

## **GOD’S IMAGE    JESUS’ GOD’S IMAGE.**

Excerpts from the book “*To Be Like Jesus*” of P. Ribes, s.j published by the Gujarat Sahytia Prakash, Anand.

### **Intent of these jottins.**

- ✓ *These materials were prepared as a model Lesson for a Catechism Book for our secondary schools However they been adapted here for personal reflection, talks, recollections, retreats, adult catechesis, and similar events*
- ✓ *The goals of that lesson were:*
  - *To make our students aware of the image of God they have.*
  - *To help them compare their image of God to the one given to us by our Lord Jesus.*
- ✓ *The image of God we have, conditions all our religious thoughts, feelings and practice.*
- ✓ *At the basis of a healthy spiritual life and practice there has to be a healthy “God-image”.*
- ✓ *If we relate to false or distorted images of God, our religious belief and practice will be faulty. We shall live in a religious world of make-belief.*

## **GOD AS AN ALL “LOVING” AND AN ALL “POWERFUL FATHER”**

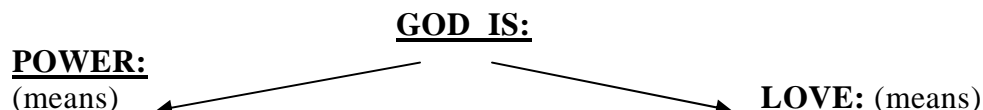
### **GOD AS LOVE AND POWER**

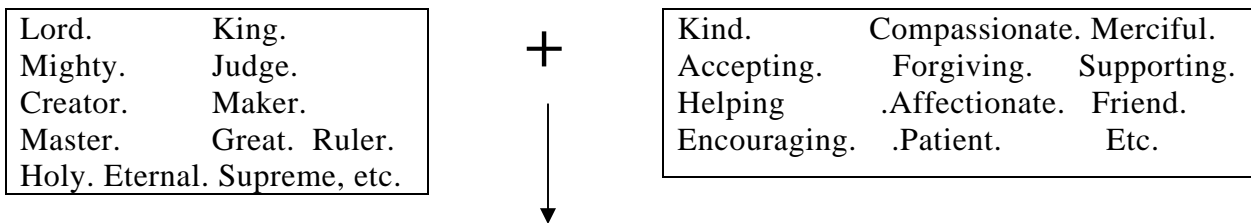
Jesus experienced God both as LIMITLESS POWER AND LIMITLESS LOVE  
For Jesus God is “almighty” and “all-loving”.

### **Read and reflect on texts quoted below and discover God as Power and Love**

Mt. 6/25 - 34	God can and loves to take care of you.
Mt. 7/7 – 11	Ask, Seek, Knock.
Lk. 15/11 – 32	The Prodigal Son.
Jn. 3/14-21	God so loved the World...
Lk.18/9 – 14	The Publican and the Pharisee.
Lk. 15/1 – 10	The Los Sheep and the Lost Coin
Lk. 11/ 5 – 13	God the Father’s Providence.
Jn. 8/1 – 11	Woman caught in adultery

### **ACCORDING TO JESUS TEACHINGS**





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THE SUM TOTAL OF ALL  
THESE NAMES AND QUALITIES

***EXPRESSES WHAT GOD IS***

**THIS MIXTURE OF POWER AND LOVE IS THE GOD OF OUR LORD  
JESUS CHRIST. CHRIST'**

**JESUS' GOD – IMAGE = (POWER 50% + LOVE 50%)**

**Reflect on the diagram below.**

GOD = POWER .....	He can help us.	(He has tability)
GOD = LOVE.....	He wants to help us.	(He has the will)

**SO. WE CAN TRUST HIM.**

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**GOD AS A FATHER - YES, HE IS AN ALL POWERFUL  
AND AN ALL LOVING FATHER**

- Jesus experienced God as (**power + love**).
- He wanted to communicate his experience to us human beings.
- For that he required a human language, human words and human\_images.
- The best word, the best image he could find to convey his God-experience to us – human beings - in human language was the word: “**father**”.
- According to his life experience in a Jewish family and in Jewish culture, the word “**father**” was the one that expressed best his experience of God as the one who is “**power and love**”.
- In the patriarchal Jewish culture, it was the father, as the head of the family, who held **power and authority**, and within the family too, the father had **love** for all its members.

- Thus, the best way, the best image Jesus could find to express his God-image was,:

**“GOD IS OUR HEAVENLY FATHER”.**

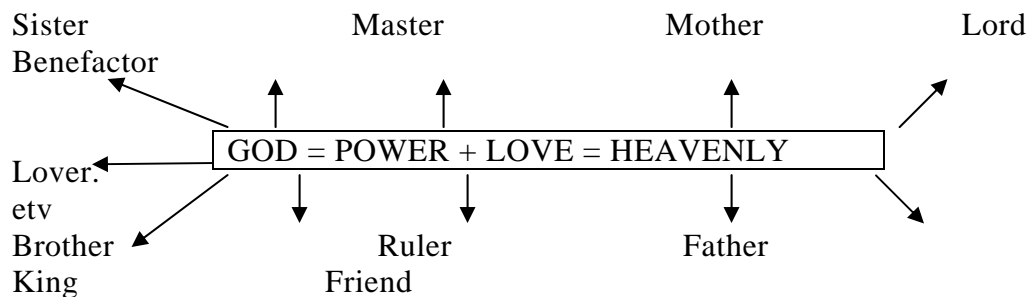
**Thus sketchily we could draw**

In human families: The best word to qualify the one who has **power + love** is  
**FATHER.**

