

Title: "A Father's Heart"

Text: **Malachi 4:6:** "And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers."

Target: The way a person perceives God is the lens in which a person sees the world, and the way they see themselves. Our effort today is to change out the lens!

I. Recognizing the Role of Father: (Genesis 2:24)

- A. **The Image:** "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son" **Exodus 4:22**
- B. **The Investment:** "O, Lord you are our Father, we are the clay, you are our potter, we are all the work of your hand." **Isaiah 64:8**
- C. **The Instruction:** "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." **Deut. 6:7**

II. Requirement of Respecting our Father:

- A. **The Principle:** "Honor your father and your mother" **Exodus 20:12**
- B. **The Promise:** "that our days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you." **Exodus 20:12**

III. Rejection of Replicating our Father:

- A. **His Beliefs:** "Why should not the son suffer for the iniquity of the father?" **Ezekiel 18:19**
- B. **His Behaviors:** "Don't be like your father's..." **Zachariah 1:4**
Absent/Abusive/Authoritarian/Accusing/Addict

IV. Results of how we Regard our Father: "For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel." **1 Corinthians 4:15**

Dictates my Filter > Drives my Feelings > Determines my Future

V. Reclaim the Reality of Father: "and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared." **Luke 1:17**

- A. **You are Acknowledged:** "the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God" **Luke 12:8**
- B. **You are Accepted:** "No longer a slave, but a Son" **Galatians 4:7**
- C. **You are Approved:** "I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty." **2 Cor. 6:18**
- D. **You are Affirmed:** "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are!" **1 John 3:1**

Take Away: Do not allow your past pains from an earthly father prevent you from present pleasures from a Heavenly Father.