

Introduction:

- “Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!” (John 14:6-7, NLT)
- “No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you.” (John 14:18, NLT) Thankfully we are not left like this...God promised to become a '*father to the fatherless*' (Psalms 68:5)
- No other writer in the NT uses the word Father in a personal way as does the apostle John. Maybe that is why he is closest to Jesus. Maybe that is why he was the only disciple found at the foot of the cross. Maybe that is why he wrote more on love than any other NT writer. He experienced the love of the Father through Christ Jesus.

I. The Condition of Orphans

- A. An orphan is a child whose parents are deceased or who have abandoned or deserted them. The condition this creates in the human heart is unimaginable.
 1. It is a child. The word child communicates two things as soon as it is spoken.
 - a) This is a vulnerable and weak little person.
 - b) This assumes relationship...mother and father. If you are a child you belong to someone.
 2. This child is now alone.
 - a) This vulnerable and weak person has no mother or father or grounding relationship.
 - b) A key part of the created order is now missing.
- B. The orphan spirit.
 1. The orphan spirit refers to a spiritual condition in which some Christians profess outwardly to know God as Father, but experience an internal contradiction to that belief. Deep down they struggle to comprehend/believe that God really loves them.
 2. An orphan spirit is a person who lacks emotional identity and seeks to earn his identity through his/her efforts.
 3. Quite often, a person with an orphaned heart wants to be loved but is afraid to reach out for fear of being rejected. As a result of an orphan spirit many Christians are bitter, scared, angry, or abusive because their hearts have not been healed.
- C. Characteristics of an orphan spirit. The following traits contrast the orphan spirit from the spirit of sonship: (From Joseph Mattera; Charisma Magazine 2013)
 1. The orphan spirit operates out of insecurity and jealousy. The spirit of sonship functions out of love and acceptance. Those with an orphan spirit are constantly battling jealousy and insecurity, since security originates in a secure relationship with our parents. Those with an orphan spirit are so insecure, they even have a hard time hearing a biological or spiritual father praise their siblings or co-laborers. But those with the spirit of sonship are so secure in the Father's love and favor that they are content to serve in any capacity needed.
 2. The orphan spirit is jealous of the success of his brothers. The mature son is committed to the success of his brothers. Those with an orphan spirit are happy when their brother

fails because it makes them feel good about themselves. On the other hand, those with the spirit of sonship joyfully commit themselves to serve, celebrate and help their brothers succeed, since they don't work for human accolades but out of a deep sense of the love and affirmation of Father God.

3. The orphan spirit serves God to earn the Father's love. The mature son serves God out of a sense of divine acceptance and favor. Along these lines, those with an orphan spirit are constantly striving and trying to earn the Father's love through accomplishment in ministry or career. Those with a spirit of sonship already know they are accepted in Christ and serve others out of that abundance of acceptance.
4. The orphan spirit tries to medicate its deep internal alienation through physical stimulation. The mature son walks in the joy and presence of the Lord for comfort. Those with an orphan spirit are constantly trying to push down their sense of alienation, loneliness and lack of self-worth through constant work, going from one relationship to the next, physical gratification and a life of narcissism and self-indulgence. However, the more they indulge, the more addicted they become and the larger the hole in their heart becomes because only the love of the Father can fill the deep emotional needs they have. Those walking in sonship bask in the presence and love of God and practice the joy of the Lord continually as their source of strength because they understand that grounding their security and self-life in anything other than God is like trying to build a house on sinking sand.
5. The orphan spirit is driven by the need for success. The Spirit leads the mature son into his calling and mission. Many attempt to accomplish great things to satisfy the deep yearning in their hearts for their father's approval. This results in them being driven to succeed instead of being led by the Spirit. Only those with a strong sense of sonship will allow the Lord to direct them and bring opportunities to them without trying to drum up their own success.
6. The orphan spirit uses people as objects to fulfill goals. Mature sons serve people to bless the kingdom. Those with an orphan spirit tend to use people as objects to accomplish their goals. Whenever we objectify people, we manipulate them with words, threats, and anything necessary to have our way and control them. Mature people who walk in sonship don't use people; they serve and release people to fulfill their destiny in Christ.
7. The orphan spirit has anger and fits of rage. The spirit of sonship rests in the Father's ability to control and guide the future. Those with an orphan spirit have issues with uncontrollable anger, fits of rage and other forms of manipulation because they feel they must control others and their circumstances in order to fulfill their goals. This is because they lack the trust necessary in their heavenly Father to guide and control their future. Those walking in sonship walk in the Father's rest and have ceased from their own works so the Father can have His way in their lives.
8. The orphan spirit is always in competition with others. The spirit of sonship is always blessing others. Those with an orphan spirit are always trying to outdo others in their

church, family, business or denomination because they receive their identity through being better than everyone else. Those who walk in sonship are constantly seeing how they can bless others, since they already have the affirmation of God in their souls. They want to freely share His love with others.

