

God as Father

Matthew Vander Els • 2018-06-25 • foundedintruth.com

MAIN VERSES

[Matthew 6:9](#) • [Psalm 68:5](#) • [Isaiah 64:8](#) • [Deuteronomy 1:31](#) • [Deuteronomy 8:5](#) • [Jeremiah 29:11](#) • [Psalm 18:30](#)
• [2 Corinthians 1:3](#) • [2 Peter 3:9](#)

Welcome Home

Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a part of? A place founded on truth and love. A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God. Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family. So welcome home.

Guys, I've been waiting so long. So long. My wife would never allow me to do this. But today, because it's a special day, I get to. And I'm super excited. Why couldn't Jonah trust the ocean? Because he knew there was something fishy about it. Oh yeah, we got some dad jokes, guys. We got dad jokes. Where was the first tennis match mentioned in the Bible? When Joseph served in Pharaoh's court. Who was the greatest babysitter mentioned in all of the Bible? David. He rocked Goliath. Why did Samson try to avoid arguing with Delilah? He didn't want to split hairs. What did Adam and Eve do after they were kicked out of the garden? They raised Cain. Dad jokes. I love them because their default is bad. But that's what makes them so good. I had a dad who would love to tell jokes. And when I look back at the humor and the joy he made attempts to instill in our lives, he succeeded. It was not because of the integrity of the joke, though. It was how he told it. And I think the joy that I absorbed from him in those moments was his joy. He liked the jokes. And despite everyone else in the room going, "Oh, that's just horrible," he would just cackle. And that would spread throughout the room. And that's one of the fondest things I remember about my father is his long stories, which I have inherited, and his horrible jokes that were always funny because of his joy that he put with them.

Serona's Question

And so tomorrow is Father's Day, and Father's Day is kind of a neat day. In 1910, a person by the name of Serona Dodge Smart got the idea of promoting a day. When she was in church listening to a Mother's Day sermon, she started thinking, "So we have a Mother's Day and everything that goes along with that. Why not have a day that honors dads?" That's a great question. Why not? And so she went to her pastor at the church and she said, "Wouldn't it be a great idea to have services for the community that honored fathers in the community? We just did mothers, can we do fathers?" And the pastor was like, "Sure. What day did you want to have this on?" And she said, "Well, June 5th—it's my dad's birthday." Okay, well, that's too soon for me to prepare and organize this whole event, so let's do it on the third Sunday in June. So there we go. That was one of the moments that fueled this day that we have today. Of course, there are many other contributing factors, but she promoted it very heavily in her community, and it spread a little bit. Then she went to study in Chicago for about a decade, and when she returned in the 1930s, she began promoting this idea that maybe fathers should be honored. And she said, "I need to get more people on board with promoting this day." And so she got in touch with manufacturers and traders that would benefit from this day. So yeah. She engaged manufacturers of ties, tube socks, and tobacco pipes. And that was the rolling out of the day that we have today when fathers get extra hugs from their kids and they get these wonderful presents that are usually made up of ties, tube socks, and tobacco. So yeah, Happy Father's Day.

God as Father

So a while back, we did a message called God as Mother. Do you guys remember that? And in it, we explored how the Bible uses metaphor to depict God as a mother brooding over her young, or a mama bear specifically, tearing apart all threats to her children, keeping us safe in the shadow of her wings. Was it good? Did you guys enjoy that? I enjoyed exploring that. It was amazing. And this week, I wanted to take a break from the Clyde series that we're currently on and focus on other depictions of God, such as God as Father.

So we have many fathers in here, and I'm a father. And I know everyone in here has some form of a father because you're here today, and I'm thankful for that. But I don't assume to know what that means to you. In other words, some of you may think of father and have images of a strong, hardworking man whose hugs give you the greatest feeling of joy and security. Some of you may get images of physical or emotional abuse. Some of you may get images of someone encouraging you on the sidelines, throwing the ball to you in the backyard, or teaching you how to start a small campfire. Never, never small—always just big. Others may get images of emptiness and sadness, not understanding where dad is in their life, wondering if dad loves

you, not understanding why everyone else's father is around them all the time and you don't know where yours is. And as a culture, we have many different images and definitions and emotions that are attached to this phrase "Father," and I would like to speak about the unmolested, unperturbed whole definition of what a father is today.

