

Lesson 11: *The Heavenly Father*
Sunday, December 8, 2024
Ryan Day

The Father, the Son, and the Spirit

Memory Text: “ ‘The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you’ ” (*John 14:26, NKJV*).

The Gospel of John is a mosaic of themes. John calls upon signs (miracles) to show that Jesus is the Messiah promised by the prophets. John uses an array of witnesses to proclaim Jesus as the Christ. He also uses the “ ‘I AM’ ” statements to point to His divinity.

All three members of the Godhead are mentioned in John 1 (*John 1:1–4, 14, 18, 32–34*). For centuries humans have tried fully to understand the nature of the Godhead, but because we can't, many reject the idea. How foolish, though, to reject something just because we can't fully understand it or because it doesn't fit within the narrow limits of human reasoning.

John says that if you want to understand God, you must look at Jesus and what has been revealed in the Word. This approach opens to us a whole new world of relationships—among the three members of the Godhead, between the members of the Godhead and humans, and among humans themselves. This week's lesson looks at how the Gospel of John presents the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but now within the context of the farewell discourse (*John 13–17*).

The Heavenly Father
Sunday

The Gospel of John is written from the standpoint of the overall biblical narrative, beginning with our origins. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (*Gen. 1:1*). Or: *In the beginning the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*

created the heavens and the earth. They are the Source of all that exists. They created the universe, including the beings who inhabit it. On our planet there was a special creation of life, and the most special of that creation was humanity. And God's purpose for creating humanity was that we should live in loving harmony with Him and with one another.

Unfortunately, Lucifer brought sin into this world. Sin is, among other things, a disruption of our relationship with God. It misrepresents who God is. Thus, Jesus took upon Himself our human nature in order to restore knowledge of God and to bring salvation to humanity.

While here, Jesus submitted His life to the Father, living according to His guidance. He said, " 'I and My Father are one' " (*John 10:30, NKJV*). " 'The Father is in Me, and I in Him' " (*John 10:38, NKJV*). " 'If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me' " (*John 10:37, NKJV*).

What were some of the roles of the Father, as described in the following passages?

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.—
John 3:16, 17

⁵⁷ As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.—***John 6:57***

²² For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son...³⁰ I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.—***John 5:22, 30***

³² Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.—***John 6:32***

¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works...

²⁴ He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.—

John 14:10, 24

⁴⁵ 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.—***John 6:45***

¹⁶ You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.—

John 15:16

²³ "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.—

John 16:23

These verses present the Father in close connection with Jesus Christ, His Son. The Father has intimate contact with our world and a deep investment in our salvation. What does this truth teach us about God's love for us?

The Love of God

The love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star,
And reaches to the lowest hell;
The guilty pair, bowed down with care,
God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled,
And pardoned from his sin.

Oh, love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure—
The saints' and angels' song.

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.