DEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP: FATHER AND CHILD

Brad Driedger - November 8, 2026

1 John 3:1 (NIV)
See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!...

God isn't just a bigger version of your dad, he is the perfect version of your dad.

Jesus came to reveal the Father's heart to us

John 1:16–18 (NLT)
From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another. [17] For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. [18] No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

Luke 15:1–2 (NLT)
Tax collectors and other notorious sinners often came to listen to Jesus teach. [2] This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law complain that he was associating with such sinful people—even eating with them!

Luke 15:3–10 (NLT)
So Jesus told them this story: [4] "If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others in the wilderness and go to search for the one that is lost until he finds it? [5] And when he has found it, he will joyfully carry it home on his shoulders. [6] When he arrives, he will call together his friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.' [7] In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away! [8] "Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Won't she light a lamp and sweep the entire house and search carefully until she finds it? [9] And when she finds it, she will call in her friends and neighbors and say, 'Rejoice with me because I have found my lost coin.' [10] In the same way, there is joy in the presence of God's angels when even one sinner repents."

1. **The Father values and pursues each one**

He feels the loss of the one! HE VALUES EACH ONE DEEPLY!

Luke 15:11–19 (NLT)
To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: "A man had two sons. [12] The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.' So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons. [13] "A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. [14] About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. [15] He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. [16] The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything. [17] "When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! [18] I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, [19] and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant." '

2. **The Father invites us to realize his goodness and repent**

These stories are an invitation to realize god's goodness and turn to him instead of our own way!

Luke 15:20–24 (NLT)
"So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. [21] His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.'
But the father doesn't even let him finish his little speech…
[22] "But his father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. [23] And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, [24] for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.' So the party began.

Not only does the Father value us enough to pursue us when we wander, and invite us into repentance - he lavishes his love on us when we repent and return to him!

3. **The Father wants to lavish His love on us**

Our shame shouldn't drive us away from God - it should drive us to God!
HE WANTS TO RESTORE US - LOVE US - FREE US!

Luke 15:25–32 (NLT)
"Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, [26] and he asked one of the servants what was going on. [27] 'Your brother is back,' he was told, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.' [28] "The older brother was angry and wouldn't go in. His father came out and begged him, [29] but he replied, 'All these years I've slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. [30] Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!' [31] "His father said to him, 'Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. [32] We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!' "

It's not your score that <u>gets you in</u> to the family of God, and it's not your score that <u>keeps you in</u> the family of God.

You are welcome in the family of God, JUST BECAUSE GOD CHOSE TO LOVE YOU!