The Father's Heart

And so in order to do that, we're going to talk about God. And my hope, my hope for this message is that you will either have a sense of peace in who your God is and how this God connects and engages with you, or that a place in your heart may begin a healing process as you find that those places of hurt or disappointment or unforgiveness or brokenness have the ability to heal as you're introduced to what a father truly is in God, how the love of a father truly feels impacting your life, and how that protective hug from a father will never let you be scared again.

And so I became a father with 23 hours notice. And I love telling the story as often as possible. So many of you know we adopted Benjamin over two and a half years ago, and we began this adoption process, and Jenny and I had very different excitement levels on becoming a father or a mother. So we went to this adoption agency and I'm just like, "We'll just check out the information," because I've never been a father before. This makes me nervous.

When New Things Happen

Men, do you ever get nervous when new things happen in your life? Right? I get nervous when I have to buy a new shirt. I like my other shirt and my wife says there's holes in it. And I said, "Yeah, but if I stand like this, no one can see them. It's my shirt. It's my favorite shirt." A small life change stresses me out. Big life change, when a job shifts or when a new dynamic happens in the family or when you find out you're a father for the first time. Anybody get just a tad nervous and maybe slightly intimidated? Just me? Okay, a couple of nods. Okay, it's good. So this is what I was, except my situation was slightly different because I was walking into the adoption agency not knowing what to expect and not knowing how my life is going to change. And am I even going to be a good father? And what if I'm not a good father? And all of these feelings started over two and a half, about three years ago.

Twenty-Three Hours

And we went to the adoption agency and we went through the process and I got more and more excited as we went through the process. And finally, we had enough money to get the process officially started and we got our application approved, which had DSS coming to your house—it was a big deal. And it was amazing and it was exciting. And 10 days later, my wife and I were shopping for Sukkot in Walmart. She's pushing the cart. Or maybe I was pushing the cart, and she gets a phone call and I'm just in la-la land shopping, and her tone changes and she begins to get very excited and talking faster and louder, and she looks at me, tears already running down her face, and she says, "We've been chosen! A birth mom looked at our profile and said, 'That's the family. That's the family I want to be a blessing with, and I would like for them to bless me.'"

And in that moment, the guy triggers—click, click, click, click, click. Your life is changing. I'm processing. This is one of those moments where I zone out. I'm like, okay, processing. You're about to be a dad. Processing. Okay, this is going to be great. You can do this. All right? And then Jenny asks the question. She says, "Okay, when is—how long? Three months? Nine months? Six months? How long do we have?" And her voice quivers more and tears begin running down her face and she's so excited and she looks at me and says, "He was born yesterday. We can meet him tomorrow morning at 11 a.m." This was 23 hours later.

And I'm still stuck in my life-is-going-to-change level one. So level two came at me—oh, baby's here, and I'm like whoa. No, no, let me process this. And that was a hectic day. I don't even know if we checked out at Walmart. We did—I don't remember; we were just running out the door. We got home. We got on the phone with the lawyer to discuss details and we were already like yes, yes—this is the door that God is opening. We want to walk through it.

Meeting the Family

And the next day, we went to the hospital and we met an incredible woman with a heart of love, and this was Benjamin's birth mom, and she was amazing. We spent 30 or 40 minutes speaking with her. And I remember when we were done in the meeting room, she looked at us, and I said, "Let me introduce you to your son," and we got to go in another room. And with her, this child was wheeled in.

