

## **WHY YOU CAN FIND COMFORT IN GOD THE FATHER**

One of the things Jesus Christ came to earth to do is show us what God is really like. Jesus exploded all the stereotypes about God. He showed us that God is not some impersonal force. God is not some angry tyrant who sits in heaven waiting to make things miserable for people. God is not some apathetic creator who winds up the world and sets it down and then sits back and just watches it go by.

In fact, Jesus called God his father, something that was unusual during his day. In fact, in the prayer that he taught his disciples, he said, “Our Father in heaven”. This is no big deal to us today because we talk a lot about the Fatherhood of God, that God is our Father. When Jesus said those words 2000 years ago, it was radical stuff. His disciples must have been greatly surprised when He said, “When you pray, God wants you to call Him Father.” In the entire Old Testament over thousands of years, God is only referred to as Father eleven times. Jesus refers to God as Father well over 100 times in the gospels. So, he wants you to know that God wants to relate to you.

Unfortunately, for some people the word “father” conjures up all kinds of painful memories. Rather than it being a happy term, it’s a sad term for some and even an angry term for others. When I say the word “father”, for some of you, it stirs up deep resentment. You had a father who was neglectful. You had a father who was abusive, either physically or verbally. You had a father who just wasn’t there, a nonentity in your life. Some of you when you think of the word “father” it brings up fear.

But the Bible tells us that your heavenly Father is not like that. In **2 Corinthians 1:3-4a**, it says, “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our trouble.”

So, the Bible tells us that you can find comfort in God. He is not like some earthly fathers who you run away from or you're afraid of, but he is always there for you, rooting for you, caring for you. So, today I'd like to give you four reasons why you can find comfort in God. We all need comfort, don't we? Especially during these times of distress brought about by the pandemic, we need the reassuring comfort of God our heavenly father. And since it's Father's Day I thought that's an appropriate subject. Why you can find comfort in God the Father.

Here's the first reason.

## **1. GOD IS A COMPASSIONATE FATHER.**

He is compassionate, loving, gracious and He cares about you. In fact, He loves you more than you will ever know. He loves you more than you will be able to experience. You can't even understand how much God loves you. But compassion is one of God's important characteristic and attribute. The Bible tells us in *Psalms 103:13* “*As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.*”

There's a story in the Bible where the disciples – the original twelve guys who followed Jesus – were out in a fishing boat one day on the lake and Jesus was in the boat asleep. They're fishing and all of a sudden a storm comes up, the waves start rising and the rain is pouring down. There were thunder and lightning. The little boat begins to be tossed to and fro in the rocky sea. The water is coming in over the sides of the boat and it's sinking. It's starting to capsize.

Jesus is asleep over at one end of the boat, obviously not concerned about this. The disciples, the story tell us, go over and wake Him up, shake Him, and say, “Lord! Don't You care that we're dying? Don't You care that we're perishing?”

That is one of the most profound questions in human existence. Does God care about my problems? Does God care about my hurts? The things I'm going through? The stresses I'm feeling? The worries I'm experiencing? Does God really care about what happens to me?

Until you settle that issue, you're not going to get to know God. If you think He doesn't care, why get to know Him? Does God care about the details in your life?

The answer is yes. He says it many, many times in the Bible. One place is in **1 Peter 5:7**. It says, *"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."* Does God care about your house payments? Yes. Does God care about the fact that your kids need braces on their teeth? Yes. Does God care about the grades you get at school? Yes. Does God care about whether you have a boyfriend or not? Yes. Does God care about your moods? Yes. Does God care about your financial investments? Yes. Does God care about your dreams and hopes and ambitions? Yes. Does He care about whether you're a success or failure in life? Absolutely. He is a caring Father. You have a heavenly Father that cares about all the details of your life. In fact, He knows every detail of your life. The Bible says He knows every hair on your head. He knows how many you have. They're numbered. For some of you that isn't too hard. But I guarantee you, there's not a person in here today that knows how many hairs you have. God knows every hair on your head and He knows their original color!

Because of that, the Bible says this, *"So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them."* **(Matthew 6:31-32)** He says, what are you worrying about?

Fathers, do you want your kids to worry about where their next meal is going to be? No.

