

God the Father



WEST SOUND COMMUNITY CHURCH

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In 1952, J.B. Phillips wrote "Your God Is Too Small." He rightly discerned that most folks conceive of God in small—even pathetic—caricatures. His desire was to help people see that God is much bigger, much more magnificent than the common misconceptions about him. Among the several caricatures people often attribute to God is Grand Old Man, the Policeman, and the Parental Hangover, and the Meek and Mild.

- God is seen as a wise old gramps—he's got some sage, old-fashioned advice, but one can hardly consider him any longer relevant.
- God is seen as the neighborhood patrol officer...the cop on the beat. While he's always lingering, he provides a quiet reminder to our conscience.
- God is seen in light of our parents. Were they good? Were they bad? Were they just so so? Whatever they were, it may very well be that we psychologically view God as we view them.
- God is loving, but he's also ineffective...since he's always nice. Being meek and mild, it's not his intention to be a Lord.

As we pursue our understanding of the Trinity, the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, keep this warning from J.B. Phillips in our minds will be a very good thing. Perhaps this is especially true as we consider God the Father. Since fatherhood is such a familiar role, as well as a much-maligned, it's essential that we recognize that God the Father is the perfect Father...a perfectly balanced Father...an eternally existent Father...the Father in whom there is no fault.

1st The Father is God.

Ephesians 4:1-6 *"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."*

2nd Father God is compassionate

Matthew 7:7-11 *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!"*



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SOUND DOCTRINE: THE TRINITY

3rd Father God is a giver

James 1:16-18 *"Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures."*

4th Father God loves us

1 John 3:1,2 *"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."*

Hebrews 12:3-13 *"Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed."*

5th Father God is very personal

Romans 8:12-15 *"So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 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!"*

For Your Personal Application: Read the Gospel of John 16

1. From John 16:1-3 What can possibly befall a Christian? Why may this happen (vs. 3)?
2. From John 16:4-15 What is at least one incredible take-away regarding God the Son? One regarding God the Holy Spirit? One regarding God the Father? What does this do for your perception of yourself?
3. From John 16:16-33 What comparison is Jesus making between himself and believers regarding our relationships with the Father? (Note especially vss. 25-28: Just as Jesus asks of the Father...we ask of the Father! Say what?!)