And I didn't know what to think. But this is a beautiful, beautiful boy. And I don't know my emotions. This is my son. Just like that. And my emotions were going off. And I remember the first words that came out of my mouth to this child. "Hey, buddy." I don't know. That was all that could come out. "Hey, buddy." I mean, it's equivalent to saying, "Hey, amigo." I was so

nervous and it was such a beautiful day and I'm excited to be on this journey with you once again—adoption number two so that Benjamin can have a sibling now. But that was the day when a piece of my heart started beating that I never knew existed before. Indescribable feeling. That was also the day that my anxiety began in my life.

That was the day that my world became his world, that my blessings became his blessings. My stress would become his stress. My strength would become his strength. That was the day in my life, that was the day when I gave my life to him. My job was to give myself to him as a father. My job was to protect him. My job was to make sure he knows what a blessing feels like. My job is to love him.

Is This What All Dads Experience?

And I had never been a dad before. And it caused me to look back and wonder: Is this what my dad felt when he brought home my brother, first time dad? Is this what all dads experience? My grandfather, my great-great-grandfather—is this what all dads experience? This indescribable feeling, this new chapter in life. I assume so. But that was the day when my goals were realigned and my goal was to be a good dad and to be a good husband and to be a provider and to be a guide and to be a teacher no matter what the cost. And I try and I push and I sacrifice, but I know I am imperfect sometimes. And maybe I'm the only one that is imperfect in my roles as a husband and a father at times. But it's encouraging to me to see that a title that I hold as a father, little old me, is being used to depict God. Wow. Not saying that God is inadequate or imperfect. Heavens no. But the Bible, and specifically Yeshua, uses this as a way for you to connect with God. This is the great I am. This is the El Shaddai that Israel knew. This is the Yahweh, the all-existent one who is with you. The powerful Almighty that shot fire out of a mountain and caused the earth to quake with his voice. And Yeshua, Yeshua tells us to address him as Dad.

Our Father

In the first century, the idea of God being this intimate figure wasn't common. God was not that intimate in proximity. We worship him from down here, and he directs his blessing out from a path that's up there. Mentioning his very name was extremely taboo. Why? Because he's holy, and he is so holy and set apart and distant, to speak his name would be to encroach on his Kedusha, or holiness. This is why the book of Matthew actually carries this tradition. When it says the kingdom of heaven instead of kingdom of God, it's just further—kingdom of heaven. Well, that means God, but yeah, it's heaven. We're just going to say heaven. Amazing. Amazing.

And Yeshua says, "Know our Father, our Father who is in heaven. Holy is His name. Our Father. Yes, He's holy. Yes, His reign of justice and mercy that is set apart. But first and foremost, He is your Father."

And the Hebrew word for father is? Everybody say "Ab." Very exciting word. So in Aramaic—Aramaic's a fun language, I guess you could say. In Aramaic, you have the definite article that comes after a word, essentially as in Hebrew. So you basically go "ah" at the end of a lot of words. So in Hebrew, Father is "Ab" and in Aramaic, the language that Jesus spoke, it's "Ab," or "Ab-ah," right? The Hebrew word for God is "El" and in Aramaic it's "Ela," right? So it's the same type thing. So Yeshua is telling us this is our Abba, our Abba who is in heaven.

Approach God as Children

And Yeshua does this while encouraging us not to use professional prayers or lofty words. He encourages us to approach God as children. And I found that so foreign. And it was radical for him to say that in the first century itself. But does that change how your prayer life works? When you approach God in the mornings, the evenings, throughout the day, as Father. Not that he's not king or all these other, but Father. It provides this type of intimacy. Not only are you yearning to have a relationship with God, but also it recognizes God yearning to have a relationship with you as a child.

And as dads, we experience new things in our lives every single day. Sometimes great things, sometimes not. Sometimes we experience as father joyful things. Sometimes we experience gut-wrenching things. And for me, it makes my walk with God that much more intimate to know, to know that the biblical authors wanted me to know, they wanted you to know, that God knows exactly what you're going through. And he has a little bit of experience.

