

God the Father



Memory Verse—1 John 4:8

“He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

SUNDAY

The Ancient of Days Is Our Kind Father

OUR God is so amazing that words alone cannot describe Him. He is invisible, so we cannot see Him. (Colossians 1:15.) Jesus came to show us by His life what God the Father is really like. He told Philip, “He who has seen Me, has seen the Father” (John 14:9). If we want to know what God the Father is like, we will want to know Jesus, who is “the express image” of God (Hebrews 1:3). He is “God with us” (Matthew 1:23).

In the Bible, the word “God” can refer to any of the three members of the Godhead who have always existed and are equal in power, wisdom, and knowledge. Often it refers to God the Father, the one Daniel called “the Ancient of Days” (Daniel 7:9).

What is God the Father like? Pagan religions picture Him as a harsh, selfish, vengeful tyrant. This is how Satan wants it. He has worked very hard to misrepresent God. As a result, many people hate God. Sadly, these heathen ideas crept into the Jewish concepts of God; and today they influence most of the Christian world as well.

To help us understand what God the Father is really like, Jesus often talked about God’s great love. He said that God’s love for us is better than a father’s love for his children. **Luke 11:11–13.** **Matthew 5:44, 45.** He pointed out how God the Father even shows kindness to His enemies. **Matthew 5:44, 45.** He told stories about the Father’s forgiveness, and how He rejoices when a sinner comes back to Him. (Luke 15.)

He talked about God’s care for all the things He made—even the small sparrow. **Matthew 10:29.** Jesus assures us that God the Father listens to our prayers and answers them, giving us what we need the most. **Matthew 7:7.**

Jesus did more than talk about the Father. He lived exactly the way the Father would have lived if He had come to our world instead of Jesus. When Jesus gently touched the unclean leper, forgave sinners, loved the despised Samaritans, rescued demon-possessed people, befriended Zacchaeus, and pitied the men who crucified Him, He was living out the thoughts, feelings, and character of God the Father.

Apply it: Why is it important to know God as He reveals Himself in the Bible? **John 17:3.** If we have wrong ideas about God, will we love and trust Him?

If we love Jesus, we love the Father, too. Are you getting to know Him by prayer and Bible study?

MONDAY

The Father Is Love

JESUS talked of God the Father’s power and wisdom. (Matthew 6:13; Luke 11:49.) But the many times Jesus talked about the love of God shows us that this was one of His favorite topics.



Jesus told His hearers that God is even “kind to the unthankful and evil” (Luke 6:35). This was hard for the disciple John to understand. He wanted to burn up

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a city that did not welcome Jesus, but Jesus rebuked him for trying to get revenge. (Luke 9:51–56.) As John came to understand the Father’s love, he later wrote, “He who does not love does not know God, for God is love” (1 John 4:8).

Do you know the meaning of your name? In the Bible, people were often given names that described their character. The word “character” refers to what we think about all the time and how we usually feel.

God’s names reveal His wonderful character. One time God told Moses His name: “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty” (Exodus 34:6, 7).

Near the end of His life, Jesus asked God the Father to “glorify Your name” (John 12:28), and His prayer was answered when He was crucified later that week. God the Father’s glorious name—His unselfish character of love—was seen through Jesus’ suffering and death on the cross. In the cross we see more clearly than anywhere else the goodness of God’s character—the kind way He thinks and feels about His enemies. We see that His love includes not only His justice against sin, but also His amazing mercy in allowing His dear Son to die so we could live.

Apply it: Read **Exodus 33:18, 19; 34:5–7.** In your own words, tell what God the Father is like.

TUESDAY

The Father Speaks

AFTER sin came into our world, God the Father communicated to man through Jesus,

God the Son. Jesus is the one who spoke to Abraham and gave the law from Mount Sinai. (John 8:58.) We find out what God the Father wants us to know by listening to what Jesus said. (John 3:34; 14:10.)

Three times during Jesus’ ministry, however, the Father Himself spoke in an audible voice. The first time was at Jesus’ baptism. What did the Father say as the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove? **Matthew 3:17.**

During Jesus’ ministry, the Father spoke again—this time to Peter, James, and John. (Matthew 17:1–5.) Near the end of his life, Peter wrote about this experience. “For He [Jesus] received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’” (2 Peter 1:17). Then Peter shared how the Father’s words proved that Jesus truly was the Messiah of Bible prophecy. **2 Peter 1:18, 19.**

The Father spoke out loud a third time a few days before Jesus’ death. Jesus was in the temple explaining that the purpose of His life of self-sacrifice and His terrible death was to bring glory to the Father. Then in front of the crowd He prayed out loud, “Father, glorify Your name” (John 12:28). Immediately, the Father’s voice was

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heard saying, “I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.” God the Father’s voice was so powerful, many of the listening people couldn’t understand the words and thought it was thunder.

