

Call to Obedience #220
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
www.schultze.org

Fatherhood is more than begetting children. It also includes
begetting an environment conducive to godly living.

A Letter To Fathers

By Reimar Schultze

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ep. 3:14).

First, let us observe that the words of this text, “of our Lord Jesus Christ,” are not found in the most ancient manuscripts. This is not to say that there are biblical or theological problems with the addition of “of our Lord Jesus Christ,” but it is to say that, for now, we are to focus on the Fatherhood of God in a broader sense than that of his being simply the Father of the Lord Jesus.

The Fatherhood of God began long before God begat his Son, Jesus, in the virgin Mary. The Fatherhood of God goes back, even before Genesis. Fatherhood began “When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy” (Jb. 38:7).

The Fatherhood of God began with begetting. You don’t become a father until you beget, until something of you comes forth from you and begins an existence, until something out of you enters history, until something out of you, which was not, now is and bears something of your image or likeness.

So, we need to perceive that fatherhood is not just about bringing people into the world, but it begins with begetting an environment that becomes the proper habitat for people to live out their existence in the favor, in the light, and under the protection of a holy God.

God’s Fatherhood began with begetting a world, an environment where each part begotten, whether it be a grain of sand, or the most distant star, would speak of God: of his presence, of his love, of his power, of his wisdom, of his infinite knowledge, of his generosity, of his patient long-suffering, of his holiness--of HIM (see Ro. 1:20).

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father.”

Oh, I believe this is great! I believe that Paul had all of this and much more in mind when he bowed his knees to pray. You see, our faith and our prayers are never greater than our God.

So then, God had no beginning, but his Fatherhood did, and it began, I believe, when he created the angels to worship him.

When God had made the angels, and they opened their eyes, they beheld him in the fullness of his glory and, hence, the phrase from Job, “and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” The moment the angels saw God, a shout came out of them which still continues to travel through the infinite universe.

Have you taken the time to get close enough to God to elicit a shout from your soul, or are you trapped and occupied with the negatives of life, making them your prison of sadness?

Next, I believe God begat the universe. This is when God became Father the second time around. As God flung the stars into space and as each settled into its place, as they beheld the glory of God, they immediately, as if led by a master conductor, began to sing for joy in the most perfect harmony.

Yes, Job, where were you “When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy”? Where were you and I, dear friend?

Now, the music of the stars has not ceased to this very day. Years ago, I read that scientists had developed instruments that can take us far beyond our spectrum of hearing, and they have discovered that there is music in outer space.

No, don't feed me this liberal theology that when God speaks about trees and floods clapping their hands, hills being joyful together, and stones crying out in praise to Jesus (Is. 55:12; Ps. 98:8; Lu. 19:40), that it is just figurative speech, or poetic language. Indeed, sometimes it is, but at other times, it is not. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and said, “...if these [children] should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out,” he was not interested in making a poetic statement, nor did he speak figuratively. He was not a liar nor was he kidding--there is life in the stones; there is life in everything God has created. God is life, and all that comes out of him has life in it. God never created a dead thing that would not respond to his voice. The sun, the moon, the stars, the animals--such as Baalam's ass--yea, even the stones of the field are in league with him.

We humans distinguish between dead, inorganic matter and living, organic matter. God does not do so. All he created has life. At his word, rocks gave forth water in the desert. At his word, the sun stood still to help Joshua finish his battle. At his word, the winds blew when Jonah got into the wrong ship; and, at his word, water turned into wine. Everything God created has an ear and responds to his voice.

There is life in every atom--electrons revolving at tremendous speeds around a nucleus of protons and neutrons--and what drives it all, my friend? And what would we find in the very nucleus of an atom had we a microscope a billion times more sensitive than the best in the world--perhaps a whole new universe? As the ant is limited in its perception of what an airplane is (an understatement), are we not also as limited in knowing what is in a raindrop, an electron, or a galaxy a billion light years away from us?

First, God begat the angels, next he begat the universe, and then he created man in his own likeness and image. He begat Jesus as the Son of Man when he was conceived into human flesh, then he begat the church on the day of Pentecost. And then, in the future, when we shall meet him in the air, God will beget new bodies for us, and finally God will beget a new heavens and a new earth. Hallelujah! Yes, this is the Fatherhood of God. “I bow my knees unto the Father.”

What you just read is all in that word, “Father,” and a billion times more!

So then, does it not behoove us earthly fathers to broaden our perspective more as to what we are called to in fatherhood? Is it not more than providing food, clothing, and shelter for our children for the next 18 years? Yea, even many animals will do that much, minus the clothing, of course.

No, we, as God, must include in our call to fatherhood the creating of an environment that nourishes not only the body and mind of our little ones, but so much more their souls, if we want to rise above the animal level of fatherhood. We must create a micro-universe for our children even before we beget them, a micro-universe that speaks from every corner: Go with God! We must beget a habitat where the wind of the Holy Spirit blows through the souls of men and the spirit of Jesus is ever present even in the most trying times.

Therefore, father, create a home where the books on the shelves are such that they neither confuse nor distract your child from the narrow way. Create a home where you need no apology on Judgment Day for the records, the cassette tapes, the CDs, and for the movies and television programs you or your children have kept and used. Create a home where

conversations are filled with “God talk,” where evil is shunned and ungodly relationships are avoided.

Create a home where patience and long-suffering never run out; where tempers never flare; where voices are never raised in anger; where no one is ever allowed to pout; where prayer and praises are as common as breathing; where servanthood is the watchword; where sacrifice is considered one of the highest virtues; and where going the second and third mile is the rule rather than the exception.

Oh, father, look at all that God our Father has begotten for us. Shall we not then also beget more than our own flesh and blood; shall we not then also take from his riches and custom-create an environment where the souls of our children will flourish and bloom in the light of the glory and mercies of the Lord in order to live with him forever?

Yes, fathers, create, or shall I say beget a home where men of God are not criticized but prayed for, where mothers are treated like queens, and where the needy are looked after.

Create a home where forgiveness is granted 7 times 70 times, where saving and giving are greater than spending and getting, where the mother’s discipline is backed up consistently by the father’s words and strong hand.

Create a home where you are as accessible to your children as God is accessible to you, where church attendance is not sporadic but regular, where prayer meetings are attended, where visiting the sick ranks higher than sports, television programs, and hobbies, and where the best of plans are dropped in a second when the Holy Spirit speaks and says, “Come with me.”

Create a home where excuses are only allowed when circumstances are beyond our control, where laziness is unknown, where punctuality is no stranger, where industry and hard work are known as a blessing, where jesting, joking, and kidding are unheard of, where the Bible is read daily, where children are not spoiled, where Sundays are not sacrificed for work, sleep, or recreation, where children are fed wholesome food to keep them from preventable diseases, and where the elderly are honored and looked after.

Dear father, shall I add more, or is this enough? “I bow my knees unto the Father.”

Oh, let this be enough: the Fatherhood of God teaches us that begetting the environment, the habitat, is just as much a calling as begetting the person for the environment.

May God grant us all his tender mercies in the expansion of our duties that we can hear that sweetest of all voices on Judgment Day: “Well done, thou good and faithful servant... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Ma. 25:21).