God Described in Metaphor

So when we look at God, we see him described with similes and strong metaphors. I went over this in the God is Mother series. God is a strong tower, right? Or God is a roaring lion, or God is a shepherd, or God is a warrior. A strong tower, bricks, right? Consuming fire. God is mother. And father is no different. God yearns to be perceived and seen despite him being infinite and incomprehensible.

A Vocation of Immense Responsibility

To be a husband and a father is to take up a vocation of immense responsibility. Men, do you guys know how important your role is in the home? It's a pretty big deal. Pretty big deal to be a husband. Pretty big deal to be a father. And when we take up this vocation, it's a huge responsibility. One: I didn't realize the weight of it when I got married. And I didn't realize the full weight of it until I became a father. It requires strength, manhood, and pride. And this is the reason why it's such a big deal. It's a big deal because it requires you to be a servant.

Being a father requires you to serve. It requires you to give of yourself piece by piece for someone else's benefit. Can you get that image in your head? That's what my father did for me. Every time he stopped, every time he took time out, every time he disciplined me, he took a piece of himself and said, "Here, serve for my benefit." And this is the calling of every man to be a servant in the world. Even if you're not married, even if you don't have kids, God calls us to be men. He calls us to serve.

Use Your Manly Strength to Serve

Of course, our first instinct is to say, "But Matt, we're strong, right? We're manly and we have manly stuff going on in our lives. Servants are weak." That's the thing about God's kingdom: in God's kingdom, he expects you to use your manly strength and your power and your leadership to serve others, to serve your neighbors around you in this world, to serve your wife, to serve your children. God wants you to be known as the guy who will always be there to help change a tire. God always wants you to be known as the guy who will take time out of his schedule to help your child with their homework. God wants you—he expects you to be the husband that serves his wife. The husband that says "Yes, dear" with a smile. That's an expectation. God expects you to be the guy who apologizes first for the sake of reconciliation.

"Yeah, but it wasn't my fault." I may or may not know that, but that's not the point. See, men, one thing that we have to realize as leaders of homes and households: we own that. That's ours to own. And so anything that happens in the hierarchy and the structure of your home ultimately is your responsibility to deal with. It ultimately goes up to you, right? If you're supposed to be the leader of your house, if you're the CEO, it's your responsibility. "Yeah, but it's not my fault." Yeah, but it's still yours to own. It's still yours to bring reconciliation to. It's still yours to bring peace into. It's still yours to find a solution for. Always. That's a hard message. It's a hard message because sometimes we have arguments with our kids. Sometimes we have arguments with our wife. Sometimes. And she started it. Okay, and you're gonna fix it.

How do you fix it? "Hey babe, I'm sorry that we fought. I hurt. I'm sorry that we fought." It's a hard thing for us to do. Why do you think God designed us men to be solution-oriented? Men, have you ever ended up in an argument with your spouse because there was a problem? This is not what caused the argument. Have you ever ended up in an argument because there was a problem and you knew exactly how to fix it and you tried? Anybody? No? Just me. "Babe, I can fix that. I have a wrench that fixes that problem. Let me go get it." Why are we ingrained with this nature as men? Because God expects you to use it at the right times for the right reasons. And God seeks to see us fulfill this mandate as men and as fathers and as husbands. That starts with accepting the fact that God has equipped us with the ability to lead, to fix, and to own our mistakes. That's what being a man is about.

You Imitate God

And where do we get these primal instincts? I believe from God as our Father. And I believe God wants us to imitate Him when we do these things. Men, when you serve your families, you imitate God. Men, when you lead your families, you imitate God. Men, when you show strength in hard situations, I believe you imitate God.

You become His image in those moments. In the Psalms, it's fascinating because God is described as the one who defends, brings justice, and fights for those who don't have fathers. A companion for those who don't have husbands. [Psalm 68](#), 5. He's the father of the fatherless, protector of the widows. [Psalms 10](#), 1. You have been the helper of the fatherless.