Do you want your kids worrying about whether they'll have clothes to wear to school? No. If my kids came to me and said, "Dad, I'm worried. I'm worried that we're not going to have enough to eat." I'd consider that a personal failure, an affront to me. Because it's my job as a dad to take care of my kids' needs. I love them, I care about them, I'm committed to meeting their needs. If their needs are not being met, I blame myself.

God doesn't want you worrying about your needs either, because He's your heavenly Father. He says, "I don't want you worrying about if you're going to have food to eat or clothes to wear. I'm going to take care of your needs. Because I'm a caring Father. Don't worry." You see, every time you are worrying, you're doubting that God really cares about the details of your life. Which is not true.

The second thing the Bible tells us about God is

## **2. GOD IS A CONSISTENT FATHER.**

You can count on Him, every time. He never lets you down. He's always dependable, entirely consistent in who He is. God is worthy of our trust. **James 1:17** *"Every good and perfect gift is from the Father who does not change like shifting shadows."* The truth is earthy fathers are unpredictable. Some of them are incredibly unpredictable and fickle.

I know some teenagers who feel like, "I never know what to expect from my dad. It changes so much from one day to the other depending entirely on the mood he's in. One day he's silent and the next day he's violent. One day he's a good guy and the next day he's a tough guy. I don't know what to expect." Inconsistent fathers produce insecure kids. Where do you find security in an inconsistent world?

God is a consistent Father. God is not moody. God never has a bad day. That's good news for us. What if God woke up and said, "I feel a little grouchy today. Who can I zap today?" What kind of world would that be?

The good news is God is always consistent. And the great news is His consistency and dependability does not depend on my consistency and dependability. **2 Timothy 2:13, "If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself."** I'm so glad that even on the days that I'm down, God is still up. Even on the days when I'm struggling, God is still victorious. He's always consistent.

The fact is, the world round us is changing at an incredible rate and we all have to deal with that on a daily basis. Because of that, we all need what Alvin Toffler calls "islands of stability" in this world of change. While everything around us might be changing, there is one thing that you can absolutely count on. God always acts the same way towards you. He always acts in love. He always acts with forgiveness. He always acts with grace. He always offers you His power. He doesn't change. He is always caring and He's always consistent. That's what God is like. That's what the real God is like. In all the man-made religions of the world, when we try to make up our idea of God, it's different. In man-made religions God is always temperamental. Whether it's Greek gods or whatever. They're always fickle. You always have to appease the gods. The true God is different. In **Malachi 3:6 in the Bible God is speaking and says, "I the Lord do not change."** We can count on that.

Some of you had a father that loved you the best that he could. He wasn't perfect but you know that he loved you the best that he could. Because of his love for you he built into your life a foundation that has grown into a wonderful relationship with God. This Father's Day weekend, take just a minute, right now

in your mind to thank God for the gift that your dad gave you. It's an incredible gift.

But many others of you didn't have a good relationship with your dad and you've struggled over the years.

I read the story of this pastor who was invited to talk in a church about mental illness and afterwards a girl in the crowd came up and talked to one of the members of his team. She told the story of growing up with a dad who suffered from mental illness, but her story had the most tragic of endings. She told the story of a father who, in his confusion and anger one day, murdered her mother. The pastor said he would never forget her exact words. She said, "My earthly father took from me something that no one deserves to have taken when he murdered my mother.

But one day I discovered that I have a heavenly Father who gave to me what no one deserves to have given when He gave His Son Jesus Christ on the cross for me. He gave me forgiveness and He gave me significance and He gave me peace and He gave me life."

The third reason why you can find comfort in God the Father is that

### **3. GOD IS A CLOSE FATHER.**

That means He's available all the time. He's there when you need Him. He's not distant. He's not far off. The Bible tells us in **Acts 17:27** "*God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.*" God wants you to find him. God wants you to know Him. God wants you to have a relationship with Him, so He is not far off. He is a close Father.

Many of you grew up with absentee fathers. Your father was never around. He was never home. Maybe he was always off on some important trip. Maybe he

was always off on a business deal. Maybe he was just hanging out with the guys. But he was never around when you were growing up and when he was at home he was distant and aloof, hiding behind a newspaper. For some of you your father was a non-entity. He just did not make that big of an impact.

