

Knowing God, JI Packer **Chapter 19: Sons of God** (Sept. 28, 2025)

	Old Testament	New Testament
God's Name	I AM	Father
Our relationship	Because God is holy (separate) we keep our place & distance in His presence	By the blood of Jesus draw near w/sincere heart & full assurance of Faith (Hebrews 10:19-22)

- God created everybody, but is *father* only to those who recognize their sinfulness and put their trust in Jesus Christ.
- Hosea's wife had a third child, and God told Hosea what to name the child. Read **Hosea 1:9-11**
- At that point they were "not my people," but Hosea sees hope in the future. The "new Israel" is the church and the "sons" will be the new Christians (i.e., Gentiles)
- What is a good father?
- The 4 Gospels were written for 4 different audiences. Who was "Matthew" written for? Where does it start? "This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham" Read **Matthew 1:15-16**.
- Whose parentage is listed? Why Joseph?
- **Adoption** is a family idea – re love & God as *father*. God intends for believers to be like Jesus: a reflection of God ("if you have seen me, you have seen the Father"), and to have the same family/fellowship with Him.
- Packer says adoption is the key concept in the New Testament: "adoption... is the highest privilege that the gospel offer: higher even than justification."¹ And, "justification – by which we mean God's forgiveness of the past together with his acceptance for the future – is the primary and fundamental blessing of the gospel is not in question."

What does it mean to be part of God's family?

- Jesus considered his disciples to be family. What did He say when Jesus met the women at his tomb... (Read **Matthew 28:9-10**).

¹ Packer, p. 206.

- Per John's Gospel, there are four primary characteristics of God as Father:
 1. Authority
 2. Affection
 3. Fellowship
 4. Honor (as God exalted Jesus, so he exalts Jesus' followers)

Values

- Now that you know you are part of God's family, you are responsible for keeping up the "family values": We are royal children because our Father is the King of kings. As such, we are given more training than others, to prepare us for the future. And our training includes discipline, which is not always enjoyable, but "The Lord disciplines those He loves."²
1. Adoption is the basis of Christian conduct
 - a. Imitating the Father (Matthew 5:44-45, 48)
 - b. Glorifying the Father (Matthew 6:9)
 - c. Pleasing the Father (Matthew 6:1-18)
 2. Basis for Christian prayer
 - a. Our Father... (Matthew 6:9)
 - b. God is always listening to Christ's prayers and to ours (John 11:42)
 - c. Provides the good things we need (Matthew 7:7-11)
 3. Basis for life of faith
 - a. We worry too much (Matthew 6:25-33)

What does our adoption show us?

1. God's love
 - a. The Cross (Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:8-10)
 - b. Adoption into His family (1 John 3:1)
2. The glory of the Christian hope
 - a. Our future is not a possibility, or even a likelihood, but a guaranteed certainty – it is a promised inheritance (**Romans 8:16-17**)
 - b. We share in the glory of Christ
3. Key to understanding the ministry of the Holy Spirit
 - a. He indwells: sanctifies & energizes

² Packer, p. 222.

b. He provides assurance, joy, peace & power

Summary³

Packer: “I am a child of God. God is my Father; heaven is my home; every day is one day nearer. My Savior is my brother; every Christian is my brother, too.”

Do I understand my adoption? Do I value it? Do I daily remind myself of my privilege as a child of God?

Have I sought full assurance of my adoption? Do I daily dwell on the love of God to me?

Do I treat God as my Father in heaven, loving, honoring and obeying him, seeking and welcoming his fellowship, and trying in everything to please him, as a human parent would want his child to do?

Do I think of Jesus Christ, my Savior and my Lord, as my brother too, bearing to me not only a divine authority but also a divine-human sympathy? Do I think daily how close he is to me, how completely he understands me, and how much, as my kinsman-redeemer, he cares for me?

Have I learned to hate the things that displease my Father? Am I sensitive to the evil things to which he is sensitive? Do I make a point of avoiding them, lest I grieve him?

Do I look forward daily to that great family occasion when the children of God will finally gather in heaven before the throne of God, their Father, and of the Lamb, their brother and their Lord? Have I felt the thrill of this hope?

Do I love my Christian brothers and sisters with whom I live day by day, in a way that I shall not be ashamed of when in heaven I think back over it?

Am I proud of my Father, and of his family, to which by his grace I belong?

Does the family likeness appear in me? If not, why not?

³ Packer, p. 228-229.