God Defends the Defenseless

See, when this was written, this was a world that neglected the poor. If someone lost a father during Iron Age, the main caretaker of the family—if someone lost a husband, the vital life companion—there were no social programs they could just fill out an application for to get help. There was no government assistance, no safety net. Abandonment took place. Children were sold for their own good. Widows faced hard decisions in how to proceed with their life. And God says his mission is to make sure that they're taken care of. He will be the provider. He will be the comfort. He will be the security. And when we take up the God-given vocation to fill these roles, we imitate God. We imitate God.

[Isaiah 64](#), 8 states, Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay. You are the potter. We are all the work in your hand. This verse is essentially saying, Father, you train us up. You mold us.

You are with us in that fire. You lead us to become the vessel in your creation as powerful. This is the God that we serve.

[Deuteronomy 131](#) states in the wilderness there you saw how the Lord your God carried you as a father carries his son all the way you went until you reach this place. See, we get images of God as King because the Bible is full of these images—this royal, regal, reverent position of King and royalty, unapproachable. And then the author here portrays God as carrying us. Carrying us. Have you guys ever thought of the God that we serve like that? Arms wrapped around you.

We Must Be Willing to Hold On

And so what has to take place for us to be carried by God? We have to be willing to hold on. There's a story about a family that went to the lake for a vacation. And the dad was working over by the boathouse. And while his 12-year-old son and 3-year-old were playing on the dock, right? And the older brother was supposed to be watching the younger brother, and he got distracted. And so little Jack decided to check out the fishing boat at the end of the dock. He put his foot on the boat. And what happens when you put your foot on a boat when it's tied to the dock? It goes this way. And so Jack fell in the water. The boat shifted and he fell in. And the older brother screamed and dad came running. He jumped in, but he couldn't find his son. He was reaching around in the mucky water, came back up, took another breath of air, swam down deeper. My boy, where is my son? And on his way up for another gulp of air, his father felt Jack clinging tightly to the post under the dock, under the water. He pried him loose, took him up for air, and when everyone had calmed down, his father asked him, What were you doing clinging on to a post underwater? Jack replied, I was just waiting on you, Dad.

This child trusted his father the same way we can trust our father. Why? Because God is our perfect father. And as a perfect father, God wants the best for you. He wants blessings in your life. He wants to protect you, and He wants to love you.

Discipline Is an Investment in Love

In [Deuteronomy 8](#), chapter 5, it's a verse we don't like. God wants the best for you. And we see this here. Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you. As a man disciplines his son, why do we discipline our children? Do we discipline our children because we hate them? Because we're mad at them? That's not our goal. Because we want them to fail? Do we discipline them because we want them to fail? No. We

discipline our children because we want what's best for them. Because of that love that we have for them, we take the time, we take the energy, we take the patience, and we correct them. And it's not fun, but our hope is that it is an investment. When we take the energy to ground them or spank them or take away privileges, enduring the backlash that it always seems to cause, we take it, hoping it is an investment for a better life for them.

Our Father disciplines us because He loves us. Which leads us to another verse you may or may not be familiar with. It's [Jeremiah 29](#), 11. How many of you guys are familiar with this verse? This is great. So Jeremiah is speaking, this prophet, and he says, For I know, it's God speaking, I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future. Man, that is an amazing, amazing bumper sticker right there.

And we read this verse and we think, God is going to get me out of this situation that I'm in. The stress that's in my life, my job environment is just toxic. It's so stressful. The bills, they're so stressful. My car problems are so stressful. And God has a plan and he's going to allow me to escape this situation. That's the promise here in [Jeremiah 29](#). God does have a plan for you in your life. And God wants to send blessings in your life. And God does not want to harm you.

