

The Perfect Father Everyday

by Danny Bond

Jesus teaches us to pray to God as our Father, and to approach Him with confidence and hope, in order to experience intimacy with God.

Duration: 43:47

Scripture: Exodus 19:12-13, Matthew 6:9, John 1:12, John 14:7, John 17:26, 1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 13:8

Topics: "God The Father", "Christian Living"

Description

In this sermon, I. Packer emphasizes the importance of understanding Christianity as a revelation of the fatherhood of God. He states that the knowledge of God as one's holy father is central to New Testament teaching and Christianity as a whole. Packer highlights that the thought of being God's child and having God as one's father should shape a person's worship, prayers, and outlook on life. He uses the parable of the prodigal son to illustrate the consequences of living in sin away from the father and the joy of being forgiven and received back by the father. Packer concludes by affirming that the father is the Christian name for God and that God's love and forgiveness are always available to his children.

Transcript

The message is entitled, The Perfect Father Every Day, and I would encourage each and every one of you to thank Jesus that we can have a happy Father's Day, actually every day. In Matthew chapter 6, the disciples had been watching the prayer life of Jesus Christ. There was something very different about it.

The Jews were a very religious people, so prayer was not foreign to them at all. Prayer was, to the Jews, a very common thing. They grew up with it, they had all kinds of rules about it, traditions about it, manners and so on.

But then when Jesus came along, there was something very, very different about his prayer life. And as they watched him go from one encounter with the multitudes to the next, and saw him operate with such love and such power, and how about this, such patience with the multitudes, they saw that in between were all these times of prayer. They wanted to know how to pray like he did after a while.

So in Matthew 6, 9, he's teaching them, and he says, In this manner, therefore, pray our Father in heaven, how it be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Marcus Dodds once said, We are not to think that where we see no possibility, God sees none. We must learn to cease from measuring the power of God by our own, and reasoning from the one to the other.

Our Father in heaven, he's omnipotent, he's all-powerful. Matthew Henry put it this way, he said, Man's extremity is God's opportunity. It's all about a relationship with him.

Thomas Fuller put it this way, he said, Prayer should be the key of the day and the lock of the night. You begin your day in fellowship with your Father, and you end your day in fellowship with your Father in heaven. Now there's three things I want to draw out about our Father.

One is we approach him directly, and how great that is. The second is we can approach him confidently. And the third is we can approach him hopefully, how good it is.

Not only that God can be known, but that he can be approached in these ways. Let's talk about the wonderful fact we can approach our Father in heaven directly. Jesus says that when we pray, we are to pray our Father in heaven.

That's who we are to pray for. There's no one else in the prayer that he tells us to pray to. In other words, we are to pray to God alone.

We do not pray to any creature. We don't pray to an angel. He doesn't tell us to pray to saints.

He tells us to pray to our Father in heaven. No creatures, to God alone. We are to come directly to the Father, which is such a great thing.

I remember growing up, I went to a lot of different churches. None of them, however, preached the gospel that I could know Jesus Christ personally. And as a result, I took off on my own journey after a while to find God.

And all I wanted after a while was to know this. Is God really there? And if he is there, does he speak? That's what I wanted to know. And if so, who can introduce him to me so we can talk? And I'd like to spend my life talking to him.

I found out that through Jesus Christ, I can come directly to the Father. In John 14 6, Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth and the life. And no one comes to the Father except what? Through me.

Now, it's very narrow on the one hand, but it's very glorious on the other, because he really does put you in direct relationship with God in heaven. Turn your Bible to John chapter 16, verse 23. We're going to use our Bibles today.

There's things I want you to look at that you might not have ever looked at before. John 16 23. Jesus is teaching them how to pray.

And he says in that day, John 16 23. And that day you ask me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the father in my name, he will give you.

Until now, you have asked nothing in my name. Ask and you will receive. Look at this, that your joy may be full.

Everything's new since I've come. I'm teaching you how to know God as your father. I'm teaching you how to come and pray to him.

