

OUR FATHER



Jesus teaches us to pray like this:

***“Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name”.***

God is our Father, and he knows us each by name.

He knows how many breaths we have taken since our birth.

He understands our thoughts “afar off”.

He knows the secrets of our hearts.

And loves us.

But our Father is not soft.

We don’t play games with him.

We cannot manipulate him.

We approach him with holy fear.



"I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear him!"

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows."

Luke 12

When the Son of God emptied himself of his glory and became one of us, he did what Adam failed to do:

He walked before his Father with perfect trust.

Every word he spoke, everything he did was done as directed by his Father.

"The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does his works."

John 14

And now, by the power of his death and resurrection, Jesus empowers us to walk before the Father as he did.

Every time we pray the Lord's Prayer, we are putting our feet on the path he walked.

We are stepping out of the darkness into the light of God.

We are welcoming the power of His world to come into our lives.

We are reaching out to the Father, and the Father is taking us by the hand, and leading us.

Our Father answers our prayers.

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are 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! "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."

Matthew 7

Over and over again Jesus urges us to pray.



He promises that our Father will absolutely answer our prayers.

If we approach our Father, trusting, not in our “worthiness”, but his mercy, he will hear us.

Not: *“God I thank thee that I am not as other men are I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all I possess.”*

Rather: *“God, be merciful to me, a sinner!”* *“Father, help me!”*

Our Father gives us the Holy Spirit.

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, he taught them to cry out to the Father for the Holy Spirit.



Because the Holy Spirit empowers us to pray.

“And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

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

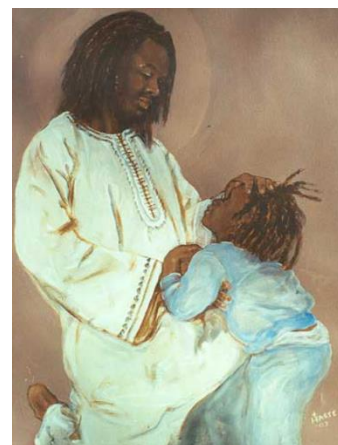
Our Father reveals the kingdom.

Even though the kingdom of God is now at work in this troubled earth, it can be seen only by those who have eyes to see.

And to whom does the Father give those eyes? To babes.

At that time Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.”

Matthew 11



Our Father corrects us.

He does it in love.

He does it for our good.

He does it because without his chastising hand we would surely drift into darkness and be lost.

And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.”

It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?

Hebrews 12

Some of us learn quickly, repent and get back on the road of Light.

Some of us keep trying new shortcuts to glory, and have to learn the hard way.

Once we repent of ourselves, we recognize the Father's chastening hand as it comes down on us. And we yield to the Father's call to back off and change direction.



Jesus' final prayer

At the end of his last discourse with his disciples in flesh and blood Jesus prayed a prayer to his Father that wraps us into the Father's arms----if we are willing.

This prayer has been preserved to us by the Father in the form of John, Chapter 17.

It's a prayer worth soaking into our souls.

It is helpful to pray this prayer with our mouths as well as with our hearts.

For this prayer draws us into the Father's presence.

The prayer concludes with these words:

O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me.

I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."



Prayer- Our Father, our Father thank you for knowing us by name, thank you for loving us. We bow before you in awe... in awe of your majesty and power, in awe of your loving kindness, and in awe of your mercy to us. May we see that every time we pray, we are stepping into your light, into your power, that we are joining you in bringing your kingdom to this world. May this be a holy time for us where we are truly reaching out to you the holy of holies. Thank you for calling us to this holy privilege. Thank you for answering our prayers. Thank you for filling us with your Spirit that teaches us to pray. Continue to give us the eyes to see what you do for us. Help us to know when you are correcting us, help us to sense your love in it and to yield to do it for your glory and our good. And Lord thank you, thank you for drawing us into your very presence, for promising to pour your love into us and for allowing us to be one with you...Our precious Father. Amen.

Richard E. Bieber: July 2021

Featured Art: Father Jim Hasse (1934-2011) a Jesuit priest who served in Chicago and Pontiac Michigan. His parishioners were his models. Website expired.

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