

WARM UP

1. Describe your favourite family vacation or outing.
2. Recall a memorable moment with your father or a father-figure in your life. Picture it in your mind.
3. Please share, what made that moment so memorable?

WORD

KEY SCRIPTURE: 2 CORINTHIANS 6: 18 NIV

¹⁸"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

Here's the current situation:

Sunday, September 6th, 2020 was Father's Day. It's a day that we as a nation commend and honour all the work, sacrifice and love bestowed by the fathers in our families. Although we usually think of our earthly fathers on this day, let us remember we have a perfect heavenly Father, who makes up for the imperfections found in earthly fathers. This Sunday+ will discuss the Father's heart towards his children.

1.) ADOPTION

2 CORINTHIANS 6: 18 NIV (repeated from above)

¹⁸"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

God became a Father to us through Jesus's redemptive work on the Cross. While we were enemies of God who deserved His righteous judgement, He sent his Son because He loves us dearly (John 3:16). Jesus bridged the gap between humanity and God that is created when we have unrighteousness, injustice, or unholiness surface in our life's actions and heart's motivations. This gap was filled through Jesus's death and then subsequent resurrection, which proved His identity as the Son of God.

God adopts us as His rightful children because of His love and through his sending of the Son by the Holy Spirit. It is something we will never ever deserve, nor be able to work hard enough to continue to earning His affection daily. Because of all this, God's spirit reminds us that we are His children, called and chosen to be His.

2.) PERFECT LOVE

2 SAMUEL 7: 14-15 ESV

¹⁴ I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son [/daughter]. When he [she] commits iniquity, I will discipline him [her] with the rod of men [humanity], with the stripes of the sons of men, ¹⁵ **but my steadfast love will not depart from him...**

As legitimate sons and daughters of God, we go through God's discipline when we commit wrongdoing and/or wrong-thinking. Although discipline seems unpleasant at the time, God's truth and grace throughout the process can lead and guide us to a new path of righteousness and holiness.

God loves us too much not discipline us. First century Hebrew Christians were encouraged in a letter with following about discipline:

No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. (Hebrews 12:11)

No matter what, whether we behave or misbehave, God's love towards us never changes, because God is Love (1 John 4:8). Let's ask ourselves, are we as convinced as Paul about the following statement?

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 8:38-39

3.) DAD KNOWS BEST

MATTHEW 7: 11 NIV

"If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"

God already knows all the needs we have and the desires of our heart. Even before we come to Him, God already knows what we are about to ask. Since God is a good Father, He meets our needs and desires in a way that works best for us and is aligned to His will. God does not want to give us something that will harm us, even though what we want sometimes seems perfect in our mind for us. However, God knows best because He knows and sees the bigger picture and what will be good for us. What an awesome reminder that God wants to give good gifts to us that blesses us and glorifies Him.

The Gospel writer Luke also captures a similar statement to Matthew above. It reads:

"If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" – (Luke 11:13)

Having the Spirit of God (God's continual presence) in our daily lives is one of the best gifts ever. 1 John chapter 4 verses 13 to 16 reads: *This is how we know that we live in Him and He in us: **He has given us His Spirit.** ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has*

sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. ¹⁵ If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

Our Heavenly Father Adopted us through Christ into His family because of His deep love for humanity and desire to be in right relationship with us. This Heavenly Dad knew what was needed to make this so. That's why Christians can confidently say Happy Father's Day to God whether we've had fantastic, or not so great earthly fathers.

APPLICATION

1. How can we experience and know God more as our Father?
2. What type of lens do you view God through because of how your earthly Dad was/is? Is that something God wants you to keep or discard as you grow your relationship with God?
3. How does/can God's perfect fatherhood fill the gap of imperfect earthly fatherhood and absent fatherhood?
4. Is having a (good) father important for our lives? Please explain why.

PRAYER

1. Ask God to draw you closer to him as His son/daughter. Thank Him for adopting you through His Son's finished work the Cross and resurrection back to life. Such a resurrection gives us hope of new life in God's family.
2. Pray for God to help earthly fathers (and father-figures) mirror His Fatherhood to you, your household, and community. Ask God to build stronger and more godly fathers in this seemingly-increasing fatherless world.
3. Pray for God to open hearts and minds to understand His love, so many more can be brought into His family through the adoption we can access through Jesus by the Holy Spirit.