

Lessons on the Lord's Prayer: Part 1, Our Father

Bible Reading: Matthew Chapter 7: verses 7 – 14

Our Father

Each one of us who has cried to God, "Oh, Lord be merciful to me a sinner" and has then believed and received Jesus as Saviour is able to call God – "Our Father." Those who have not yet asked God for the forgiveness of their sins and turned to Jesus who is the only one who can give us a new life can not call God their father because they are still children of this world, children of darkness, and children of Satan.

Then Jesus taught His disciples to pray he told them to begin by saying "Our Father." If Jesus had not told us to call God our Father perhaps, we would be afraid to use this name because we know that God is good, and great, and strong, and wise. We know that we are not good and strong but weak children. We know that God made the world and all that is in it. We know that He is over all and therefore we might not feel that we should call him "Our Father." It is because of Jesus and His goodness that we can stand before God and call Him our Father which is a name of love and nearness.

If we wish to understand more about God as our Father, it is good for us to think about earthly fathers. We know that some fathers on earth are good and that some are bad. We will think about the best father we know and then remember that God as a father is much better than the best father on earth.

We all know that good fathers on earth love their children. We know that a father who loves his children wishes them to have the things which are best for them to have. We know that a father who loves his children will not give them things which are bad for them. We know that fathers wish their children to love and obey them. We know that the father who truly loves his children must sometimes punish the child to help the child to do what is right and best. We know that a father who loves his children will provide for the needs of the children. We know that a father will give his life to save his children's life if he must. We know that a father wishes his children to grow and to learn. All these things are true of God our heavenly father only He knows much better than our

earthly father the things we need, the things which are good for us, the things which we should not have, the time when we should be corrected. He knows the best way for our lives, and He hopes that we will obey Him.

We know that a good father on earth wishes to be with his children. He wishes to talk to his children, and He wishes His children to talk to Him. We know that a father who is far from his children and cannot talk and help them is not happy and so it is with God our father. He wishes us who are his children to talk to him and he wishes to talk to us. This talking with God and fellowship with God is prayer. The more we talk to God in prayer the better we know Him and the more He can tell us of his will for our lives. If we wish to have God's help and power, we must ask Him for it in prayer.

We know that our Father God is everywhere and that He can always hear us and so we should learn to always pray to him and in all places. Sometimes we are separated from our earthly fathers and cannot speak to them, but this is never true of God. The only thing which can separate us from our Father God is sin and this is the thing we must watch for and ask forgiveness for in our prayers.

We call God, our Father, but we know from the Bible that the love of God is like the love of a mother as well as like the love of a father. As a father, God provides for the things we need and teaches and corrects us but as a mother He comforts us in sorrow, and cares for us in sickness. As we begin to pray to God our Father, let us stop to think of who He is and then of how He loves us.