Apply it: The Father said of Jesus, “Hear Him” (Matthew 17:5). Why do you think those two words were so important that God Himself spoke them from heaven?

WEDNESDAY

The Unity of the Father, Son, and Spirit

As we studied in a previous lesson, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit worked together to create our world. “Let Us make man,” They said.

(Genesis 1:26.) They must have enjoyed making plans and speaking Their ideas into existence. But what about the work for our salvation?

When we think of being saved, we often think of Jesus. But Jesus’ interest and love for us reveals the Father’s equal interest and love for us, which is the same as the Spirit’s desire for our salvation. Jesus told us, “The Father Himself loves you” (John 16:27), and He urged us to pray directly to the Father. Jesus also talked a lot about the work of the Holy Spirit, whom He called our Helper



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or Comforter. (John 14–16.) Who did Jesus say would send the Spirit to us with every spiritual blessing we could ever need? **John 14:16, 17.** □

What did Jesus tell an influential Jewish teacher about the special mission that God the Father sent Him to accomplish? **John 3:17.** □

Just as the Godhead worked together in our creation, They also work together for our salvation.

From all eternity, there had been perfect unity between the Father and the Son. (Proverbs 8:22–31; John 5:17–47). But in Gethsemane, Jesus felt this unity being broken up. As our sins were placed on Him, He felt separated from the Father. On the cross He cried out in anguish, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Mark 15:34). But He kept trusting; and with His last breath He said, “Father, into your hands I commit My spirit” (Luke 23:46). He recognized that no matter what happens, it is always safe to trust ourselves to the tender, loving care of God the Father.

Have you ever wondered how the Father felt when it was time for Him to say, “Awake, O sword, against ... the Man who is My Companion?” (Zechariah 13:7). If you think that was easier for Him to do than dying



for us Himself, why not ask your parents what they think?

Apply it: Jesus’ prayer for His disciples was that they would be as unified with each other as God the Father and God the Son are united. (John 17:21.) Is this the unity God wants for brothers and sisters and their parents? What keeps the Godhead united? **1 John 4:8.** □

THURSDAY Supreme Judge

MANY wicked rulers have honored evil people and punished innocent people. In vision, Daniel saw



that someday these wicked rulers will be judged for their evil deeds. God the Father, called the Ancient of Days, is a just Judge, “by no means clearing the guilty” (Exodus 34:7), although He is very eager to forgive every repentant sinner. **Galatians 1:4.** □

In the judgment, the Father works closely with Jesus, the Son of Man. (Daniel 7:9, 13, 14.) Jesus explained Daniel’s vision in this way: “For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, ... and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man” (John 5:22, 27). On another occasion Jesus

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declared, “If I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me” (John 8:16).

Paul said that God the Father is the Judge, and that “He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained” (Acts 17:31). Again we see that God the Father and God the Son work together and give a united decision.

Jesus assures us that if we are following Him, we do not need to fear the judgment. God is our friend, our brother, and our loving heavenly Father. (Matthew 6:1, Mark 3:35; John 15:14, 15; 20:17.)

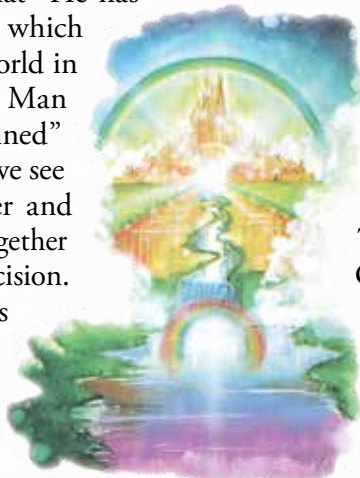
Apply it: In the judgment, God the Father has appointed Jesus to be not only our Judge, but also our Advocate. **1 John 2:1.** □ An advocate is someone who helps the accused, like a lawyer. Who is our accuser? Is it the Father as many people think? **Zechariah 3:1, 2; Romans 8:31–34, 38, 39.** □ Those who are loyal to Jesus have their sins forgiven and are assured a verdict of “Not Guilty.”

