

The Perfect Father

Father's Day, 2016

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Intro: At a time we honour our earthly fathers, it bares mention that not everyone has had a good experience with their fathers. Some earthly fathers have been abusive, cold, or just plain not there. This is why we want to focus on our Heavenly Father. God is the perfect Father. Here are FIVE characteristics of our Heavenly Father that we want to focus on:

1. He's My Provider

Matthew 7:9-11 "Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"

- Generally speaking, most parents don't want to deprive their children of the basics of life
- Earthly dads are sinners (Jesus said "you then, being evil...")

Matthew 6:33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

2. He's My Discipliner

Hebrews 12:5-6 "And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "MY SON, DO NOT DESPISE THE CHASTENING OF THE LORD, NOR BE DISCOURAGED WHEN YOU ARE REBUKED BY HIM; 6 FOR WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE CHASTENS, AND SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES."

Hebrews 12 shows to us that:

- a. Discipline is a sign of being God's child - vs. 7
- b. If we are not disciplined by God, we are not true children of God – vs. 8
- c. If we respected our human fathers for disciplining us, shouldn't we submit more to God who does it for our good? – vs. 9-10
- d. God's discipline results in spiritual growth – vs. 10-11

3. He's My Security

- No trial comes into your life unless God allows it (e.g. Job)
- God is the great Protector of our souls

Romans 8:38-39 "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

4. He's Personal

Israel had wanted to be like the nations around them. Because of this they had a problem with idolatry. God states to them in regards to their false idols of worship:

"They do not know nor understand; For He has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, and their hearts, so that they cannot understand." Isaiah 44:18

Then in Jeremiah:

"They are upright, like a palm tree, and they cannot speak; They must be carried, because they cannot go by themselves. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, nor can they do any good." Jeremiah 10:5

The idols and any other false God is not personal. On the other hand, Jesus said to us:

Matthew 10:30 tells us: "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

5. He is Always There

Deuteronomy 4:7 "For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him?"

Hebrews 13:5 "For He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU."

Questions:

1. What kind of dad did you experience when you were growing up? Would you say he helped you understand our Heavenly Father, or made it harder for you?
2. State in your own words what it means to be disciplined by God. Have there been times that you've seen God's disciplining hand in your life?
3. What does it mean to you that our Father is *personal*? How is this important or how is this different from many religion's understanding of God?

Prayer: "Lord, thank you for the Heavenly Father that You are! Thank you that you are a Father that is my Provider, my Discipliner, my Security. Thank you that you are a personal Father and that You are always there. Help me to point others to my Father and urge them to trust in You and come to You in faith too so that You can be their Father too. In Jesus' name, amen."