

Barriers to the Father's Love (pt. 2)

1. The Father wants us not only to know the TRUTH of his love (agape), but also to experience the TOUCH of his love (PHILEO).
2. God wants us to have something more than DOCTRINAL UNDERSTANDING; he wants us to have a RELATIONAL EXPERIENCE.
3. Doctrines inform us; love transforms us. Doctrines expose sin; love extinguishes sin.
4. In our last workshop, we looked at two things that cause barriers to the Father's love: the **father of lies** and **faulty teaching**.
 - a. The father of lies speaks lies about our heavenly Father, causing us to doubt his love and to fear his punishment.
 - b. Faulty teaching causes our need to *unlearn* many things. Unlearning is much more difficult than learning.

I. Third barrier: Father Images (Luke 11:9-13)

1. Our perception of the heavenly Father keys off of our perception of our earthly fathers.
2. From our text we see that Jesus encourages us to seek the Father's gifts, help, presence....to be seekers of the Holy Spirit.
3. Distortions of our perception of the heavenly Father, due to the flaws that sin has produced in our earthly fathers, create the *most prominent barriers* to experiencing the fullness of the Father's love.
4. What did Jesus mean when he said that all fathers are evil? He meant they are flawed, that there is not one sinless father.
5. Fathers are required by God to represent him. But God knows that no father will do it flawlessly. All will fail at some point.
6. Children are responsible for their responses to their earthly fathers and to God.
7. Earthly fathers are to communicate love with words, touches, and expressions.
 - a. If a father fails to demonstrate love and affection to a child, the child will have difficulty receiving and expressing love. This becomes a barrier to the love of our heavenly Father.

II. Common distortions of the Father image

1. *Performance oriented fathers*

- a. This kind of father produces the perception that God demands religious performance.
- b. The child of this father needs to hear God say, *"This is my beloved child, in whom I am well pleased."*

2. *Passive fathers*

- a. The passive father isn't around much or even if he's there, he's not *there*. He's too busy to communicate love.
- b. The resulting perception of the heavenly Father is distant, non-caring, non-involved, and non-demonstrative.
- c. The child of this father needs to hear God say, *"I am with you always. I will never fail you or forsake you."*

3. *Punitive fathers*

- a. This father gives pain instead of love.
- b. The resulting perception is a heavenly Father who is harsh, stern, unforgiving, unloving.
- c. The child of this father needs to experience the heavenly Father's touch that says, *"I am near to the brokenhearted and I heal those who are crushed in spirit."*

III. Conclusion

1. Our world is full of people who have invisible injuries—hurts that will not heal. God wants to heal those hurts.
2. 1 Corinthians 1:9 *"God, who is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."*
3. Our heavenly Father sent Jesus to *"...bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release for the prisoners; to comfort all who mourn..."*