Ponder Jesus' Relationship with His Father

Reflections, prayers, scripture, and recorded new hymns for public worship and personal devotions

from the series: Fresh Views of Timeless Truths

Ken Bible

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In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not [b]comprehend it.

There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.

There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John *testified about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me." For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

Recording of the following reading and hymn together: SEE JESUS Devotional Tapestry

As I See Jesus

Father, as I see Jesus, I see You. In Him I see Your beauty and glory, Your holiness and love. I see all You are. made fully human. In Him I also see who I am becoming. I see all You have destined me to be. When I am complete in Him, I will be Your glorious child, living in You and loving You, joyfully and forever. I will glow with Your holiness and Your goodness.

Father, You are fully showing Yourself and sharing Yourself with me in Jesus Christ. Praise to You!

Hymn recording: See All That Human Can Be

See All that Human Can Be

TUNE: Come, Thou Almighty King (ITALIAN HYMN) John 14:23; Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45-57; Ephesians 1:3; Hebrews 2:11, 17; 1 John 3:1-2



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Scriptures on Jesus' Prayer Life

(NASB)

Luke 3:21-22

Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

Luke 5:15-16

The news about [Jesus] was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.

Luke 6:12-13

It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God. And when day came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles.

Luke 9:18

it happened that while He was praying alone, the disciples were with Him, and He questioned them, saying, "Who do the people say that I am?"

Luke 9:28-31

Some eight days after these sayings, He took along Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming. And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah, who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Luke 11:1-4

It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples." And He said to them, "When you pray, say:

'Father, hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come.

'Give us each day our daily bread.

'And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.'"

Jesus and His Father

Because prayer is the key to a happier, more satisfying life, I'm particularly interested in what Jesus teaches us about prayer, both through His words and through His example.

I read about His life in the Gospels - the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Bible. The more I learn about Him, the more I sense that He had a special relationship with God, His Father. I see it in His life. I hear it in His words.

• He seemed always conscious of His Father, always living in His presence. His Father seemed always right there with Him.

• He always had an open line to His Father. Their conversation wasn't isolated only to special times of prayer. Prayer didn't seem to start and stop. Their conversation was open and continuous.

• We think of Jesus as being a "super man," knowing absolutely everything around Him and being full of unlimited power popping from His fingertips. But as we listen to His words, we learn the opposite:

"I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing." (John 5:19, NIV)

"The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work." (John 14:10, NIV)

• Because of His relationship with His Father, Jesus seemed always relaxed and always focused.

• He was busy but never rushed. What a wonderful quality! Though under pressure, He never seemed tense. How I want that in my own life!

In all these things I'm not talking about some vague, abstract quality or a mystical state of mind. Read about Jesus' life. I want His peace, His strength, His joy, His love. Doesn't everyone? I want His open and constant relationship with the Father, for that is the key to His life.

So when Jesus talks about prayer, I want to listen. I want to take Him seriously. I want to learn and follow Him.

Hymn recording: Teach Us to Pray



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Matthew 4:1-11

(NASB)

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."

Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written,

'He will command His angels concerning You';

and

'On their hands they will bear You up,

So that You will not strike Your foot against a stone."

Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."

Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only." Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

The Temptation of Jesus

The Heavenly Father drove His own beloved Son, with Whom He was thoroughly pleased, into the desert alone, for 40 days without food, to be tempted by His bitter enemy, Satan, who wanted only Jesus' destruction.

How different is our Heavenly Father's treatment of His children compared to us human parents! We do anything we can to spare our children unpleasant circumstances. The Father, knowing what is best for us and how much we can bear, regularly exposes His children to various types of pressure and need. We tend to focus on our children's temporary comfort and preferences. Our Father focuses on our character and eternal well-being. We shouldn't squirm or complain like selfish children when He puts us through difficult-but-necessary preparations for His service.

Here Satan tried to turn Jesus away from His Father. Knowing that the key to Jesus' power was His relationship with His Father, Satan tried to separate them. He tried to turn Jesus toward His own needs.

Jesus stayed focused on His Father. In His responses to Satan, He always spoke of the Father's will. That was His constant concern.

That is also our key in temptation. When you first sense Satan's approach, turn to your Father. Ask for His provision, His will, and His glory. Nothing can shake you if you depend on Him.