Years ago, I read a study in *Time* magazine about the impact of absentee parents and the effect it's having on children today. The study said that the rise in two-earner income families as well as the rise of single parent families has resulted in the fact that parents now spend an average of 22 fewer hours with their children each week than they did in 1969. That's almost a full day per week in lost parental attention.

And we wonder why kids are shooting each other on the campuses of our nation. We have decided that money is more important than our kids. We have decided that a certain standard of living is more important than time with our kids. You say, "We've got to make ends meet." Lower the ends! Don't make the kids pay for a lifestyle you can't afford. Kids growing up with absentee parents have a hard time getting to know God, for one thing. God, our heavenly Father, is a close Father. He is not detached. He is not aloof. And that's why you can get to know Him.

Now, let me share with you **what it means that God is close to you**. It means that

**1. God is never too busy for you.** Your parents may be too busy for you. You may be too busy for your kids. But God is never too busy for you. When you pray, God does not say, "Not now. I'll see you later." **1 Peter 3:12 says, "For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer"**. So, he never turns away when you're in need. God is never too busy for you. Also,

2. God loves to meet my needs. Matthew 7:11 says this, *“If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”* God says, “If you, being an imperfect parent love to give good gifts to your kids what do you think a perfect parent like your heavenly Father wants to do?” I must admit I am selfish a lot of times. I’m self-centered. I think of my needs. But still, as a parent, I love to give to my kids. I love to meet their needs. I really do. And if I with my own mixed motives love to do that, how much more does God want to meet your needs. He’s a perfect Father and He’s waiting to meet your needs. *Philippians 4:19 says “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”*

God is never too busy, He loves to meet my needs and

3. God is sympathetic to my hurts. He’s sympathetic to my hurts. When I come to God with my pain, God doesn’t say, “Oh, come *on!* Get over it! Put a smile on your face. That’s an easy little thing. Get a Band-Aid!”

If you’ve had a tough week, God understands. *“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”* (Psalm 34:18) I have no doubt that in a crowd this size here today somebody’s got a broken heart. Somebody had their heart broken this week. Some of you feel crushed in spirit. What do you do? Turn to God. He is sympathetic to your hurt. He loves to meet your needs. He is never too busy for you. He wants to help you out! He’s your heavenly Father.

The word that Jesus used for “father” in Aramaic is the word “abba”. Abba is not a Swedish rock group. Abba is the first word that every Middle Eastern child learns. It means “daddy” –If you’ve been to Israel or any Middle Eastern country, little Arab kids run around all the time – “Abba, Abba, Abba.” It means “daddy.”



It is the ultimate term of endearment, of closeness, of family. There is no barrier between a little baby and a father. It's just Abba.

I have three kids. Two are teenagers and one is almost a teenager. My oldest, Ally just turned 16 this year. But even still today nothing is sweeter to my ears than when I open the door to my house and walk in and my three kids will say, "Daddy!" That's the most beautiful sound to my ears. I still get excited when my kids go, "It's Daddy!" It's a term of endearment.

Now, If I were to walk in the door of my house and my kids were to come up to me and say, "O thou most holy procreator of the Estabillo family! Thou who so sovereignly bestows our allowance upon us. We beseech thee for a bountiful blessing of cash that we may goeth to the movies." I'd be going, "Huh???"  
Hello???"

God doesn't want you to talk to Him like that. I like my kids to come up and say, "Hi Dad." – give me a kiss on the cheek – "Can I get another Oculus game? Love you!" I'd rather have that than this ritualistic talk.

God says when you come and talk to Him, you're to say, "Daddy, Papa, Abba." You see, he wants you to have such an intimate close relationship with him that you just cuddle up in His arms and say,

"Dad, here's my problem... Dad, here's my hurt ... Here's my need.... Here's what happened this week." You just share with Him on a heart-to-heart basis with no fluff, no ritual, no thee's and thou's, just daughter to daddy, and son to daddy. God is a close Father.

So, God is caring, He is consistent, He is close and...

#### **4. GOD IS A COMPETENT FATHER**

He can handle any problem you give Him. Nothing is beyond His ability. Nothing is beyond His resources. Today this is in direct opposite to human

fathers. We have an epidemic of incompetent fathers today who are good at a lot of other thing but pretty lousy as fathers. Especially on TV, all the fathers are nitwits like Al Bundy or Homer Simpson. Some of our young people are going “who are those?” Google them. I heard two school kids bragging on the schoolyard. One said, “My daddy can beat your daddy.” And the other kid goes, “Big deal! So can my Mom.”