And where I'm taking you is into such a relationship with him that your joy may be full. Only a Christian born again can know fullness of joy in their heart, that your joy may be full. In first Timothy 2:5, Paul writes, and he says, for there is one God, one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

In John 1:12, we read, but as many as received him to them, he gave the right to become the children of God, even to those who believe in his name. It is a great day of freedom and simplicity. When you realize you can come directly to God through Jesus Christ, have a direct audience with God as your father and heaven.

And he comes down to live in your heart. It is a great day when you just begin to approach him directly. I think, God, he is my father and he is my God.

We also approach him confidently. How great it is to have a father that you can come to and not have to second guess what's going to happen, what the reaction is going to be, what the mood is going to be. We can come confidently.

We can actually enjoy him as our own father. See, Jesus, when he came on the scene, he was living in fellowship with God, the father. So he was modeling something that had never been seen before.

Because, you see, before Christ and his incarnation in his ministry here on Earth, throughout the Old Testament, you see men praying to God. But you do not see the kind of intimacy in their prayers and in their life as Christ has with the father. Let me give you a few examples.

When God took the children of Israel out of Egypt, brought them to Sinai, and then began to appear and speak from the top of Sinai, here are his people gathered below. There's about three million of them. They're staring up at this granite pulpit that looms into the sky.

And on the top, God is there thundering and talking. As they began to hear God actually speak, they got really nervous. And as he outlined some specific sins, they got even more nervous.

This had not been done before. God outlining specific sins. So they went to Moses and they said, Moses, listen, we're really glad that God is talking and everything, but it really scares us.

So could you go back up the mountain and ask God if he would just talk to you first and tell you things? And then you can come back down the mountain. You can tell us what he said, because it really scares us. To hear God speak like that.

And that's the way they did it then. And then when God was going to really manifest his presence, he told Moses, rope off the mountain. And if anyone comes past the ropes during this time, they will die.

So make sure nobody comes past the ropes. So what kind of a message is that to an individual seeking the Lord? Says you can come up to him, but you can't come all the way up. In the temple, when they built the temple, you had eventually, especially in the time of Jesus, you had the court of the Gentiles.

Then you had you could go a little further. The Gentiles could only go that far, no further. Then you had the court of the women.

Then the women could go that far, no further than you had the court of the men. So they could go that far in. Then you had the court of the priest.

The men had to stop there. Only the priest could go farther. Then at the back of the temple area there, the temple mount, you had the structure that has the holy place and the holy of holies.

And only the high priest could go into the holy of holies one time a year to go directly into the presence of God, the Shekinah glory of God at the Ark of the Covenant one time a year. So you see that kind of approach to God in the Old Testament. Do you know that in the Old Testament, God is referred to his father only 14 times, only 14 times in the whole of the Old Testament.

And even at that, it's not on a personal level. It's as the father of the nation of Israel. So he's the father of the nation.

For example, you don't find Abraham coming and praying and saying, oh, father, you don't find it. You look at the life of David, you look at his Psalms. David was picked by God to be king because he was a man after God's own what heart.

So we know that he was as intimate with God as you could be at the time. And yet reading through the Psalms, you will never find David calling God father in a personal way. Any references to the father of the nation, you can search then from Genesis to Malachi and you will not find an occurrence of an individual praying to God as father just directly like that.

So Jesus appears on the scene and suddenly here he is. And every time he goes to prayer, he addresses God directly as father. This is brand new.

This is unprecedented. It's powerful. And they see the effect in his life of this kind of intimacy.

And it's amazing to see how it unfolds, really. Can you take your Bible, turn to Luke chapter two, verse 48. I think in some ways the most staggered and amazed at this reality was his father, Joseph and his mother, Mary, his earthly father, Joseph, who basically adopted him because because Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit.

So they'd been up to Jerusalem to worship and then they'd left and they would travel in caravans in those days. And generally, you had all of these relatives in the caravan. So they wouldn't necessarily go scouring everywhere to see if Jesus was with them.

