

“Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ”

by Wayne Goff

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . .” 1 Peter 1:3a.

Numerous times in the New Testament epistles, God is called the “*Father*” of Jesus. Forty-nine times in the four Gospels, Jesus refers to God as “*My Father*.” In what way is this true? Is Jesus a created being, as the Jehovah’s Witnesses suggest?

The Father of Jesus Christ

Without a doubt, Jesus Christ is **not** a created being! John 1:1 identifies the Word as God. Hebrews 1:3 tells us that Jesus is “*the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person...*” Thus, Jesus shares *the identical essence* with God, and is God. But in some sense Jesus is God’s Son, and God is the Father of Jesus.

Perhaps this question is deeper than finite mortals can ever know. But let me suggest that the terms suggest a *Divine relationship* that existed in eternity, long before Jesus came to the earth and was born as a man. We can see this in Jesus being called “*the only begotten of the Father*” (Jn. 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; etc.). In John 1:14, we read “*...and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*” Likewise, John 1:18 says, “*No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*” Add to this the statement of Jesus to Philip, “*...He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’*” (Jn. 14:9). All of this confirms the exact Deity of Jesus with God the Father, and the relationship the Two share together.

“*Only begotten*” is used four times of human relations (Lk. 7:12; 8:42; 9:38; Heb. 11:7), but otherwise it occurs **only** in the Gospel of John and is used **only** of Christ. This fact tells us that relationship is behind the terms “*Father*” and “*Son*.” In Jesus Christ, you can behold the glory of the Father because they are the same! Jesus has declared God the Father to the world through His own incarnation.

Marvin Vincent wrote of John 1:14 that Jesus’ glory “...was the glory of one who partook of His divine Father’s essence; on whom the Father’s love was visibly lavished, and who represented the Father as His ambassador.” [Word Studies in the New Testament, vol. 2, p. 53]. So there is a definite Father-Son relationship when Jesus came to earth. In this sense Jesus said, “*My Father is greater than I*” (Jn. 14:28). God the Father held the superior position of authority while Jesus came to the earth. Jesus *voluntarily* submitted Himself to the Father’s will, just as a son should do. Jesus explained that “*...the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me*” (Jn. 14:24). Furthermore, you can see the authority of the Father over Jesus in the words of John 5:20-27. Jesus does what the Father authorizes. The Father permitted Jesus to have judgment over the world. The Father granted the Son to have life in Himself. When Jesus finished His work on earth through His perfect life, death and resurrection, Jesus then proclaimed, “*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth*” (Matt. 28:18). Up until that time such authority belonged to the Father, and Jesus as His Son acquiesced to Him.

There is another sense in which God is the Father of Jesus Christ. Acts 13:33 quotes Psalm 2 which reads, “*You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.*” This psalm was fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! This is the application made by the apostle Paul and recorded by Luke. So in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God was also His Father. This psalm is quoted also in Hebrews 1:5 to show Jesus’ superiority over the angels. Be careful in your reading of New Testament passages to distinguish when Jesus is called “*begotten*” because of His resurrection from the other times He is referred to as “*the only begotten.*”

In conclusion, may I remind to you that God is the **Father** of Jesus Christ (1) because of their eternal, precious relationship; (2) because Jesus came into the world as God’s Son, a subservient role; and (3) because Jesus was raised up from the dead by God the Father. Search the Scriptures to be sure these things are so. The descriptive wording of 1 Peter is identical to that of 2 Corinthians 1:3 and Ephesians 1:3. There is similarity also found in 2 Corinthians 11:31; Romans 15:6 and John 20:17. If you are seriously interested in studying the subject, then carefully study the gospel of John. It is enlightening!

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