But this verse is not talking about you. God was not talking about that situation of you escaping the stressful situation in your life. We can snip this verse out of the Bible, put it on a t-shirt, and make a lot of money if we just strip all context away. It's not talking about you. And it certainly is not some verse that promotes escapism. It promotes thriving and discipline and growth because of it. This verse is actually speaking to Judah and the stress that they were living in. Okay? So how many of you guys have some stress in your life? I got some stress in my life right now. Right? All of us, right? So yeah, we have stress in our lives, but the Babylonians came in, burned your house down, destroyed the temple, enslaved you, made you walk four to six months across the desert, and then when you got to this new place called Babylon, they told you this is your new home and you will serve us now. Welcome home. Y'all don't have that kind of stress in your life. No.

A Father to His Covenant People

See, Judah and Israel were called God's son and he was their father. These were his people, the people of the covenant that vowed to take his message, to be his image, his reflection, his kingdom to all the world. They promised to be a light to all the nations so that the world would feel his presence through their lives and actions and speech. That the orphans would be taken

care of, the widows would be secure, that the poor would not be exploited, that status would not be gained through violence. Did Judah succeed in this vocation? No, they failed. Solomon became an arms dealer and Judah and Israel made themselves wealthy by exploiting the weak. What was the result? If God did not care about his children, what would he have done? The same thing we would have done if we don't care about our kids. Nothing. But God did care. So what did he do? He brought discipline in the form of exile. That's what the story of the garden tells us. He allowed the Babylonians to come in, enslave the people that were enslaving others.

And Judah was taken to a strange land. And Jeremiah, this prophet, was sent to tell them that God had not abandoned them. Quite the opposite. Jeremiah was sent to tell them that this is a good thing in your life. It is for your own good. God is teaching you. God is being a father to you. God is going to make a new covenant with you based off your breaking of your relationship with him. And it will be birthed out of the forgiveness and the mercy he offers you through this time period. All will have a way to experience him after this takes place. All will know his love. All will know his mercy. All will know his forgiveness.

And when Jeremiah is speaking, he starts this section out of Scripture with [Jeremiah 29, 11](#). For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. [Jeremiah 29, 11](#) is a response of God, enduring him spanking his kids. I love you. And this is discipline in whatever form is going to make you a better person. It's going to make you more responsible. It's going to make you a more clear image of who I am. Do not have despair. I am with you. I have plans for you. It's going to be fine.

If you have this on your car as a bumper sticker, you don't have to. I mean, it's still a nice verse. I'm just saying it's not about your car troubles. It's not about your stressful job situation. God wants you to experience the fullness of his embrace as your father. He wants the best for you. God will protect you as a father. Psalms 18:30 states, What's a shield do? It protects you, but how it protects is it gets in front of you and it gets in between you and whatever's flying at you to harm you. He's a shield. God presents himself as someone who gives comfort, that gives security, that gives protection. In [Psalm 68](#), we quoted it earlier, the psalmist gives a very intense description of God. And I wanted to bring this out because I want this to display the model of what a father should be.

So [Psalm 68](#), verse 1 says, "May God arise, may his enemies be scattered." Anyone know that song? Right? We sing that song a lot, right? May God arise—no one wants to sing it with me. Right? May his enemies be scattered.

So we sing this song and it's all joyful, right? It's like, yeah, we've got to rise. That's verse 2. "But may the righteous be glad and rejoice before God. May they be happy and joyful. Sing to God. Sing in praise to his name. Extol him who rides on the clouds, the cloud rider. Rejoice before him. His name is the Lord. A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in family. He leads out the prisoners with singing."

God Among the Orphans

So the writer here gives this intense scenario of God who gives rain, the God who shook the mountain at Sinai. And in the midst of these sweeping motives that we see here, the writer stops abruptly with these powerful, borderline scary images, and stops to take note of a core passion of this God. In the midst of this power and strength and melting, fiery everything, God is the father of orphans. God is the protector of widows. God gives the desolate a home to live in. He leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious live in parched land.