So the caravan leaves and they discover after a few days that Jesus is not with them. He's 12 years old. He's not with them.

So where is he? I don't know. I haven't seen him. Maybe he's left back at Jerusalem.

So they go back to Jerusalem to find him. And we read in Luke 2, 48. So when they saw him, they were, what does it say? Amazed as mother said to him, son, why have you done this to us? Look, your father, Joseph, look, your father and I have sought for you anxiously.

And he said to them, why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be about my father's business at 12 years of age? He was calling God in heaven, his father at 12 years of age. It had never been done before at 12 years of age. Can you imagine? Not only were they amazed, but the religious leaders that he was talking with.

Jesus addressed God only as father in his prayers. In fact, in the Gospels, you'll find him addressing God as father more than 60 times, more than 60 times. The only time that we don't see him use the term father

when he prays is, does anyone know? On the cross, when he's bearing the sin of the world and he has the wrath of God being poured out on that sin, he cries out, my God.

That's the first time he's not saying father when he prays. It's in that mysterious separation that occurred between the father and son there as he bore our sins. The beautiful thing, though, is once he paid the penalty, once he bore our sins, we find that before he died in Luke 23, 46, when Jesus cried out with a loud voice, he said, father, into your hands, I commend my spirit.

Having said this, he breathed his last. He pillowed his head on his chest. Father, it was back to father before he died.

So throughout his life, this intimacy that he modeled was marvelous, but he didn't just model it. He made it available. He made available the marvelous intimacy that he had.

So in Matthew six, nine, when he says, therefore, in this manner, Lord, how do you have this kind of fellowship with God? It's the way I pray. Well, then teach us the way you pray. All right.

Do it in this manner. He didn't say do it by memory and then do it by rote mechanically. He said, do it in this manner.

In other words, let me give you my outline for the main things I pray for. The main things I pray about and let me show you how I start. I come to God as my father.

You come to God. Now you begin to address him as father. This would be monumental in their thinking.

Turn your Bible to John 14, seven. You start to chase this around in scripture, and it is just become so wonderful. John 14, seven shortly before he goes to the cross, he's with his closest followers and Philip wants him to show them the father.

So in John 14, seven, he says, if you had known me, you would have known my father also. And from now on, from now on, you know him. It's not good from now on.

Everything's changing because of what I am doing, what I've been doing, what I've been preaching, what I'm about to do from now on, you know him and have seen him. Philip said to him, Lord, then show us the father. It'll be sufficient for us.

Like pull out a photograph or something. You know, the disciples are so dense. They are so dense.

Can you just show us a picture and we'll be happy. Just show us the father for a second. That'll be all right.

Jesus said to him, have I been so long with you and yet you have not known me, Philip. He who has seen me has seen the father. So how can you say show us the father? You've been you've been seeing the father in and through me the whole time to see me is to see the father.

He says, do you not believe that I am in the father and the father in me, the words that I speak to you? I do not speak on my own authority, but the father who dwells in me does the works. Believe me. Look at father, father, father, father.

Believe me that I am in the father and the father in me or else believe me for the sake of the works. But do believe me now. Go to John 17, 26.

This is. As good as it gets. Jesus now is moving toward the cross.

And this is his time of prayer. Sometimes called his high priestly prayer. It's time of prayer alone with the father.

How I thank God that that he prayed loud enough for John to be able to hear him. So John could write it down for us in John 17, 26. He's talking.

Jesus is talking to the father in prayer. This is inter Trinitarian communication here, folks. It's deep.

John 17, 26. I have made you known to them. He's talking to the father.

Father, I have made you known to them and will continue to make you known. Isn't that great? Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. He's going to continue to make the father known to all that know him.

So it wasn't just for the disciples and the apostles. All of us today that know him. He is going to continue to make the father known to us.

That tells me that my life with God never has to get boring. Because I could live a hundred years. And if he revealed the father to me every single day at the end of the hundred years, how much of the infinitude of God will have been revealed to me? Just the tiniest bit.