I have set the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. (Psalm 16:8, NIV)

> Facing temptation, Father, I choose the pleasure of pleasing You.

Hymn recording: With Jesus in Temptation

With Jesus in Temptation

Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13; James 4:7



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Philippians 2:5-8

(NASB)

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Empty before God

He emptied Himself—that's how Paul describes Jesus' preparation for ministry. As He came to earth, He emptied himself of the power, privilege, and glory that were uniquely His. He began His ministry here by going into the wilderness for 40 days of fasting and temptation. The first act of His public life was to humble himself and line up with the sinners for baptism.

Jesus emptied Himself. When He spoke or acted, it was only by His Father's will and through His Father's direct provision. He became transparent. When we looked at Him, we saw only the Father—His authority, His tenderness, His wisdom, the very loveliness of His character.

Jesus laid aside His own will:

"By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me." (John 5:30, NIV).

In this emptying, Jesus made himself totally dependent. All that He was, all that He did, was by faith in His Father. He made Himself an open vessel, holy and yielded. Thus His weakness was His great strength. His helplessness was His constant sufficiency. The Father's words in 2 Corinthians 12:7 are fully embodied in Christ:

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." (NIV)

As we begin to grasp this truth, hope and excitement rise in us. If Jesus' life was total dependence, if all that He was, He was by faith, then the horizons of our lives and ministries are formed by the beauty of Christ himself. Our lives can speak of God's greatness and glory. They can make His love a reality to people all around us. But this is possible only as we empty ourselves and depend constantly and completely on the Father.

If emptying was Jesus' preparation for ministry, it shouldn't surprise us that emptying is essential for us. We shouldn't feel persecuted when experiences in life and ministry wring out of us every last trace of self-sufficiency, ambition, and personal agenda.

Emptying involves pain, humiliation, frustration, failure, defeat, dead ends, despair, and giving up on dreams we thought were absolutely central. Emptying involves more of Christ and less of everything else.

Right now, Lord, this moment, by Your power and at Your call, I release to You all my drives, all my ideas, all my ways. I lay them down, Lord, and put them aside. I turn away from them. Flush them out of my heart, I pray. I will accept anything You send into my life to separate me from lesser things.

From this point on, I only want to move at Your call and at Your word, relying on Your power alone. Ambitions, ministries, hopes, dreams, I release them. My only desire is You and to follow You as Your lowly servant. I love You, Lord. I seek You alone.

Hymn recording: Each Moment by Faith



WORDS: Ken Bible MUSIC: Traditional Welsh Melody

ASH GROVE 6.6.6.5.6.6.6.5.D.

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Luke 4:1-2, 14-44 (NASB)

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days...

And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all.

And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written,

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are oppressed, To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord."

And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?" And He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well."

And He said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown. But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land; and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." And all the people in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things; and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, He went His way.

And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbath; and they were amazed at His teaching, for His message was with authority. In

the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, "Let us alone! What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet and come out of him!" And when the demon had thrown him down in the midst of the people, he came out of him without doing him any harm. And amazement came upon them all, and they began talking with one another saying, "What is this message? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out." And the report about Him was spreading into every locality in the surrounding district.

Then He got up and left the synagogue, and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Him to help her. And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and she immediately got up and waited on them.

While the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them. Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ.

When day came, Jesus left and went to a secluded place; and the crowds were searching for Him, and came to Him and tried to keep Him from going away from them. But He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose."

So He kept on preaching in the synagogues of Judea.

Following the Father

"I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life." (John 8:12, NASB)

Father, I say I want to follow You, but how easily I am distracted by my own desires. If I get my eyes off You, I begin following my agenda, not Yours.

Because Jesus maintained His close and constant relationship with You, He followed You into the harsh wilderness,

conquered temptation, and was empowered by Your Spirit (Luke 4:1-14).

He obediently spoke the unpopular truth in His hometown (Luke 4:14-30).

He confronted a demon in Capernaum and banished him (Luke 4:31-35).

He spoke with Your authority and wielded Your power over evil (Luke 4:36-37).

He healed all the sick brought to Him (Luke 4:38-41).

Though His schedule was demanding, He rose early to pray (Luke 4:42).