FRIDAY

Supreme Authority in the World to Come

THE mother of two of Jesus’ disciples, James and John, asked Jesus if He could give her sons the top positions in His kingdom—one to sit on His right hand and the other on His left. How did Jesus answer? **Matthew 20:23.** □

Jesus is our example. Although He is highly exalted and equal with the Father, He never seeks the highest place. (Philippians 2:5–11.)



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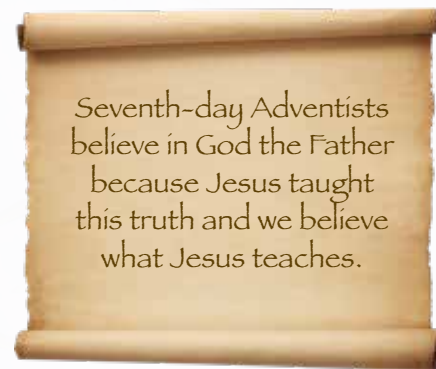
While fully aware of His divinity, Jesus even tenderly washed the feet of His betrayer, showing us what the Father would have done in the same situation. (John 13:1–17.)

Members of the Godhead never seek to exalt themselves. Jesus exalts the Father and the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 15:24–28; John 16:7.) The Holy Spirit and God the Father exalt Jesus. (John 16:13; Philippians 2:9.)

God is the most humble Being in the universe. In the last two chapters of the Bible, Jesus reveals to us the willingness of His Father to move His throne from heaven to this earth. He wants to dwell for all eternity with those who had once been rebels against His government and whom He now joyfully calls His children. **Revelation 21:3–7; 22:3–5.** □

Yes, Jesus shows us exactly how wonderful God the Father is. And He is also the perfect example of what we should be like—always submissive to the Father’s will.

Apply it: We live in a world where some people who call themselves Christians don’t like submitting to God. What example did Jesus set for Christians to follow? **John 15:10.** □



Seventh-day Adventists believe in God the Father because Jesus taught this truth and we believe what Jesus teaches.

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Introducing God the Father

In Acts 17:24–31, Paul introduced God the Father to some heathen people who had never heard of Him before. He said,

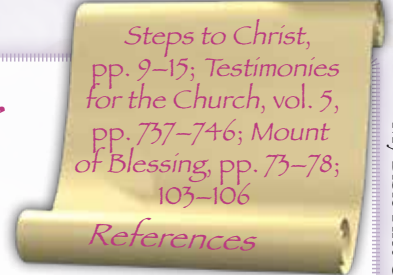
“God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’ Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising. Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”

What are some truths these verses teach us about God the Father?

Simple Bible Summary

God the Father is the creator, sustainer, and ruler of the universe. Like the Son and the Holy Spirit, He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, faithful and slow to anger. His great love never fails. So we can be saved from our sins, He has unselfishly given us the two best gifts He could give: the Son and the Holy Spirit; and He freely gives us everything we need.

Simplified from the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



Steps to Christ, pp. 9–15; Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, pp. 737–746; Mount of Blessing, pp. 73–78; 103–106
References

I have looked up and read all the Bible texts in my lesson this week! (Every text you read should be checked.) □

Bible Study #4
Learning what the Bible says about...

God the Father

 **God the Father is the ruler of the whole universe.**

1. **Daniel 7:9** In a vision, Daniel saw God the Father, whom he called “the _____ of _____.” He is also called “the Power” (Matthew 26:64), “Redeemer from Everlasting” (Isaiah 63:16), “the Excellent Glory” (2 Peter 1:17), and “Father of mercies” (2 Corinthians 1:3).
2. **Revelation 4:2, 3** The prophet John saw God the Father sitting on a beautiful _____. Many angels were singing praises to Him. (*Revelation 4, 5; 7:9–17.*)
3. **Psalms 45:6** God’s throne will last _____. He always has been, and always will be, the king and ruler of the whole universe. (*Psalms 93:2; Lamentations 5:19.*)
4. **Psalms 103:19** God’s throne is in _____, and His kingdom rules over _____. (*Matthew 11:25; Psalm 47:2.*) All the angels in heaven cheerfully do whatever He asks. (*Psalms 103:20–22.*) They trust Him because He is good, kind, wise, and fair. His government is based on righteousness, justice, mercy, and truth. (*Psalms 89:14; Acts 17:24–31.*)

 **The King of the universe is our loving Father.**

5. **Hebrews 4:16** God the Father’s throne is called the “throne of _____.” He wants to give us love, faith, grace, mercy, and peace. (*Ephesians 6:23; Titus 1:4.*)
6. **Matthew 6:9** What name did Jesus say we should use when we pray to God? _____

We should always show God proper reverence and respect. (*Hebrews 12:28, 29.*) But He doesn't want us to be afraid of Him. He wants us to trust Him as our kind, loving Father.

