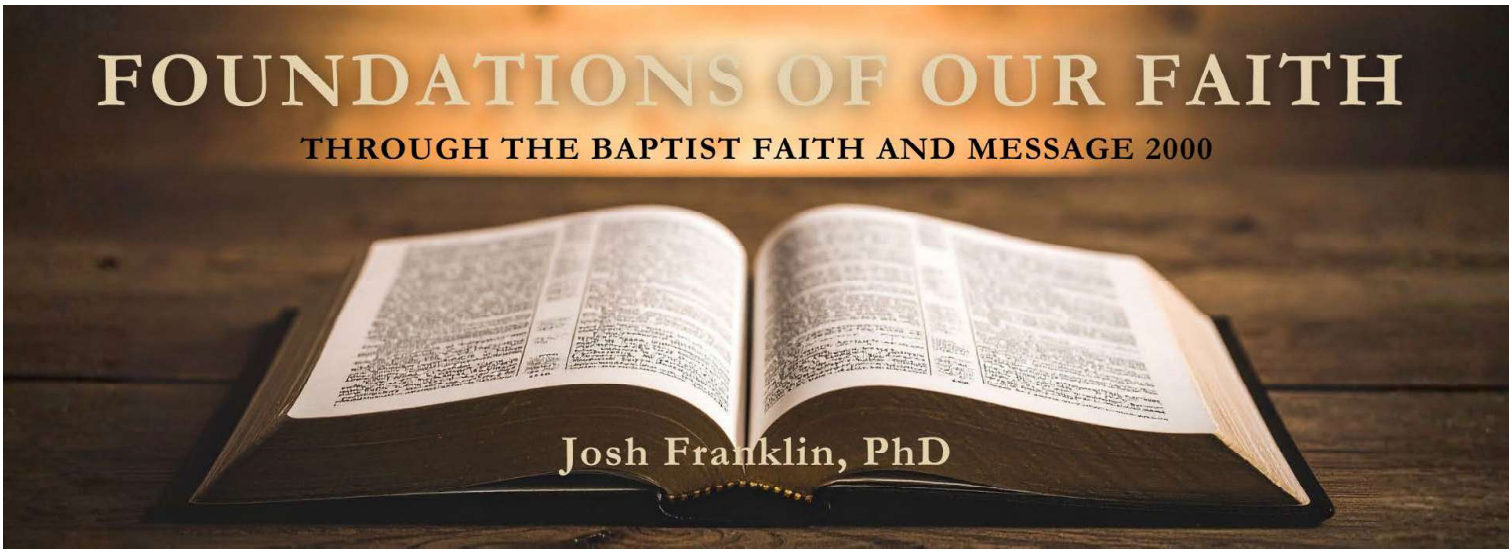


God, Can I Call You "Father"?

Article 2A: God the Father - "God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men."

Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff; 20:1ff; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3, 15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

Psalm 103:13 (HCSB): "As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him."

I. Providential Care[1]

God's love and care are described through providence, meaning He provides for His creation, involved intimately with His creatures (Ps. 104). This providence is evident in several ways:

- **Care and Protection:** The predictable operation of natural laws, like gravity, showcases God's care. The story of Joseph (Gen. 37–50) illustrates how God's plan prevails over human intentions (Gen. 50:20).
- **Provision:** God's provision is evident in stories like Elijah's miraculous feeding (1 Kings 17:2-7). Jesus emphasized this in the Lord's Prayer, teaching us to seek daily sustenance from God (Matt. 6:9-13).
- **Moral Structure:** The universe's cause-and-effect structure reflects God's providence. Moses highlighted the consequences of obedience and disobedience (Deut. 30:19-20), and Paul emphasized sowing and reaping (Gal. 6:7-8).
- **Purpose of Grace:** History testifies to God's providence and purpose, ultimately displaying His glory through the redemption of sinners (Acts 17:24-31).

II. Knowing God as Father

1. God is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 3:16-17)

2. God is the Father of all who believe in Christ (Galatians 3:26; Galatians 4:6-7)

[1] This point is summarized from Kelley, Land and Mohler, *The Baptist Faith and Message* (LifeWay, 2007), "God the Father".

3. As Father…

A. God Cares For His Children (Psalm 103:13; Matthew 6:25-34)
B. God Corrects His Children (Proverbs 3:12)
C. God Comforts His Children (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17)
D. God Is Close To All His Children (Ephesians 2:18; 1 Peter 1:17; John 3:16-17)

J.I. Packer once wrote, "If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means he does not understand Christianity very well at all. For everything that Christ taught, everything that makes the New Testament new, and better than the Old, everything that is distinctively Christian as opposed to merely Jewish, is summed up in the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God. 'Father' is the Christian name for God."[2]

III. Is It Scriptural to Address God as "Mother"?[3] No!

1. **Scripture itself forbids that any word of any Scripture be changed.** The Bible is verbally (every word) and plenarily (in totality) inspired, and nothing can be added or taken away. In this case, we are talking about an addition, since referring to God as "Mother" is to add to the words of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21; Revelation 22:19).

2. **Scripture never addresses God as "Mother" in any context.** The Bible does compare God's emotions to that of a woman in childbirth (Isaiah 42:14), but nowhere does the Bible equate God with a woman (Isaiah 63:16; 2 Corinthians 6:18). In the rules of language, a comparison (simile) is quite different from equating one thing with another (metaphor).

3. **God has no gender in Scripture.** God is Spirit (John 4:24). God is neither male nor female in a biological sense. This is also true of angels (Matthew 22:30).

4. **God revealed Himself only in masculine language.** He used such terms as Father, Lord, King, and Husband (Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 10:17; Psalm 74:12; Jeremiah 10:10; Hosea 2:16). The Bible uses masculine language for God because that is the language with which God has revealed Himself.

5. **Jesus, the Son of God, addressed God as Father and taught us to do the same.**
   A. Matthew 6:9 in the Lord's Prayer
   B. Matthew 26:39 in Gethsemane
   C. Luke 23:34 on the Cross

6. **The apostles of Jesus always referred to God as Father.** Never once did any of them address God as Mother (1 John 2:1; James 1:17; 3:9).

IV. How You Treat Him As Father

1. **Accept Him As Father (John 1:12)**

2. **Trust Him As Father (Matthew 6:26; Proverbs 3:5-6)**

3. **Talk To Him As Father (Hebrews 4:16)**

4. **Submit To Him As Father (Hebrews 12:9)**

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[2] J. I. Packer, *Knowing God* (Downers Grove, Ill: Intervarsity Press, 1973, 1993), 201.
[3] Bill Bennett, *Politically Incorrect Answers to America's Hot-button Issues* (Wilmington, NC: New Hanover Printing, 2008), 127-136.