He knew when to ignore popular pressure and move on (Luke 4:42-44).

Father, that's what I need:

Your enabling for my weakness;

Your wisdom for my ignorance.

Father, give me the Spirit of Christ!

Hymn recording: Spirit, Come



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Scriptures on Jesus' Devotion to His Father

John 4:34

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work."

John 6:38

"I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

John 7:16-18

Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."

John 14:8-11

Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves."

See Jesus

Father, when I want to know Your will, You show me Jesus. When I want to know how to know Your will, You show me Jesus. Every moment of His life He bowed in Your presence, weak, needy, dependent, seeking, listening, obedient. Thus He lived every moment in every circumstance strong and sufficient. He knew Your will, for He only wanted Your will. You were His strength and sufficiency. All that He was. all that He needed flowed from a right relationship with You, a constant, dependent, obedient relationship with You. Knowing Your will flowed from knowing You. Doing Your will flowed from living in You. So it will be with me. Father, I want to live in the Spirit of Your Son, wanting You, needing You,

trusting You, breathing in You.

Hymn recording: Living Christ



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Scriptures on Jesus' Dependence on His Father

John 5:19, 30

"I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does... By myself I can do nothing. (NIV)

John 14:10, 24

"The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work... These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me." (NIV)

Moment by Moment

Father, Jesus always only said what You told Him to say and did what You showed Him to do.
Thus He was always in You, always in the moment, always focused on You, always fully responding to You.

That is what I want, Father.

Give me His mind and

His Spirit.

I am too often

distracted from You and

distracted from the individuals, needs, and opportunities right in front of me.

Father, may my heart and mind be

always here, always now, always trusting, always listening, always open to the gentle wisdom of Your love.

Keep me

like Christ, in Christ, moment by moment.

> For Himself and for His followers, Jesus measures success only one way: pleasing His Father.

Hymn recording: Like Christ, in Christ

Like Christ, in Christ

John 5:19-20, 30; 6:38; 14:10, 27; Colossians 2:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 TUNE: Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley (LONESOME VALLEY)



WORDS: Ken Bible MUSIC: Traditional Spiritual; arr. by Ken Bible LONESOME VALLEY 8.8.10.8.

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John 6:44

(NASB)

[Jesus said,] "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day."

John 14:6

Jesus *said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

Father and Son

John 14 – 17

Father, I was attracted to Your Son Jesus because of You. I sensed in Him something more than myself, something more than I could ever be on my own. I sensed You in Him, the Almighty God, the absolute, the transcendent, the pure, the impossibly holy. Yet Your purity was now human, seeable. touchable, and relatable. I saw "human" and "holy" joined in one Person. I was drawn to love Him and trust Him because I saw You in Him. Now, I find Him drawing me back to You. Through Him I am learning to know You. Through Him I am brought into Your holy presence. I am finding Him to be the way to You, the truth about You, the life that flows from You. In Him I hear all Your heart wishes to say to us. In Him I begin to see all You are doing for us. In Him I share Your Father-Son relationship: I receive a Father's deep love for His holy Son. I return a Son's worshiping love for His pure and perfect Father. In Your Son I breathe Your Spirit, the same Spirit that made Your Son so beautiful. In Him I breathe Your wisdom, Your holiness, Your love. In Christ, through Your Spirit, I breathe the peace and perfect union of Father and Son.

Hymn recording: Father and Son



WORDS: Ken Bible MUSIC: G. A. Young; arr. by Ken Bible GOD LEADS US 11.8.11.8.w.Ref.

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Fearing the Father

Isaiah 11:1-5; Luke 12:4-7

What does it mean to fear God? From scripture, it seems that fearing God is something other than being terrified of Him, and something more than simply respecting Him.

Whenever you want to understand God's will for our lives, look to the example of Jesus. This is how Isaiah described the Messiah over 700 years before His birth:

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And He will delight in the fear of the Lord. (Isaiah 11:2-3a, NASB)

Read the gospels, look at Jesus' life, and you'll see what it means to fear God. Jesus responded to His Father wholeheartedly, completely, constantly. He trusted Him. He revered Him. He obeyed Him. He lived for His Father alone. For Jesus, His Father was the ultimate reality, the ultimate source, the ultimate goal.