In the universe at large: The best way to express that God is: **power + love** is  
**HEAVENLY FATHER**

**The words GOD THE HEAVENLY FATHER contain all we can say about God**

- No human words – not even the word Father or **Heavenly Father** - can tell us in an exhaustive way what God is.
- Human words are only approximations, analogies, images.
- As long as we experience God as POWER AND LOVE we could call him also by different names,
- In the Bible God is called also Mother, Spouse, Master, Lord, Creator. Judge. Rock and even other names.
- All of them are different facets, different aspects of his greatness and infinitude –
- We can use any of these words to name God as long as it helps us to get in touch with him,
- All the names he has been invoked with down the ages, put together, still fall short of fully expressing what God is.
- The sketch below may give us a more comprehensible idea of what God is. However, all said and done we still remained enveloped in the mystery of what God is!



**Consequences of Having Jesus’ “God – Image”**

- We become Christ-like. True Christians.
- Our prayer life will be like the one of Jesus.
- We shall say the “Our Father in sincerity and truth.

- We shall live in submission to God's will
- Our deepest aspiration will be: "Not our will, but God's will be done".
- We shall not complain or grumble against God.
- We shall live in peace and serenity.
- We shall feel free from fears, anxieties, and scruples.
- We shall feel united with God our Father and one at heart with Jesus.
- We shall live in God's hands like a little child in his mother's arms.
- We shall serve and love God spontaneously, not out of fear or of a spirit of gain.

## **Final Reflections**

- What was your "God-image" before going through these notes?
- How did that God-image affect you in the past in your dealings with God? Explain.
- What's the God-image you should have from now on?
- What should you change in your old way of perceiving God?
- From now on, how will you pray, go for Mass, make your confessions, etc.?

## **Closing Prayer:**

- Place yourself in the presence of God your loving Abba – Father.
- Slowly and in a meditatively, recite the OUR FATHER.
- End with a hymn to the Father: ' f.i. Father, we adore you", Abba Father “\

## **APPENDIX ONE Suggested Activities**

### **1. Write a few prayers to God on a given topic in keeping with the God-image of Jesus.**

- Thanksgiving.
- Petition: exams, healthy, death, success, for job, etc....
- Surrender.
- Forgiveness for some wrong done.

### **2. In various situations, how would people with different God-images pray?**

- Exams are near.
- In the lost of a dear one.
- After falling into a serious sin.
- He lost his purse
- One has been falsely accused

### **3. Designs and Color Scheme:**

- Draw a design that for you symbolizes God...

- Color it. Use any color scheme that expresses how you feel about God.
  - Explain the meaning of your design and of the colors used.
- 3. Cartoon-drawing competition.**  
Drawing cartoons of various wrong God-images.
- 4. Write four “slogans”** expressing what the God – image of O.L. Jesus is.
- 5. Impersonate Jesus.** Write the prayer Jesus would say to God his Father were He in your present situation.

## **APPENDIX TWO**

### **NEW TESTAMENT QUOTES**

#### **GOD AS OUR FATHER**

*Actually, nowhere in the N. T. has Jesus given a formal instruction on the “Fatherhood of God”. For Jesus, that God was a Loving Father was a fact of experience! It needed not explanation.*

*It was natural for Him to speak of God as of a Father. It was natural for Him, too, to pray to God and relate to Him as to a Father.*

*Below you will find a few N.T. quotes on the Fatherhood of God. Grouped into three chapters based on Jesus’ teachings, his prayers and on ST. Paul’s teachings.*

#### **Chapter 1 When Jesus speaks of God he always does it as of a Father**

Mt: 5:43-48	Jesus’ teaching on loving our enemies
Mt: 6:1-4	Jesus teachings about charity.
Lk 11:1-13 and Mt 6 :5-15	Jesus’ teaching about prayer.
Mt 6:17-18	Jesus teaching about fasting.
Mt 6: 25-33	Jesus teaching about Gods providence.
Mt 7:7-11	Ask, seek, knock.
Mt 16:16-17	Peters’ declaration about Jesus.
Mt 20:22-23	Request of the mother of the sons of Zebedee.
Lk 12:32	Riches in heaven
Jn 15:11-17	Jesus the real vine

#### **Chapter 2. When Jesus prays or talks to God he does so as to a loving Father.**

Mt 11:25-27	Jesus rejoices.
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Jn 17:1-26  
 Mt 26:39-42  
 Lk 23:44-46

Jesus prays for his disciples  
 Jesus before his Passion. Agony in the Garden.  
 Death of Jesus, parting prayer of Jesus.

### **Chapter 3. St Paul's teachings of God as our father.**

Rom 8:12-17  
 Gal: 3-26-28,4:6

We are Gods sons. We cry, Abba. Father!  
 Through faith we are Gods children. The Spirit in our hearts makes us cry: "Abba Father".

Eph: 1:3-6

God the Father.. Chose us to be his children in Christ even before the foundation of the world!

Eph3: 14-15  
 Col 1:12-14

All fatherhood comes from God.  
 The father has rescued us... and brought us to the kingdom of his son.