

The Last Word:
The Children of Abraham 'In the Bosom of the Father'
(Reflections on September 11 and John 1)"
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□ **John 1:16**

- Craig Keener: This phrase “grace for grace” describes “an inexhaustible supply of _____.”
- *Desire of Ages*: “The gift of _____ reveals the Father's heart. . . . Having undertaken our redemption, He will spare nothing, however dear. . . . No truth essential to our salvation is withheld, no miracle of mercy is neglected, no divine agency is left unemployed. Favor is heaped upon favor, gift upon gift. The whole _____ of heaven is open to those He seeks to save. Having collected the riches of the _____, and laid open the resources of infinite power, He gives them all into the hands of Christ, and says, All these are for man. Use these gifts to convince him that there is no love greater than Mine in earth or heaven. His greatest happiness will be found in loving Me.” (57)

□ **John 1:17-18**

- Robert Smith (v 18): “The unique one, himself God, who is at the _____ of God, has made God known.” (*Wounded Lord* 13)
- Craig Keener: “in the bosom of the Father” (v 18) describes “absolute _____.”
- NIV (v 18): “. . . who is himself God and is in closest _____ with the Father.”
- Robert Smith: “John’s gospel is usually heard to be asserting, ‘Jesus is like God.’ That way of thinking assumes that we know in advance who and what God is. But this climactic verse of the prologue declares quite clearly that God is not known. That we might know the unseen and therefore unknown God, the evangelist invites us to draw near to Jesus and contemplate his story. The evangelist reverses ordinary ideas about the relation between God and Jesus. He is not saying, ‘Jesus is like God.’ Instead this verse suggests, ‘_____ is like _____.’” (14)
- *Steps to Christ*: “None but the Son of God could accomplish our redemption; for only He who was in the bosom of the Father could declare Him. _____ who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it manifest. Nothing less than the infinite sacrifice made by Christ in behalf of fallen man could express the Father's love to lost humanity.” (14)

□ **And September 11**

- In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus the beggar, Jesus describes heaven with the Jewish idiom, “in the bosom of _____” (Luke 16:22, 23).
- All three monotheistic religions on earth today claim _____ as their Father (see Luke 16:24).
 - Genesis 16:15—“So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, _____.”
 - A baby son preserved by divine _____ (God’s visit with Hagar).
 - He was the father of the “children of the _____” (Genesis 25:6, 18)—the father of the children of Islam.
 - Genesis 21:3—“And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him—whom Sarah bore to him—_____.”
 - A baby son born by divine _____ (God’s visit with Abraham and Sarah).

- He was the father of the “children of _____” (Exodus 3:15)—the father of the children of Judaism.
- Galatians 3:29—“If you are Christ’s, then you are _____ seed, and heirs according to the promise.”
 - Spiritual children “born again” by divine _____.
- So which clan is going to make the move to reconcile with the others?
- *Would you be surprised to learn that God has raised up a branch from within one clan that is to point all three Abrahamic families to the “bosom of the Father”?*
 - With the Jews this Christian branch shares: #1—the belief in one God; #2—the seventh-day Sabbath; #3—the Ten Commandments; #4—the seven-day Creation; #5—the sanctuary of God and its unique truth; #6—the truth about death and the resurrection; #7—the divine health code; #8—the great controversy between God and Satan; #9—the spirit of prophecy; #10—the great Day of Atonement (judgment); #11—the truth about the Messiah/Redeemer.
 - With the Muslims this same Christian branch shares: #1—the one beneficent Creator God; #2—reverence for the Holy Book; #3—a life of prayer in commitment to God; #4—a lifestyle of radical health (no pork, no alcohol); #5—acts of charity in devotion to God; #6—an endtime judgment; #7—the return of Isa al Masih (Jesus the Messiah).
- So who is this branch within the Christian community that has been raised up to bridge to all three monotheistic religions of the world? I believe it is the Seventh-day Adventist Church—a community of Christians closer to Jews and Muslims than any other Christian body.
 - The children of Abraham and Moses, of Ishmael and Isaac, are the very children the heavenly Father longs to draw deep into his eternal heart.
 - Given our mission to build bridges to our Muslim and Jewish friends and neighbors, then of all people shouldn’t be first to reject the impulse to forward any email or any video that belittles or attacks the sincere faith of these children of Abraham.
 - For if we as children of Abraham ourselves seek to destroy the integrity and reputation of godly Muslims and Jews, we engage in *fratricide*, the mortal attack of children upon their own siblings.
 - We must—in the name of the Word made flesh to save us all—seek to build faith bridges to the very ones others are rejecting and attacking.
- Nearer, still nearer, close to Thy heart,
 Draw me, my Savior, so precious Thou art;
 Fold me, O fold me close to Thy breast,
 Shelter me save in that haven of rest.
 —C. H. Morris
- For when I am near to him, it will surely be clear to me, that I must be near to them, too—all the rest of the children of Abraham.

“Nearer, Still Nearer”

Blessing, Christ, treasury, universe, breast, intimacy, relationship, God, Jesus, Only He, Abraham, Abraham, Ishmael, miracle, east, Isaac, miracle, Israel, Abraham’s seed, miracle