In short, Jesus treated God as God. That is what it means to fear God. That is what the Old Testament refers to when it repeatedly says:

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. (Proverbs 9:10, NASB. See also Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10; Prov. 1:7; 15:33)

Jesus taught His disciples not to fear evil, or persecution, or Satan, or death. There is only one thing in all creation that God's children need to fear:

"I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has the authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!" (Luke 12:4-5, NASB)

If we fear the Father as Jesus did, if we treat Him as God, if we trust that He is allpowerful, all-wise, and all-loving, why should we ever be anxious or fearful about anything that life or death can hold?

Hymn recording: The Fear of God

The Fear of God



TUNE: House of the Rising Sun Isaiah 6; 8:12-13; Jeremiah 5:22; 10:2-7; Malachi 4:2; Matthew 10:26-31; Luke 12:4-7

WORDS: Ken Bible MUSIC: Traditional Folk Tune and Ken Bible RISING SUN C.M.

Alt. Tunes: AZMON, MAITLAND, MARTYRDOM

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Recording of the following reading and hymn together:

QUIETNESS Devotional Tapestry

The Quietness of Jesus

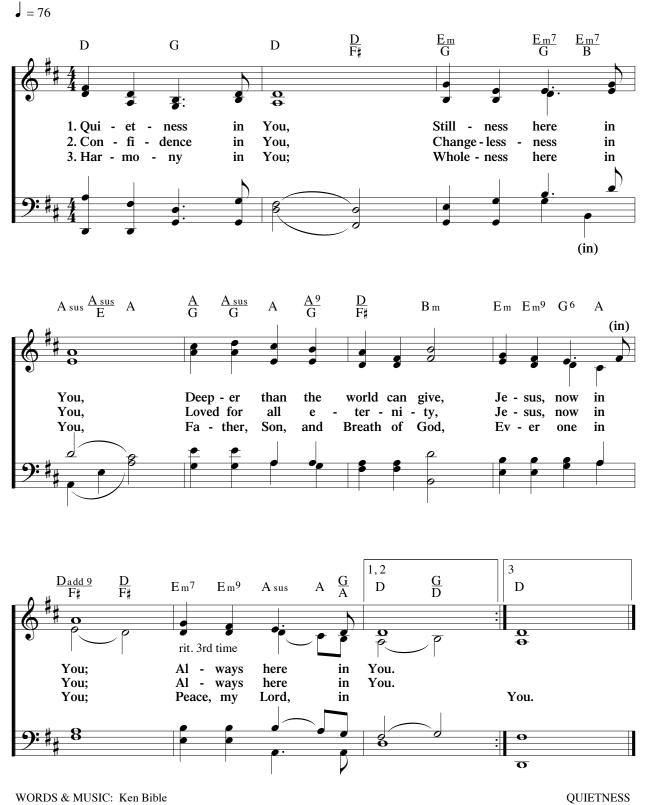
Father, as I watch and listen to Jesus, I sense a deep quietness in His Spirit. I sense a calmness in Him. He trusted You. He knew Your power, Your love, and Your perfect wisdom. Why should He be anxious? Why should He not obey You gladly and completely? He was confident, not in Himself. but in You. He was wholeheartedly committed to You. His words were Your words. His actions were Your actions. He moved each moment in Your wisdom, Your authority, and Your compassion.

Father, give me the Spirit of Jesus. Grow in me His faith, His love, His perfect peace in You.

Hymn recording: **Quietness**

Quietness

John 14:27; 17:20-24



^{5.5.7.5.5.}

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Scriptures on God's Promises in Christ

John 14:16-23

[Jesus said,] "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him."

Ephesians 1:3

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. (NIV)

1 John 3:1-2

See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. (NASB)

Jesus' Life Is God's Promise

Look at Jesus Christ:

human, yet divine; completely dependent on the Father, yet always sufficient in Him; weak, yet strong; suffering, yet joyful; pressured, yet at peace; having died, yet risen to boundless, endless life.

The life of Christ is the Father's promise to you.

As He lived, you can live here and now. As He lives, you will live forever.

Hymn recording: <u>Jesus' Life Is All a Promise</u>



8.7.8.7.D.

Alt. Tune: NETTLETON

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