I love it. Father, I have made you known to them and I will continue to make you known. Here it is in order that the love you have for me may be in them.

Is that amazing or what? As Jesus walked around on this earth, the love that he was bathed in and fellowship with the father, the love, the experience and fellowship with the father. He is now praying that that love as he goes to the cross and then ascends back into heaven, that that love can come down out from God and into us the same kind of love that he experienced in fellowship with the father. So it goes beyond just calling God father.

It goes all the way into Jesus praying right here for us that the same love that was in him in fellowship with the father would be in us. The love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them. You talk about being a long way from religion.

This is as far from religion as it gets and as deep into relationship with the living God as it gets. Let me ask you a question. Do you think the father answers the prayers of the son? This is a powerful prayer because God is going to answer it.

All we have to do is come to our father in heaven and say, put your finger right on John 17, 26. Say that's for me, Lord. I want it.

Let me begin to experience it in my life. So when they wanted to know how to pray, he said, you begin and you do it like I do. Start to call God your father and begin to know him in that way.

They'd never heard anything like this. This was so wonderful for them. You start the way I start.

And notice he says in Matthew 6, 9, he says, when you pray, pray our father. In other words, we're a family. Isn't that great? We are a family.

When you are born again and God becomes your father in that sense through Jesus Christ, you are born into a family, our father, so that he teaches us to pray in intimacy with the father in such a way that we're always thinking about each other. It's very hard to pray. In fact, impossible to pray the way Jesus teaches us to pray and be entirely self-centered.

That is so important because we are so self-centered already. Any help we can get to dislodge us from being utterly self-centered, we need. I think Jesus that he taught the disciples to pray in this way and right up front, our father, and then it's lead us, forgive us.

So if we pray the way he prayed, we're going to be praying for each other. We're going to be mindful of each other. We're going to be thinking about each other.

We're going to be loving each other. The hour filters down through the entire prayer. You end up praying for not just yourself.

You should pray for yourself. Sometimes people say, well, I feel like it's selfish that I just pray for me. It's like a pendulum swing, you know, either you just pray only for yourself or you pray only for others.

It kind of goes in a shift. First, you pray only for yourself. Then you want to get more spiritual.

So you stop just praying for yourself. You pray only for others. And then you get confused and you think, well, gee, I'm being left out a lot and starting to get neglected here.

And I'm, you know, getting kind of messed up. I wonder if it'd be OK to sneak in a prayer or two for me. You know, we swing on these crazy pendulums.

People have come so often after messages. Pastor, is it OK to pray for myself? I always tell them Jesus taught us to pray our father. But he did say father and he is your father.

And you should pray first for your own life, because if your life is a mess, what good does it do to be praying for others? So, yes, you should pray for your own life. So you're intimate with him. Then pray for others and you'll pray with power for others.

It's family, our father. We enjoy together the fatherhood of God and we enjoy personally, intimately the fatherhood of God. And we enjoy in the process the love of God, the love of God.

We can approach God. We can come in to pray. Jesus said, when you pray the father, find a place and go in there and shut the door.

Get along with him. We can approach with a sense of already being loved. How important is that when you've been out there having what is now the worst week you've ever had? Perhaps in years you were doing really great.

You were walking so close with the Lord and somehow some way you slipped, you fell, you crossed over the line in his sin. And the next thing you knew, it was more than one day. And then it was a week.

Then it was two weeks and a month. And the next thing you know, you're coming back to God and you've been so far from him. How important is it to know that I can approach with a sense of already being loved? It's absolutely critical.

In fact, that's what keeps me from staying out there away from God for long periods of time, because I don't want to miss out on that love. We are to come boldly before the throne of grace. We read in Hebrews that we might find grace to help in time of need.

When is the greatest time of need or when we're having the hardest time? That's when we should be rushing in. Coming with a sense of being loved already and enjoying the love of the father and first John three one. Let me read it to you.