But nobody can beat up your heavenly Father. Nobody! The Bible says in **Luke 1:37 (CSB) “For nothing will be impossible with God.”** Nothing is impossible. He can handle it all because He is competent.

When you’re growing up, you think your dad is Superman. As a little kid you think, “My daddy can do anything!” But as you grow older, you realize that your father had limits to his resources when it came to allowance and there were limits to his wisdom when it came to advice. Sometimes he was just guessing, giving it the best guess.

But your heavenly Father really can do anything. He can do anything! Nothing is impossible with God.

**Ephesians 3:20 says “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.”** God says, “Think of the biggest dream for your life. I can top that. Think of the biggest goal for your life. I can top that.

Think of the biggest problem you think you can ever come up against. I can solve it. Think of the biggest hurt you’ll ever have. I can soothe it.” God says, “I can handle it all. I’m your heavenly Father and I’m close and caring and competent and I’m consistent and if you’ll trust Me, things will go a whole lot better in your life.”

Here’s my question for you. What have you been doubting that God can handle? That situation that you’re in right now that you’re all stressed out about

because you think, “I don’t think God can handle this. I need to do this one. I’m going to have to manipulate behind the scenes. I’m going to have to politic for that job at work. I’m going to have to pull ends and cut corners and streamline things and be a little deceptive here and there. I’ve got to work extra hours and make this happen because I don’t think God can handle this problem.”

What are you thinking? That you can handle something that God can’t? God can handle anything. You need to drop it in His arms and let Him handle it.

The bottom line is God can take care of His children. And He does when we trust Him. Because He’s caring, He’s consistent, He’s close and He’s competent. He takes care of His children.

The obvious logical question then is, is everybody a child of God? Will God take care of everybody’s needs? Is God the Father of everyone?

The answer is Yes and No. If you mean, did God create everybody? Yes. If you mean, does God love everybody? Absolutely. If you mean, does God have a plan and purpose for every person on the face of this planet? Absolutely. God is the Father of everyone in that sense.

But it takes more than birth to be a father. It takes a relationship. Some of you were probably birthed by men you never met. They are your father by creation but they are not your father by relationship and you miss it. You long for it and you wish you had that relationship.

God says, “I have created everyone but not everyone is my child unless they have a relationship with me.” You are not in the family of God – you were created by God but you are not in the family of God until you choose to become a part of it. That’s a choice you can make today.

How do I become a part of the family of God? How do I become a child of God? How do I get God to be my heavenly Father?

The Bible says in John 14:6-7 *“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well.”*

Now, look at Galatians 3:26. “So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through ... being religious.” No, that’s not what it says. “So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God by ... going to church.” No. “So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God by ... keeping the Ten Commandments.” No. *“So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.”* That’s the only way you get into God’s family – children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

The \$64 M question is, why would you put your faith in Jesus Christ? The answer is because he died for you on the cross. The Bible says that we are sinners and condemned to die. We have inherited sin from our first parents Adam and Eve. This is the reason why this world is in chaos and disorder. Sin is the cause of all evil in this world including death. But God wants to set it right. He wants to set us free from sin and death. The only way to do that is by sending his perfect and sinless Son Jesus Christ to be an atoning sacrifice for us. The Bible says, “For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus”. The Bible says that if you repent of your sins and receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior, God will make you his child and God will be your father. *“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.”* (John 1:12-13)

Today, you have an opportunity to become a child of God and call God as your heavenly Father. All you need to do is to confess your sins, whatever sins you have, big or small, sins that have been making you feel guilty, sins you are not proud of, sins you want to get rid of, ask God for forgiveness and then accept

Jesus in your heart who can take away all your sins. The Bible says that he nailed all your sins on the cross and you can find forgiveness in Jesus. And you know what, it gets better, because once you receive Jesus, you receive another gift, the gift of eternal life. When you pass from this earth, you will be with Jesus in heaven forever. That is the comfort that God of all comfort is offering you today. Would you accept that offer?