



**Life Group Study Notes**  
**Father's Day: God Our Father**  
**Ps. James Lowe - June 18, 2017**

**Warm Up (10-15 minutes)**

**Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.**

- What was one quality you appreciated about your father (or another influential older male)?
- What do you think is an important quality that fathers should demonstrate?
- Who do you know that you think is an especially good father?

**Word (10-15 minutes)**

**Sermons can be heard online at [www.bethelworld.org](http://www.bethelworld.org)**

1 John 3:1-10 ESV *See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure. Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.*

All of us suffer from the failings or absence of our earthly fathers. No father is perfect; all are sinful. But if we will come to know our Heavenly Father who is perfect, we can receive that which we need. We can be healed and can grow in our ability to be better husbands, fathers, and friends to others.

## **Loved**

We must learn that we are truly loved by God. God's love is unconditional. He doesn't love us only if we love him back perfectly. He loved us even while we were estranged from him, even while we were turned away from God and were living sinfully as enemies of God. God's love is amazing.

God loves us as his children. We are not merely loved as part of his creation, but as his very own sons and daughters. God considers himself our father now, not only when we get to heaven. He has chosen us to be his family. We know we are chosen to be his children because we believe in Jesus, his Son, who died for our sins and rose again.

## **Purified**

If we are God's children, we will respond to God by purifying ourselves from sin. As God draws us to himself and reveals himself and his love for us, we will be convicted by the Holy Spirit of those things that displease him. The Spirit will help us to purify ourselves.

## **Practicing**

If we are God's children, we will grow in living a life of righteousness. We will no longer live a lifestyle of unrighteousness because God is active in our lives, revealing himself to us and transforming us. As our Father, God will continue to convict us by the Holy Spirit of our sin. He will continue to lead us out of sin and into righteousness because he loves us and wants what is best for us. God's goal is to conform us into the image of his Son, who perfectly reflects his own nature and character.

## **Loving**

As we grow in understanding that we are children of God, we will increasingly express love toward others in ways that reflect God's love. The more we know we are loved by God, the more we will purify ourselves. The more we purify ourselves, the more we will walk consistently in righteousness. And the more we walk in righteousness, the better we will be able to express God's love to others. We will love others unconditionally while also seeking to influence them to love God and live for him, just as God does with us.

## **Discussion (10-15 minutes)**

**Choose one of the points below, and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.**

- How does God express his love toward you?
- What is God working on in your life at this time? In what area is he wanting you to change?
- How is God wanting you to express his love in better ways?

## **Prayer (10-15 minutes)**

**Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.**

- Ask God to reveal the depth of his love for you.
- Ask God to show you what he wants to change in you at this time in your life.
- Ask God to help you express his love for others, especially those who you find difficult to love at this time.