John wrote. Behold, this is John wrote this, by the way, the end of his life late in life when he was with Christ in his ministry on Earth. John was a very, very young man when he wrote first, second and third.

Johnny was much older. Now he's looking back and marveling. First, John three one.

Behold, what manner of love the father has bestowed upon us that we think of it. We should be called the children of God. Those of us who were out there before just serving the devil.

Now that we can be called the children of God, what love is this? God's children are granted by him through Jesus Christ, the most profound intimacy imaginable. That's what being a Christian is all about. When Jesus prayed to the father, we find him using the term Abba.

It was a term of endearment. He addressed God in Mark 1436. He said, Abba, father.

He addressed him with that same familiar intimacy that he would have addressed Joseph. In fact, you go to that part of the world today and you'll be walking along and you'll hear little kids yelling out Abba, Abba, Abba. You know, these biblical kids here, you know, looking all around.

It's just father. Jesus used the term Abba because he was so intimate with the father. But then he brings us into the same intimacy and he teaches us to pray to the father.

And it is the work of the Holy Spirit to cultivate that same kind of intimacy in us so that we can enjoy the tender love of God that was in Christ that he prayed would be in us. Turn your Bible to Galatians 4, 6. When you're born again and you come to know God as your father through Jesus Christ, it doesn't just end there. It begins there.

Galatians 4, 6 is because you are sons. God has sent forth the spirit of his son into your heart, crying out what Abba father. The truth is, when you're born again, you're born again, crying Abba father.

Romans 8, 15 says you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you receive the spirit of adoption by whom we cry out Abba father. The moment you're born again, and this is how you know you're born again. Your heart begins to just cry out for intimacy with the father.

That cry of Abba father is generated within you by the Holy Spirit. The old Puritans used to call that holy longings, holy longings. When you're truly born again, you begin to experience these holy longings to be near with the Lord, and that's the difference, the huge difference between religion and relationship with God, between knowing about Christ and believing the facts about him and actually knowing him and knowing the father through him.

Holy longings, Abba father. And so we cry out in the same way as Christ because it's Christ in us. Causing us to cry out to the father with that kind of intimacy and Romans 5, 5 says that the love of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he's given to us.

So there you have the whole thing. Jesus prayed, father, I pray for them that the love that has been in me, your love will be in them as it has been in me. I have revealed you to them and I will continue to reveal them.

And so it's all takes place within us, that intimacy and that love by the Holy Spirit. So you can know personally through prayer, the ultimate experience of a perfect father every day whose love is unconditional. John Blanchard has put it so well, he said, God loved us when there was nothing good to be seen in us.

And nothing good to be said for us. God loves each one of his people. Get this.

God loves each one of his people as if. There was only one of them to love the focus of the father on your life. He, he is able to love you as though you were the only person in existence to be the recipient of his love.

I read about a young man who could never please his father as he was growing up. That may be familiar to some, no matter what he did, it was always met with criticism. If he mowed the lawn, his father saw only the few blades of grass that he missed, not the rest of the lawn that he had done so well on.

If you clean the garage, no matter how much time he spent or how well he had done, his father always found something to complain about. If he brought home a report card with high grades and had all A's on it, one B plus, his father would look at it and he would, he would not see the A's. He would only see the B plus.

Okay, what's the problem here with B plus? He wouldn't see that the rest were all A's. And so he grew up like that. As a result, the boy felt that he was a perpetual failure.

Of course he did. He lacked self-confidence. He became obsessed with the thought that he could never do anything right.

Maybe you grew up like that, obsessed with the thought. I can't do anything right. That's what happens when you have a father like that.

Well, your father in heaven is perfect. And this individual carried that over into his spiritual life. So he came to Christ and he lived in a state of despondency because he carried that image of his father over to God in heaven.

And he just assumed God in heaven is like that, too. And then he read in the Bible that it says it's impossible to please God. And he failed to see that he was quoting Hebrews 11, 6. He missed the point.

It says without faith, it is impossible to please him. He just saw it's impossible to please him. Well, there it is.