7. **Matthew 6:9-13** This sample prayer shows us how to talk to God the Father. Read it slowly and think: What does each part tell you about God and what He wants to do for you?
8. **John 16:23, 24** Whatever we ask the Father in Jesus' name (according to His will), He will _____ us.
9. **John 16:26, 27** Jesus said that we can pray directly to God the Father, because the Father Himself _____ us.

Jesus showed us what God is like.

10. **John 14:8, 9** Jesus said that if we have seen Him, we have seen the _____. So if we want to know what God the Father is like, we will study the life of Jesus.
11. **Mark 10:16** Jesus wanted children to come to Him. He took them up in His arms and _____ them. Does the Father love and welcome children just as much? _____
12. **Mark 2:5** A man was very sick because of some wrong things he had done. When he came to Jesus, Jesus said to him, "Son, your sins are _____." Is God the Father just as willing to forgive our sins? _____
13. **John 13:5** The disciples felt too proud to serve one another. But Jesus washed their _____. Is God the Father just as humble and willing to serve us? _____

The Father is love, and He does all He can to save us.

14. **1 John 4:16** God is _____. This is the best word to describe what God the Father is like.

15. **John 3:16, 17** God the Father showed His great love for us by giving His only _____ to die for us, so that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life. He wants everyone to be saved, not condemned. (*1 John 4:9, 14; John 6:39, 40.*)
16. **Romans 5:8, 10** God sent His dear Son to die for us while we were still His _____. He did not wait for us to love Him, but He loved us first. (*1 John 4:19; Matthew 5:44, 45; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 5:18–21.*)
17. **Romans 8:31, 32** Since God the Father was willing to let Jesus die for us, we can be sure that He will freely give us _____. (*Matthew 6:25–34; Ephesians 1:3.*)
18. **Luke 11:13** God the Father also wants to give us the _____. (*John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26.*)
In lesson 6, we'll learn why this is such a wonderful gift.
19. **James 1:17** _____ good gift comes from the Father.

 **Since God is our Father, we should live to please Him.**

20. **1 John 3:1** Our loving Father in heaven has given us a great honor by calling us His _____. Since He is our Father, He expects us to love and obey Him. (*Malachi 1:6; Hebrews 12:9; Exodus 20:6.*) He wants us to be His friends and spend time with Him. (*1 John 1:2–4.*) He wants us to sing to Him, thank Him, and tell others how good He is. (*Psalms 47:6, 7; 89:1; Ephesians 5:20.*) He wants us to be holy, like Him. (*Galatians 1:3, 4; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 4:3.*) He wants us to forgive others the way He forgives us. (*Matthew 6:14, 15; Luke 6:36.*) He wants us to be helpful and kind so others can see how good He is. (*Matthew 5:16; 45–48.*) He wants us to live in harmony with other people, who are also

His children. (*Malachi 2:10; John 17:11, 21.*) As our Father, He will discipline us when necessary. (*Deuteronomy 8:5; Proverbs 3:12; Hebrews 12:5–10.*) He will guide us and help us follow His plan for our lives. (*Jeremiah 3:4; Isaiah 64:8.*) And He will protect us and keep us safe from Satan. (*John 10:27–29.*)

God the Father wants to be with us.

21. **Matthew 6:9** God the Father lives in _____.
22. **John 14:2, 3** Before Jesus went back to heaven, He told His disciples, “I go to prepare a place for you.” Where? “In My Father’s _____.” God the Father wants to share His home in heaven with us—and even His kingdom! (*Luke 12:32; Revelation 1:6; 3:21; 7:15; 21:3, 4.*)
23. **John 14:23** The Father doesn’t want to wait until we get to heaven to live with us. He wants to live with us now. If we love and obey Jesus, the Father and the Son will make Their _____ with us. (*Isaiah 57:15; 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18.*)

My Decision

Jesus said that when He comes again, He will come “in the glory of His Father.” Everyone will see Him sitting next to the Father. (*Matthew 16:27; 26:64.*) The people who have chosen Satan to be their father (*John 8:44*) will be afraid when they see “the face of Him who sits on the throne” (the Father) and the Lamb (Jesus). (*Revelation 6:16.*) But if we have chosen God to be our Father, we will be very happy to see His face. (*Isaiah 25:9; Revelation 22:3, 4.*) Will you accept God as your Father and become one of His happy, obedient children? _____