This is the father, this masculine protector in this society that is built on the status of men, a patriarchal society in which these lines were written. This is the father of orphans and widows. The phrase "father of orphans" is unique and rather odd, specifically in the Hebrew and in the English, because orphans are exactly those who don't have a what? A father. But he is the father of the ones who don't have a father. Thus the very character of God contradicts the social assures that none will be without a male protector in this society built on male social status. It's a powerful psalm. It's radical.

The orphans are those without a home, subjected to the world around them, in danger of anything and everything. And this father gives shelter. This father gives a home. This father gives a home that contains many rooms. And he invites you to come because you're accepted in his home.

The poetry here concludes in verse 10. It says, "Your flock found a dwelling in it. In your goodness, O God, you provide for the needy." The needy are cared for by this God. You provided for the needy. The vulnerable are given prosperity. The orphans are given a home. No wonder the church has a tradition of praying, "Our Father," to the one who contradicts the identity of all of those labeled orphans. This God will not leave you. This God will not forsake you. This God will stand, protect, and shield and shelter you. This is our Father. This is a Father that loves us, loves you.

A Radical Shift in How We Know God

See, although God is referenced directly and indirectly in the Old Testament as Father just a couple times, that was not the image that was widely promoted in Judean culture. The main role of God has been traditionally portrayed as what? Our mighty king. Our God who is a warrior. Our God who conquers. Our King who corrects. Our King who leads us.

And then here comes Yeshua, this radical rabbi from Nazareth of all places. And he says this in Matthew chapter 6, verse 9. Many of you know this. It's called the Lord's Prayer. Yeshua is speaking, and he's speaking about the kingdom, and he's speaking about all these things, and he says, "This is how you should pray. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we have also forgiven our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

Kingdom, bread, deliverance. Three main things in there. "Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be your name." It's one of those Bible words again that we never use outside of reading the Bible. What's hallowed mean? It's actually where we get the... That's the root word of Halloween, actually. It's All Hallows' Eve, Holy Day.

So, "Our Father in heaven." How does Yeshua himself address God? How does Yeshua tell us that we should address God? Our Father. Now, Yeshua was not the first rabbi in the first century to suggest this, but he was certainly one that emphasized it the most.

From King to Daddy

What images do you get when I say king? You're going to meet the king today. You're approaching the king. What do you think of? What feelings do you get? Scared? You get a little scared. Why do you get scared? Power. So much power and strength, right? Anyone else? What do you think of? King. You're going to meet the king right now. Intimidating. Whoa, right now? Right now? Do I need to? I mean, what do I do? Fear. Fear. Formal, sacred—you're approaching God.

And Yeshua, in his radical teaching, is saying he's your daddy. And it's a bit more intimate, and it has a bit more love to it, and it has joy and peace all surrounding that word. And Yeshua's purpose for doing this, I believe, is not only to reflect on his role as the anointed king, God's son, but Yeshua wants to portray and highlight those attributes as the forefront of what God wants you to experience about him first. Love, protection, and blessing. I believe with all my heart this is what Yeshua was teaching in this moment. When you think of God, this is how God wants you to think of him first before everything else. That's radical.

And this resonated with the disciples of Yeshua and his followers quite a bit. In [2 Corinthians 1:3](#), Paul says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort." Father. Father. In [2 Peter 3:9](#), Peter says, "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise, as some count slowness, but is patient with you. He's a patient father. Not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

I love who our God is in the Bible because our God is not just a king that is intimidating and is a conqueror and is a warrior. A man of war is what Torah says. It's not just. I hate that word. It's such a limiting and minimizing word—just God.

A Better Father Than We've Known

God is a father, and everything that a perfect father should be. And as I said before, I don't know what father means to you, but the biblical narrative and the authors here are trying as hard as they can to get you to realize that despite whatever your familiarity is, or definition, or experience is with this word father, this is what a good father is.