He's just like my dad. And here we go again. Only forever, which is even worse.

So he went to his pastor and he said, man, I'm really messed up. Now I read that I could never please my dad. Now I read God is impossible to please.

So his pastor opened the Bible, says, look, without faith, it's impossible to please him. In other words, what pleases him is simply you coming in faith. Seeking him with your heart from your heart and faith that

pleases him.

That's all it takes to please him. In other words, we all have to remember God is so satisfied with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross in atonement for our sins. So satisfied.

Romans says he made propitiation for our sins. The NIV says a satisfaction. Propitiation is a theological word.

NIV is common word kind of waters it down big time, but it helps you get the idea. God's completely satisfied with Christ and his atonement for you on the cross. Therefore, he's already satisfied with you because you're in him.

The rest is a relationship you work out day by day. Practically, so God is satisfied with the righteousness of Christ on your behalf. Therefore, he's not hard to please.

He's actually easy to please. You just come in faith and seek him with your heart and he's pleased to be in fellowship with you. He loves you.

He loves you. He wants you to enjoy his love. So we enjoy the fatherhood of God.

We enjoy the love of God. And at the same time, we enjoy the fact that he's perfect. We enjoy the perfection of God.

In other words, he's not just loving. Sometimes he's always loving. He's always loving as we approach him.

We need to keep that in mind. Jeremiah 31 3 says, listen to this. The Lord has appeared of old to me saying, yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love.

Therefore, with loving kindness, I have drawn you. Do you know that when the writers of the King James Bible put it together, they had to make up the word loving kindness. They had to join together those words because there was no word in the English language to describe what was being said there in the Bible by God of that kind of love.

Therefore, with loving kindness, I have drawn you. That's the love. It's always that way.

He's never changes in his love. So that kind of perfect love then nurtures a confidence within us. However, I may have approached my earthly father, I can approach my heavenly father in confidence because his love is unchanging so that let me put it another way.

That's a little easier to grasp. God writes with a pen that never blots. God speaks with a tongue that never skips.

God acts with a hand that never fails. He is absolute perfection. He's always loving them always.

And he is always, always forgiving. Turn your Bible to Luke 15 18. I know this is familiar to many of you.

But after looking at all of these wonderful scriptures takes on more meaning. Luke 15 18. You have the prodigal son.

He got his inheritance early and he went away and lived a sinful life and blew all the money. He ended up on a farm and he was eating pig food. He ran out of money.

So he saw these pigs chowing down. So he hopped the fence and he got that in there with the pigs and he was able to get some food at least. And he realized here I am.

My father is wealthy. He's got servants and everything. And I'm here with the pigs eating pig food.

What a perfect picture that is of a life backslidden, living in sin away from your father in heaven, eating the stuff of the world. So he comes to himself, the Bible says. And what a great day it is when you come to yourself, you come to your senses, you come to yourself.

My father loves me. I will arise and go. But the great thing is, is that the father, his father loves him so much.

He's been watching every day, every day that he was gone. The father was watching. So he comes to himself.

He says, I am no longer worthy to be called your son. I'll go and tell him that. Make me like one of your hired servants.

So verse 20 of Luke 15, he arose and he came to his father and when he was still a great way off. You know what I like about this? Jesus is teaching this and it's father, father, father, father, father all the way through. If you notice it, he says, I will rise and go to my father.

And when he was still a great way off, his father saw him. That means his father had been watching every day. In other words, his father was already loving him every day, all the time.

He's a far off thing. And all the father is mad at me and all of this, you know, he's watching every day, just waiting for him to come back so he can receive him back. So when he's a great way off, his father saw him and had he had compassion.

And he ran to him and fell on his neck and kissed him. The father ran to forgive him. Your father in heaven loves you so much.

He is always forgiving. And when he forgives, he runs to forgive. Then he brings him in.

And in verse 22, the father said to the servants, bring out the best robe, put it on him, put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet and bring the fatted calf here and kill it and let us eat and be what? Mary, for this, my son was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found. And they began to be merry.

