

## God as Father in Heaven

What is a father? There are many meanings in the dictionary. As a noun, some of the definitions are a male parent; a father-in-law, stepfather, or adoptive father; and the Father, the first person of the Trinity. That would be God. As a verb it means to be the creator, founder, or author of; originate; to assume as one's own; take the responsibility of.

Our Father in Heaven, God, created each one of us. Psalm 139:13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. He has a plan for each one of us. 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. . God is the perfect Father and He is with us always. What's more, we are expected to imitate God as best we can. Ephesians 5:1-2 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

For men who follow God, that means we have a high bar to reach for. We are to be the kind of fathers to our children that God is to us. We are asked to show God's compassion and His strength. And as I think of all these things I need to remind myself that with God all things are possible because I couldn't do it by myself. We also need to remember that we need Him to be our Father and we need to love and cherish Him just as we hope to be loved and cherished by our children.

As Christians, we call each other brothers and sisters in Christ. In saying that, we are acknowledging God as our Father in Heaven. It makes us a family with all the ups and downs that come with having brothers and sisters. But what's wonderful about our family is who our dad is. Our dad is the guy who built the entire Universe. Our dad is the guy who saw two cities, Sodom and Gomorrah, that were filled with evil and destroyed them. Our dad is the guy who found one righteous man left on the Earth and saved him and his family while wiping out everyone else. Our dad is the guy who Loves us so much and wants to be with us so much that he sent his only Son down to Earth to sacrifice him in payment for all the evil we have done. He did this so we could be clean in His sight and we could be near Him. Our Father is worthy of praise and respect.

But we don't always respect Him, do we? I know I don't always do what's best for me, what He would tell me to do if He were standing right beside me, or what I know in my heart I should be doing. When I disobey Him, I'm not showing my Love and respect for Him, and it makes me sad. I want to be a good son. I want to be able to always do what's right. But sometimes, I'm not even sure what's right, and I don't always stop to ask. Sometimes I don't ask because deep down I already know the answer. How does God feel when His children don't obey Him? Certainly mad. He's destroyed people, towns, and even most of the world in His anger for being rejected by His own creation, His own children. But also sad, because He loves us and wants to be near us. We know He Loves us because of He has given us a way to be forgiven. He has given each one of us the ability to ask for, and receive, forgiveness.

When our children disobey us, or disrespect us, it is OK to feel angry or frustrated. Even God feels this way and He's shown it. But we also need to remember His forgiveness when we go to Him and ask for it, and share that forgiveness when our children come to us and ask for it.

Children, when you disobey or disrespect your parents it is wrong. Hebrews 13:17 tells all of us Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. Another way to say it would be that disobeying just makes things worse. And just as your parents ask forgiveness from God when they disobey His commands or reject Him, it is important for you to ask forgiveness from your parents when you disobey or reject them.

Our Father in Heaven created us, Loves us, has plans for us, teaches us, protects us, provides for us, and has prepared a way for us to be with Him forever. He expects us to Love Him, obey Him, and share His Love with all of those around us. This is the relationship He has modeled for our relationship with our parents, and our children. This is why we call God our Father in Heaven.