

OUR PERFECT HEAVENLY FATHER

Marc Gibson

Today is *Father's Day*, a time set aside to honor and remember our earthly fathers. This is as it should be, for the scriptures even remind us that "we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect" (Hebrews 12:9a). Fathers have great responsibility in being the head of the home and bringing up his children "in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). A home without a father is lacking a vital part of what God intended for a happy and fulfilling home. Earthly fathers should take their role seriously and the other members of the home should show them their appreciation. But there is another "Father" that many show little respect for, and even forget entirely.

The Bible speaks of this one as the "Father of spirits" (Hebrews 12:9b). This Father is the one, true God "of whom are all things" (1 Corinthians 8:6). He is the Father of all creation: "Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?" (Malachi 2:10). Paul writes that the Father is the one "from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Ephesians 3:14-15). Please notice some further characteristics of our divine Father:

FATHER IN HEAVEN – Jesus taught us to pray, "Our Father in heaven..." (Matthew 6:9). Our Father dwells in heaven, not on earth in temples made by men (Acts 17:24). This is why we need to "set our mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2). Do we think on heavenly things, or is our heavenly Father forgotten in the rush of life?

FATHER OF JESUS – Jesus came as the "only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14). He is the Son of the Father in heaven (1 John 1:3). Jesus, as God Himself (John 1:1), maintains a special relationship to God, the Father. Early on in His life on earth, He realized He must be about His Father's business (Luke 2:49). He and His Father are one, unified in doctrine, purpose, and righteousness (John 10:30). The Father has placed Jesus at His right hand today (Colossians 3:1) to reign over the "kingdom of the Son of His love" (1:13). At the second coming, Jesus will deliver "the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power" (1 Corinthians 15:24). Will you be in Christ's kingdom when He delivers it to the Father?

FATHER OF MERCIES – "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). The Father in heaven extends His bountiful hand to all, "for He makes His sun rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust" (Matthew 5:45). It is a shame that so many show little to no regard to the true giver of all things. Each breath we take should remind us of the loving care of our Father in heaven. The Father's spiritual children especially know His mercies through the bountiful spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:3). An abundant reward awaits the righteous in the eternal city!

FATHER OF LIGHTS – "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning" (James 1:17). The heavenly Father has no ugly skeletons in His closet or secret plans that will deceive us. His will is revealed today for all to see in the New Testament. God will not tempt us to sin, nor will He deceive us with error. "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). What a good and perfect God we serve!

FATHER OF LOVE – True love is demonstrated by God. "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent forth His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16). Man must believe and obey His commandments to be saved. This is how we show our love for the Father in heaven.

Most young children want to be like their parents when they grow up. We are commanded to be "perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Being "perfect" means spiritually "grown up." The divine Father

wants you to walk in His steps. Are you a child of God? Have you been adopted by the Father in heaven (Galatians 4:5-7)? Make every day a day dedicated to honoring your Father in heaven!