9. The orphan spirit lacks self-esteem. The spirit of sonship walks in the love and acceptance of Father God. Those with an orphan spirit have a hard time loving and accepting themselves. Those walking in sonship are filled with a sense of divine love and acceptance that enables them to walk confidently in the joy of the Lord in spite of the fact that all humans are sinners and fall short of the glory of God.
10. The orphan spirit receives its primary identity through material possessions, physical appearance and activities. The spirit of sonship is grounded in sonship and the Father's affirmation. Those with an orphan spirit never have enough career success, material possessions, pleasure or illicit relationships to satisfy the hole in their heart related to their identity. Consequently, they are constantly striving to gain satisfaction through the use of various things or people in their lives. Those who walk in sonship are so grounded in their divine Father's affirmation that they can be satisfied serving in the background and can celebrate the success and attention others receive. The void in their soul has already been filled with the unconditional love of the Father.

II. The Cure Is Christ

A. Jesus is the cure to all of humanities ills.

1. The greatest gift known to humankind is to accept, receive and walk in the love of the Father, who so loved the world that He gave His only Son so that we may not perish or waste our lives away but experience the abundant life that only our divine Father can give.
2. Jesus came to make a way for humanity to get back to God. That was His sole purpose in coming. To open the biggest and greatest adoption agency known to man! He came to seek and to save orphans! He came to heal the heart of orphans...those vulnerable, weak, abandoned spiritual children cut off, alienated, and rejected because of sin.

B. "Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!" (John 14:6-7, NLT) the triple expression emphasizing the many-sidedness of the saving work. Morris, L. (1995). *The Gospel according to John* (pp. 569-570). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

1. The Way - Jesus not only shows people the Way, He is the Way!
 - a) The "Way" is used in 4, 5, and 6. A way is a connecting point. It is the path that connects two things.
 - b) The link/path is between God and sinners. Orphans to their true Father!
2. The Truth - "Truth" reminds us of the complete reliability of Jesus in all that he does and is. There is no lie, no deception in Him. Mankind had believed a lie in the serpent. Now

in Christ they are presented the truth! Believing a lie will keep you an orphan. Believing the truth will set you free and connect you to the Father once again!

3. The Life - life" stresses the fact that mere physical existence matters little. The only life worth the name is that which Jesus brings, for he is life itself. You have not lived until you have met the Savior!!!

C. Faith is the key to this realm of existence.

1. By faith you become a child of God.
2. By faith you receive the Father's love. You do not earn this!

III. In The Father's House

A. In the Fathers House you have identity—you are His. You are loved. You are accepted!

B. In the Father's House you are important—you do not have to fight for position. You are secure in His love.

C. Man was intended for God's pleasure. This is not to be seen in a carnal way. His pleasure is not in what He can get from you but His pleasure is in you! The Father said of Jesus, "This is my dearly loved son who brings me great pleasure."

1. Revelation 4:11 (NLT) Everything God made was for His pleasure.
2. Colossians 1:16 All things were created by Him and for Him.
3. Isaiah 43:1-7 We were created for His glory. He formed us, we are His!
4. God wanted a family. He walked with Adam and Eve in the garden and His desire is to walk with us too. He enjoyed their company and wants to enjoy friendship with us as well!

D. Man was made in the image of His son

1. Ie. "You look like your Father!"
2. Romans 8:28-29 We are predestined to the likeness of His son. Not only are we made in Jesus' likeness but we can also share his inheritance and the intimate relationship he has with the Father.
3. 2 Corinthians 3:18 being transformed into His likeness.

Conclusion:

- The heart is the control center of all the success you will experience in life. As you allow your heart to be healed and made whole, you will break negative cycles, such as short-term relationships, debt, and marriage and family problems. You will begin to have fun in your relationships; you will enjoy your job more; and you will feel a sense of destiny. It starts with the revelation that God is a good, good Father.
- So, how is your heart condition? You may not know it, but your heart is deciding your quality of life. Make a decision today that you want a whole, healthy, healed heart and begin taking steps to Healing the Orphaned Heart.