When you come to God for forgiveness, know that he runs to forgive, accept the forgiveness and enter into the joy that he has for you. Too often we come to God, we ask for forgiveness and we cannot forgive ourselves. So we ask for forgiveness.

Then we go away and we kind of are spun out and kind of weirded out and wandering around. And we come back to God and we ask him all over again. Now, Lord, I know I was here before, but you were probably mad at me then.

And so I'm back now. And, you know, we we already prayed together once. Maybe you're less mad.

I'll try again. And we come back again and again. Oh, please forgive me.

Look, I promise we start making bargains. We just simply need to come to him. He rushes to forgive, accept the forgiveness, begin to thank him for the forgiveness, begin to be merry.

Let him love you. He is always loving. He is always forgiving and he is always unchanging.

His love is constant. Malachi 3, 6, he says, I am the Lord and I change not. I change not.

God wants us to enjoy knowing him. Do you enjoy knowing him? If you've been living by do's and don'ts, if you've turned your Christianity into do's and don'ts and you're not enjoying your fellowship with God, it's time to come back to him and let him rush in and forgive you and just pull you in close. It's time to enjoy God, to be merry with God.

Have a merry heart. You realize we don't even talk like that anymore. How are you doing today? I have a merry heart.

When was the last time you heard somebody say that? We live in such a bummed out world. When was the last time you said, how are you? I am merry. See, the Bible uses these terms we don't even use in our world today.

Such a different kind of life when you're intimate with the father and you're enjoying his unchanging love and his forgiveness and you realize he's not moody. I think one of the biggest problems with any father that's earthly, any earthly father is he's moody. So, you know, what's his mood going to be like? Dad's home.

Somebody take a peek and see what it looks like out there. I thank God I can come to him as my father and know he's not moody. He's not going to say, you know what, son? I had a really bad day, you know, running the universe and everything's not easy.

Angels were giving me trouble. Of course, there's always the devil. Go away now.

You go away and play and come back later. No, he's not moody. He is the same.

He's unchanging. Every time you come, you can know that he's not moody. He doesn't have bad days.

He doesn't have weeks of failure. He doesn't walk around in guilt and condemnation. He is perfect and consistent.

And every time we approach him, he's just as loving, just as receptive, just as willing to listen as he was the last time. He's our perfect father every day. J.I. Packer had some great words to say.

He said, you sum up the whole of New Testament teaching in a single phrase. If you speak of it as a revelation of the fatherhood of the holy creator. In the same way, you sum up the whole of New Testament Christianity.

If you describe it as the knowledge of God as one's holy father. If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child and having God as his father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and his prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all.

Packer goes on to say for everything that Christ taught, everything that makes the New Testament new and better than the old, everything that is distinctly Christian as opposed to merely Jewish is summed up in the knowledge of the fatherhood of God. Then he ends by saying this, father is the Christian name for God. Father is the Christian name for God.

And so we approach him directly. We approach him confidently. And then, of course, we approach him hopefully because he's all powerful and he's all loving.

William Cooper is pronounced looks like it's spelled like Cowper, but it's pronounced Cooper. William Cooper wrote many great hymns. He wrote these words restraining prayer.

We cease to fight. Prayer makes the Christians armor bright and Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees. Good words.

Do you want to know why it's true? Those words of Cooper, because the man who kneels to God can stand up to anything. The man who kneels to God can stand up to anything. Jesus said in this manner, therefore, pray our father in heaven.

How would be your name? My beloved brethren, father is the Christian name for God. Let's pray. Oh, God, how we do love you.

And how good it is this day to read in your word in so many places. Of how much you love us as our father. We bless and praise your holy name.

Lead us on father into intimacy with you. That we may know you as our perfect father every day and know a merry heart as a result. Joy, unspeakable, full of glory, filled with the love of God that was in Christ.

Now in us and we ask these things in Jesus name. Amen.

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