

# Your Father

06 - Living the Simple Gospel  
Church on the Park | Sunday, 8 JAN 2017

**Text:** Philippians 1:12-13

**Theme:** Circumstances will crash around you like waves, but your Father is a solid rock for you to stand on.

**Intro:** Since December I haven't preached. A few times a year, I lay down my sword (God's Word) so that I can sharpen it. When a woodcutter's ax gets dull, he has to use much more strength to chop down a tree. But, if he rests from chopping and sharpens his ax, he will be able to chop a tree down more efficiently. I find that this principle is important in every area of life. It's not just good for preaching and teaching, but whatever field you are in.

Did you know that there is a difference between preaching and teaching? It's a fine line, but there is a distinction. Preaching is proclaiming. It's declaring what is and what God will do. Preaching exclaims, "Jesus is Lord!" Teaching goes on to explain and develop why and how he is Lord. Preaching and teaching go together.

At church my emphasis is on preaching and feeding you the truth, but I also intertwine that with teaching. At Bible School my emphasis is on teaching, enabling you to feed yourself and others. But I also weave preaching into my teaching at Bible School.

Today, I want to proclaim to you what I believe God spoke to me for 2017 & beyond. I have three simple points about who your Father is and what it means for us.

## 1) **Your Father is faithful, not fickle; he is like a rock and he will fulfill his Word (Num. 23:19).**

- Your Father wants you to **know** him, not to think he is too great to know. And it's through knowing your Father that you become **strong** (Daniel 11:32).
- A **fickle person** is constantly changing their mind and their mood.
  - One day they say something, the next day they change their mind. You never know what type of state they will be in.
- You may be tempted to think that your heavenly Father is fickle. Your thinking may go something like this:
  - *"God is too **mysterious** and **high** for me. I don't know his plans or thoughts. He is too **great** and **glorious** for me to know him. Maybe **one day** he wants to be **nice** to me, but the next day he wants to make me **miserable**. He's God in heaven and he can do what he wants"*
    - **Eli** had a similar attitude to this in 1 Samuel 3:18.
      - It may seem like a godly attitude, but it isn't.
- Look at what **Numbers 23:19**: "God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind; **does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?**" (NASB & NIV; interestingly spoken through Balaam who was trying to curse what God blessed).
  - **God has blessed** your life, do not **curse** it. God has blessed your family, do not put it down. The Father has blessed this church, do not speak harsh words against it. **Speak what God speaks.**
- Here's why it's important to know that the **Father is faithful, not fickle**:
  - **Negative circumstances** will come against you like **waves** continually **beating** on a **rock**. Some of those **waves** are **small**, some **occasionally** are **very big**.
  - But here's the **good news, the gospel**. These **circumstances**, these waves, **do not change** your **Father's heart** and **Word** toward you.

- The **Lord** is like a **mega-rock** that you can stand on, **unmovable** by the **circumstances** that come against you.
- **Paul** knew this. That's why his **prison sentence** did not cause him to lose his faith, rather it boosted it and others.
- In **2017 is a year of fulfilment**. The **Father** will **fulfil** his word in your life and this church.
- As I was on my **prayer walk**, I heard the Father speaking, *"I build my church on the Rock. It's on the Rock that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. I also want you to be like a rock, unmoved by these waves."*

## 2) Your Father will build you when you are on his Rock (Matt. 16:15-18).

- **Jesus** is the **Rock**, the **sure solid foundation** that **your Father builds on**. Look at Matthew 16:15-18.
  - *Who do you say that Jesus is? Do you say that he is your rock? Do you remember who first called God, a rock?*
- **Anna and I** are called to lay the **foundation** of this church, but it's up to you to **build** on it. **You are the builders**, we are just here to **guide** the project.
- *Going back to the question, who was the first one to call God a rock? And who else called God a rock?*
- **Moses** is the first to call God the '**Rock**' in his song (**Deu. 32:4**, 13, 15, 18, 30, 31, 37).
  - Moses is **not** referring to a **small stone**, but a **huge mega-rock**, like a **mountain**.
    - The word in Hebrew is **tsur**. It **sounds like** our word '**sure**.'
      - It means a **rock**, rock face, boulder, rocky hill, cliff or mountain. And Moses uses the word to talk about God as a **mighty refuge, fortress and stronghold**. **God is solid** and his **word is solid**.
      - His **character** and **ways** do not **change**.
      - "Yahweh is a Rock, not in being represented as an idol carved from stone, but in that he is **totally reliable**. He is a sure source of strength and he endures throughout every generation. There is no unrighteousness found in him; he is completely upright (Deut. 32:4; Ps 92:15)" (**TWOT**)
  - *How did Moses come up with this name? It came as a **revelation** to him in the **wilderness**.*
    - God caused the **water** to **flow** out of the **rock** (Exo. 17:6)
    - Yahweh also had Moses stand in the '**cleft of the rock**' when he **revealed** his **character**, his **name**, to him (Exo. 33:21-22).
- When the Lord **fulfilled** his Word to **Hannah**, she boldly declared: "There is no one holy like the Lord, indeed there is no one besides you, nor is there any **rock** like our God" (1 Sam. 2:2).
- **David** also proclaimed **God** as his **rock**. David called God '**Rock**' **more times** than anyone in Scripture. It continually comes up in **Psalms**.
  - *How did he discover God as his Rock? In the **wilderness** when **Saul** was **relentlessly pursuing** him. David would **hide** in the **rocks**—the **mountains** and **caves**.*
    - The **greatest revelation** of God is in the **wilderness** (1 Chron. 11:15; 1 Sam. 23:25; 24:2-3).
  - Like Moses, **David's last song** was filled with the **revelation** of God as his **rock** (2 Sam. 22:2, 3, 32, 23:3).
    - God's **Word** to our **church**: "Truly is not my house so with God? For he has made an everlasting covenant with me, ordered in all things, and secured; for all my salvation and all my desire, ***will he not indeed make it grow?***" (2 Sam. 23:5).
    - Psalm 18, 19:4 **\*27:5**; 28:1, 31:3, 40:4, 42:9, **\*61:2-7**, **\*71:3**, 78:16, 20, 35, 81:16, 89:26, 92:15, 94:22, 95:1, 105:41, 114:8, 144:1.
- Stay on the **rock** and **don't sink** into the **waves** and **mud** of **negative circumstances**.

## 3) Your Father builds with stones, not bricks. Bricks are exactly the same, but stones are diverse (Isa. 56:6-8).

- Your Father wants to **build** more **foreigners** on his **rock**.
- This is **the year for the foreigner**.

- At one time you were a foreigner to this Rock, to God's Kingdom.
- **Welcome** the **foreigner** with open arms.
- The **Father's heart** is for the **foreigner** and those **without family**.

**Conclusion:** First, your Father is faithful, not fickle, even though circumstances can be unpredictable. Second, your Father is a solid rock and he wants to build you up on his rock. And lastly, the Father is building his house with stones, not bricks. Every person he builds with is different.