does Jesus teach us to address God, and why is that significant?

*On a Notes page, write out each request that Jesus teaches us to pray. By each, write what it means. Which of these requests do you find yourself praying more often? Less often? How might you grow in aligning your prayers with Jesus' teaching here?

WEDNESDAY

Worship in Song: Check the Tuesday e-mail from Hope and listen to the “Song of the Week.”

Fatherhood of God: Today, we reflect on the loving discipline of our Heavenly Father. Read Hebrews 12:1-11. For the person who has become a child of God through faith in Jesus, there is no longer any fear of condemnation (Romans 8:1), but God does discipline us. What does this passage teach us about God’s discipline?

THURSDAY

Scripture Memory: Write out Romans 8:15. Reflect on it as you write.



Barriers: *Today and tomorrow, we look back over the whole series to prayerfully reflect on our theme: “Know God as Father.” Look back through all five weeks of the journal. Then ask yourself, “What makes it hard for me to know and love God more deeply?” Some examples might be:

- **History** – “My relationship with my dad was/is hard for me.”
- **Suffering** – “If God loves me as His kid, why has He allowed pain in my life?”
- **Doubt** – “I find it hard to believe that God loves me.”
- **Fear** – “Honestly, I’m afraid to get to know God. What might He ask of me?”
- **Other** –

Share that barrier with a trusted friend. Ask them to pray with and for you, that God would help you overcome that barrier and live a life of deeper love for His people.

FRIDAY

Consider gathering some people from Hope to discuss these with you in the coming week.

Review: *Look back over the last five weeks. What has God been saying to you? Write down some key thoughts and ideas.

Question: *What is your biggest question right now about knowing God as your Father?

Next Step: *What is a next step God might have you take in knowing Him or growing in intimacy with Him? List some ideas below. Then see "Possible Next Steps" for further ideas.

Encourage: What brother or sister in Christ do you know who needs encouragement in these things. Pray for them and consider encouraging them to take a next step in growing in their knowledge and love for God.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- Philippians 4:4-20
 - In verse 8, Paul gives instructions on what we are to set our minds on. In what ways are you doing that right now? In what ways are you setting your mind on things that do not align with these things? Is there a step God would have you take here?
 - In verse 9, Paul charges them to follow his example. In what ways might you be able to encourage other Christians to follow your example? In what ways might you not be able to do so? Is there a step God would have you take here?
 - Verse 13 is an often-quoted verse. What do people usually mean when they say it? What does Paul mean in context here?
 - Read Acts 16:6-40 to get the background on Paul's experience in Philippi, referenced in our passage for today.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

We encourage you to discuss your reflections with others. Some ideas:

- We suggest using the summary questions on Thursday ("Barriers") and Friday (first three questions) as your group discussion this week, wrapping up the series.
- You can also use some of the questions from this week's journal reflections or the "For Further Reflection" questions.
- Recite the Scripture memory verse together (you can read it together this week if that helps...we recommend using the ESV version so we're all learning the same translation).
- See the "For Further Reflection" section for more ideas.

SERMON NOTES

MAY 29

POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS TO “KNOW GOD AS FATHER”

- Read over the Scriptures that talk about the love of God. Take one at a time, walk for 5-10 minutes reading over one of those verses or passages, letting God speak those words over you as you walk.
- Read a book on the Fatherhood or love or character of God. Books include:
 - *Knowing God* by J.I. Packer
 - *The Good and Beautiful God* by James Bryan Smith
 - *The Attributes of God* by A.W. Tozer
 - *The Holiness of God* by R.C. Sproul
 - *The Prodigal God* by Tim Keller
- You may need to unpack your feelings and experiences around your earthly father. Prayerfully consider talking to a trusted friend or Christian counselor.
- Visit a Community group, or sign up for a Bible study, to join others in getting to know God through His Word.
- Brainstorm other steps you could take here:

GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU

Psalms 36:5-7 - Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your justice like the great deep. O Lord, you preserve both man and beast. How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings.

Psalms 103:11 - As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Isaiah 54:10 - "...Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

Ephesians 3:14-17 - And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Romans 8:35-39 - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Isaiah 62:5 - "As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you."

1 John 3:1 - How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

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4934 Western Row Road | Mason, OH 45040
513.459.0800 | hopemason.org