

FATHER'S DAY

We often recite, *"Our FATHER who art in Heaven -- Holy is Your name"* (Matthew 6:9), but do we really realize to whom we are speaking? The Our FATHER in Heaven is the God of Creation -- the God of the Universe -- the Omnipotent One. To Him belongs all our Love, Adoration and Obedience.

We also have earthly fathers as well to whom we owe our Love, Appreciation and Honor.

There are two Bible verses that point directly to our relationship with our biological father, *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right"* (Ephesians 6:1), and, *"Honor your Father and your Mother"* (Exodus 20:12). Notice, the first in the New Testament is for "children" -- those young and growing up in their father's house. The second in the Old Testament is for children of all ages, even those who are old enough to be on their own, having their own families. The first is followed by, *"And, you fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord"* (Ephesians 6:4).

We must acknowledge right away that there are some father's who brutalize and mistreat their children -- those do not deserve the honor mentioned here and negate the respect due to a good father.

As we celebrate "Father's Day" we must all take a serious look at our biological fathers as well as our Heavenly Father. Our earthly fathers are fallible, not always perfect, and not always kind. Our Heavenly Father is Perfect, Kind, Loving, Providing, Dependable -- ALWAYS the same. We can confidently put our Entire Trust in Him. He has said, *"I will never leave you, nor forsake you"* (three times -- Joshua 1:5; Deuteronomy 31:6,8; Hebrews 13:5).

It is unfortunate that fathers do not always face up to their responsibilities. It has been said that, "Any man can produce a baby -- but it takes a responsible man to be a father" -- the difference is Commitment, Compassion, and Companionship.

COMMITMENT -- to provide the necessities and protection for the child.

COMPASSION -- to show the love and care for the child.

COMPANIONSHIP -- to supply the bonding and encouragement for the child.

This includes a proper relationship with the mother of the child -- a marriage, a home, provision of food and clothing, protection from harm, and never ending love, respect and care.

The responsibility of a good father is to lead the family and provide Scriptural instruction -- *"These Words I command you shall be in your heart -- you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way"* (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

We have the example of our Heavenly Father, and the admonitions for fathers to stand tall and proud, to be the example, and to shoulder the responsibilities that come with fatherhood -- he must be the leader of the home. Too often the mother is forced into this position by the neglect of the father -- he must teach by example, *"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it"* (Proverbs 22:6).

Some final important questions come to mind -- Is God YOUR Father? -- Do YOU, fathers, have the proper relationship that is needed with the Father in Heaven? Are YOU a real father to your children?

