

“THE HEART OF A FATHER”

Bible Study Lesson

By Pastor Milo Miras

Editor’s note: We received permission from our friend, Pastor Milo Miras, to reprint the following Bible Study on God the Father’s Heart of Love for YOU. This can be used for group or individual study, divided into three sessions. As you read the lessons and discuss the questions at the end of each section, we pray the Father’s love will be made real to you in a powerful way. God bless you!

—The editors at www.healingandhealth.org

Part 1: An Example of the Father

Luke 15:11-32

Fathers are crucial in family life. They set a standard and they are the role model for their children. If the father is godly, the family will tend to be godly. If the father isn’t godly, the rest of the family will have to struggle to be godly.

The Lord understood the importance of fathers. The following parable illustrates the traits of our Heavenly Father and traits to have as godly fathers.

1. The Generous Father (11-13)

- The youngest son was out of line when he asked for his portion early.
- The father gave it to him anyway.
- It is hard to know how to parent children. Each child has different needs.
- It is especially hard for a father who loves his children to stand by and watch his child or children go down the path of self-destruction.

2. The Grieving Father (14-20)

The father was watching for his son. No doubt he would daily go to the edge of the field and look down the road, praying for his son’s safety. No doubt, he would also lay down at night worried about where his son was and what he was doing. He may have felt he was a failure and would ask for the Lord’s forgiveness. We know his heart was broken.

One particular day, he saw his son coming home. He ran toward his son and fell on his neck and kissed him. He didn't say, “I told you so.” The son already knew. He had compassion, because he loved him.

3. The Gracious Father (21-32)

He didn't have to be gracious. He could have berated his son for his misdeeds. He could have made an example out of his son for the trouble and embarrassment he brought upon the family. The older brother would have berated him. But the father was teaching his children a lesson — grace.

- Love outweighed the disgrace.
- Love outweighed the money lost.
- Love was proud the son had come home.
- A life had been rescued and a family was restored.

Isn't this the example our Heavenly Father has made for us? While we were lost in sin, rebellious, and unwilling to take our place of responsibility, our Heavenly Father loved us anyway and welcomed us home with forgiveness and open arms.

Discussion Questions:

1. What examples come to mind that your father set for you?
2. Which of these examples are you practicing or following today?
3. If you did not grow up with a father, who were your "father" role models in life?
4. How did they influence or affect your life?

Part 2: What the Father Gives

Matthew 11:25-30

Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family said, "I believe, with everything within me, that husbands hold the keys to the preservation of the family."

Fathers are vitally important to the family, and without a Heavenly Father, where would we be?

Read Matthew 7:11.

We have a loving, giving Father in heaven. He is far more giving than we are. All we have to do is ask and sometimes He gives even when we don't ask! What a Father!

In **Matthew 11**, it reveals a portion of what our Heavenly Father gives to us in this life:

1. **His wisdom**
2. **Privileged Relationship**
3. **Comfort and Rest**

1. His Wisdom

Read Matt. 11:25-26.

What is hidden from the wise and the learned? It is the truth of the Gospel that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Most High God. It is hidden from those who do not want to know it or do not have the time to learn it.

Read Ephesians 3:2-4.

Verse 4 says, ***“In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ.”***

Psalm 119:99 says that we believers do have more insight than unbelievers in the world, because we have received **Jesus Christ** into our lives and His Holy Spirit leads us into “all truth”.

Because of these reasons, read the Book to discover the wisdom and the power of God! His wisdom has been revealed to little children who seem to understand very well and to those who humble themselves before God like little children. What a Father we have!

2. Privileged Relationship

Read Matthew 11:27.

All who claim the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord, Master, and Savior not only know Him, but know His Father and His Holy Spirit. Some people may claim to know the Father, but there’s only one way to know Him and that’s through Christ.

Read Ephesians 1:3-5

Before the world was created God predestined or predetermined those who would accept His Son, Jesus, and they would be His chosen people! **WE ARE SPECIAL BECAUSE WE CHOSE TO RECEIVE JESUS CHRIST!**

And this gives us a privileged relationship to call Him Abba Father. He knows you! He knows your name, where you live, your phone number, your cell number, your likes and dislikes, your goodness, and your sins. He knows every hair on your head and He even has them numbered! **YOU ARE SPECIAL!** He knows all about you and yet He still loves you!

3. Comfort and Rest

In Matthew 11:28-30 Jesus says “. . . *For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*”

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-4.

In this world we live in, we don't find compassion everywhere or in every person. Even though it seems that no one cares, there is Someone who cares — our Heavenly Father.

Read Hebrews 4:15-16.

Jesus knew all about weariness; therefore, He understands everything that we go through in life and HE IS NOT WITHOUT COMPASSION. This is why we can lay any burden Him and He'll take it from us.

We can live better than most people, because we do have a wonderful, loving Heavenly Father who is with us no matter what we face in life. We can receive this comfort and rest by trusting in Him. Someone said, “YOUR PAIN IS IN HIS HEART.”

Discussion Question:

Share examples of how our Heavenly Father has blessed you with wisdom, relationships, and rest.

Part 3: The Father's Heart

Matthew 6:9-14

If we understand what God is really like, then we will have a greater understanding of who we are in relationship to God. And then, we will be in a much better position to discover who we are in Christ.

First, let us look at the Lord's Prayer as it begins with two precious words — “Our Father.”

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name,

- v. 10 **Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**
- v. 11 **Give us today our daily bread.**
- v. 12 **Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.**
- v. 13 **And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”**

Our Father — this is how Jesus taught us to address God.

With these two short words, Jesus profoundly describes your **position** and **relationship** with God.

The word “our” indicates God is corporately the possession of all who accept Christ and decide to follow Him.

In **Romans 10:12-13**, the Scriptures establish that the word “our” unites us with all Christians. And it is in this context of corporate faith that God reveals Himself as our Father.

Sometimes we would rather have God just to ourselves — and we do, in a sense; but there is also a sense in which we have to realize that God is the Father as well.

Second, look at the character of God — our Father — and His love for us and the healing power of His love in our lives. In the natural and in the supernatural, who and what we become is affected and defined by our parents. Our genealogy influences who we become.

Galatians 3:29 reads, *“And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.”*

Galatians 4:7 says that we are heirs through Jesus Christ. *“And therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”*

Romans 8:16-17 says that *“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”*

And finally, we are His sons and daughters through Jesus Christ — a supernatural genealogy!

God wants us to explore His heart, to be open to having an incredible relationship with Him. And as we do, we will experience a life-changing journey when we discover that the Father’s heart is Jesus Christ.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read the following Scriptures:

- a. **John 8:54-55**
- b. **John 10:25-30**
- c. **John 15:9-17**

Share what you see in these verses about the relationship of Jesus to His Father.

2. What do the words “Our Father” mean to you before and after you receive Jesus Christ into your life?
