

Fathered by God Part 4: Growing in Grace (9-29-2019)

Mexico Re-Cap: Grace Chapel Mexico – Brian & Rochelle Ray (church recently acquired a new building)

- Provided the materials and built benches to double their seating capacity
- Bible study with leaders Brian is developing
- Pool Party for kids living in very poor community
- Sunday Church service & Kid’s ministry meeting (lots of new volunteers)

Last Few Weeks: Fathered by God . . .

Part 1 – God is our Father, and Jesus wants us to know, enjoy, & love the Father he knows! **(Adam & Eve)**

Part 2 – God is a **Loving Father** – who gives **Freedom**, runs to **Redeem** us, & pursues us with His **Presence**. He does this so that we can learn first hand what love is, and can enjoy giving & receiving it! **(Luke 15)**

Part 3 – Our Father is teaching us to love like Him – sacrificially! He will do this by Instruction, Warning, & Discipline. Always in Love for the purpose of helping us grow in Love. **(Cain & Abel)**

Today: “Growing in Grace” – Planted, Rooted, Tended

Jesus birth & early child-hood . . .

- Nazareth – Bethlehem – Jerusalem – Bethlehem – Egypt – settled in Nazareth
- Slaves to Rome – Out of place & outcast – Running for their lives – Refugees in Egypt
- The child was – celebrated, provided for, protected, loved

Open with a Parable from Jesus . . .

Mark 4:26-29 (NKJV)

(26) And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, (27) and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. (28) For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. (29) But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

Note: The power of unseen growth that happens below the surface over an extended period of time!

Jesus lived out this parable, untrusting himself to the process of growing in His Father’s “greenhouse.”

We will spend our morning looking at an example of how he did this found in Luke’s gospel chapter 2 . . .

1) Planted – Jesus was planted where he would grow - in Spirit, Wisdom, and Grace

Luke 2:40 (NKJV)

And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Notes: Jesus was planted into a family where he could learn & grow . . .

- **Spirit** (pneuma) – the breath or presence of God.
- **Wisdom** (Wisdom, skill, cleverness, tact, expertise in any art)
- **Grace** (Favor, 1st appearance of the word in the NT)

By Grace - We are born into the world of our father – into their homes, into their lives. They provide, guide, & protect. **Ultimately they give us a specific structure . . .**

Luke 2:41-42 (NKJV)

(41) His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. (42) And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.

Notes: Jesus learned from that structure – from customs, the law (The Word), and feasts.

Application: Don't skip the details – learn from the Father, & immerse yourself in His family!

- **Spirit** – Be in His presence, hang around where his presence is welcomed & invited!
- **Wisdom** – Learn the Word. Learn to use it & live by it!
- **Grace** – God's favor is upon you, can you see it? Learn to recognize Grace more than Flaws

2) Rooted – Jesus positioned himself to absorb all the Father had to give

Luke 2:43 (NKJV)

When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it.

Notes: Lingered – “Tarried behind” (remain, abide, endure). Literally to “remain under”

Luke 2:46-47 (NKJV)

(46) Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. (47) And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.

Notes: He is found in the midst of teacher (listening & questioning), All those listening to him were astonished at His understanding & answers.

- **Understanding followed “Inquisitive” Learning!**

Jesus positioned Himself to Learn: Lingered, Listened, and Probed (like a root digging for good soil).

Jeremiah 17:5-10 (NKJV)

(5) Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD. (6) For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, In a salt land which is not inhabited. (7) "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD. (8) For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit. (9) "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? (10) I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.

Application: Where are your roots? Are you probing within yourself, trusting to your own ability & strength?

Jesus shows us the real path – trust in the Lord, and put down roots in Him. Choose to believe that it pays off with good fruit over the long haul. That’s his promise!

Remember: Jesus learned for 30 years and taught others for 3. How about that for a ratio?

3) Tended – Jesus submitted to his Heavenly Father & His earthly parents

Luke 2:48-49 (NKJV)

(48) So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." (49) And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

Notes: Must – necessary, right and proper, a sense of duty, I ought to be!

- About My Father’s Business
- In my Father’s House
- In the things of my Father – he was immersed in, and absorbing the ways of His Father.

***Am I focused more on what I want to receive from my Father, or focused on what He wants to give me?**

Luke 2:50-51 (NKJV)

(50) But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. (51) Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart.

Notes: “Subject to them” (To place in order, to place under in an orderly fashion, Literally – “To place under”)

Compare Lingered (vs 43) to Subjected (51): He lingered (remained under) with His Father, but he also submitted (placed under) to his parent’s (imperfect) rule.

Jesus navigated the transition from imperfect earthly parents to his Heavenly Father. And the results speak for themselves . . .

Luke 2:52 (NKJV)

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Notes: (Compare vs. 40-52) **Grace** from God leads to **grace** among men – you can't circumvent that process. It is essential; otherwise your standing in the world is built upon shifting sand.

Conclusion: Let's position ourselves to Grow in Grace by embracing life in our Father's House!

- **Planted** in His word and in His family
- **Rooted** by lingering in His presence, listening to His instruction, and seeking understanding
- **Tended** by God, trusting in His expert hands, even when we question where He has us