I don't know what your experience was growing up with your father, but there is a Father that does love, and there is a Father that has mercy, and there is a Father that disciplines out of love, and there is a Father that is slow to anger, and there is a Father that has a short memory of wrongdoings, and this is a Father that is awaiting us with arms open. No, running towards us with arms opened wide. Have you ever felt his embrace in your life?

Worship team, you guys can come up. We can go ahead and conclude.

Adopted Into the Family

[Romans 8:15](#)—Paul speaks, and he says this. So in Paul's writing to Rome here, he's referencing a Roman institution of legal adoption. And Roman adoption was fascinating because it could be done at any age. But more importantly, when done, it was considered to have new life birthed into a reality. When you were adopted in Roman culture, all past debts were canceled. You are legally heirs in a new family. You have a new father. You are no longer an orphan. You are loved. You are forgiven. You are blessed by a good and perfect father.

And all of Yeshua's prayers, except for his cry in [Mark 15](#), begin with father. He's addressing father, father, father. And this term father brings together at least two attributes of God that if you leave with nothing else today—know God is first and foremost these two things: His intimate love for his children and his sovereign power over creation, which is evoked in heaven.

And to call God Father in prayer is to receive that love, is to proclaim that I want and I yearn this love in my life. And to know his power and to seek to embody his will, which are expressed in the petitions of this Lord's Prayer.

Except you approach as little children. Children.

The Invitation

So I don't know where you're at today. My hope is that this message gives you hope for your own life. That you would know today that your past does not have to affect your future. That your earthly father does not have to leave you an empty legacy. That your earthly father doesn't have to be the remnant of what you view a father as.

I would hope that you would feel the perfected love of God through Yeshua. And you would feel the fullness of God's love through his embrace today. And maybe you've never cried out to God as father. I don't know. Maybe you've prayed all of your life and you've had this relationship with God, but you've never spoken those words, "my father." As I would invite you today, proclaim him as the good father. Proclaim him as your perfect father. He's waiting, running with arms open.

That pain can start to go away and there can be forgiveness and there can be joy. And maybe you find yourself struggling to lead your own home today as a father, facing the unknowns of fatherhood, the unknowns of life—there is a father that cares about you dearly. There is a father who wants to lead you, bless you, and give you comfort. Yeshua referred to himself as God's son, and God being his father, and he also invites you to partake in that relationship. He invites all of us, despite our past experiences, despite our failures, despite our doubts, despite our situations, Yeshua invites you to run in the arms of the Father who loves you.

Come and Be Supported

And we have a prayer team. And they're advocates for whatever it is that you need in your life. And I invite you. I invite you to come. Be supported. I invite you. Cry out today to the greatest father you will ever know and ever experience. I invite you today to cry out to Abba. Cry out to your Abba. The love and comfort and peace and security can be overflowing. This is who God is, and this is who Yeshua tells us his father is. Amen. Shalom.

Share Your Story with Us

I'm Matthew Vander Els and I hope you enjoyed this message. Founded in Truth exists to cultivate a fellowship of image bearers that live the redeemed life only Yeshua can give. If this ministry has been a blessing to you, we would love to hear from you. Send us an email through the contact form on our website and tell us how God has used this ministry to edify your faith and relationship with Him. If you'd like to see more messages like this one, subscribe to our YouTube channel by clicking [here](#). If you'd like to donate to this ministry and be a part of what God is doing through it, you can donate through our online giving portal [here](#). We thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to next time. Shalom.

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at Foundedintruth.com

EMAIL: Info@foundedintruth.com FACEBOOK: facebook.com/foundedintruth WEBSITE: <https://www.foundedintruth.com> Google: <https://g.co/kgs/az3iPeM>

Watch or listen: foundedintruth.com/bible-teachings/god-as-father/

This automated transcript has been lightly edited for readability; scripture quotations appear as spoken. For the authoritative teaching, watch the video. • Founded in Truth Fellowship, Rock Hill SC • Saturdays 11:00 AM • Your giving keeps every teaching free: foundedintruth.com/give