

---

### *Why Father's Day matters*

---

*Our Father, who art in heaven*, ...the words are so familiar that we scarcely give them a second thought, & yet they embody one of the most marvellous truths of the gospels: the fact that we can indeed refer to God as “*our Father*”. Although we are talking about the creator of the universe, the one who is all good and all pure, before and beyond time, yet He still calls us His children. Although His ways are not our ways or His thoughts our thoughts, the Lord wants us to enjoy a personal relationship with Him. This is unique good news, - and too often not shared by the Church - foreshadowed in passages like Psalm 103 and Hosea 11 in the Old Testament. Jesus taught His followers that when you pray, come to God as *Abba – Dad* – our loving heavenly Father, who longs for us to come to Him trusting in His constant unchanging loving kindness; and to know that God is waiting on us to do so. The Lord of heaven and earth, the God before and beyond time but present with us in the here and now, loves us as deeply and devotedly as the best father we could ever hope for or imagine loves his child. As we give thanks today for fathers and fatherhood, let us also recognise and trust, know and give thanks for the God who invites each one of us to call Him, *Abba, our Father*.

---

*The Peace and assurance from knowing that we are adopted by God*

---

In John 14, Jesus spoke of giving a peace that passes all understanding so do not be troubled and do not be afraid. But how? In these troubling, abnormal, uncertain and changing times, we are daily reminded that we are far from being in control of our lives and world. How do we find peace and direction?

On Father's Day, I recall fondly nights when our children were very small, and more recently with our grandchildren, when in the middle of the night, we would hear the pitter-patter of footsteps coming into our bedroom and a small child would seek comfort from a sore tummy or a bad dream or "can't sleep" in our company. Most often, hugs and the reassurance of our loving presence would bring calm and a quick return to sleep. Even if we are now adults, fearful and anxious, maybe feeling alone and forgotten, Jesus promises a similar peace and the assurance, through God's Spirit, of that loving presence with us, as we trust in the forgiveness He won for us through His suffering and death on the cross, and that we are held and kept in God's love.

Will we accept that grace with the love and trust of a child – a child of God?

There are some people in whose presence we feel the need to be on our best behaviour. We feel that every word and action is being scrutinised in case it causes offence or doesn't measure up to what's expected. Indeed, as we make our way in the world, there is a sense in which all of us wear a mask most of the time, and there are few people in front of whom we are ready truly to be ourselves. To do that requires total love and trust. God, we are told, is such a one, before whom we can let down our defences, knowing that He accepts us and loves us as we are. He may want us to change but His love is not conditional on that. He reaches out day after day, offering His grace, guidance and support. Though we may often reject Him, He will not reject us as we turn to Him.

---

*Meditation for Father's Day*

---

Nick Fawcett offers this Meditation for worship on Father's Day:

It's me, Lord –  
not the person I pretend to be,  
nor who I want to be,  
but me, as I am,  
with all my strengths,  
all my weaknesses,  
all my faith,  
all my doubt –  
me, as I've rarely dared come before,  
reaching out to You in prayer.  
I've no right to be here, I know that,  
for I'm nothing special,  
nothing to write home about,  
and I've little idea what I'm going to say,  
still less how to say it.  
But You tell us if we truly seek, we shall find,  
if we're really sorry, You'll forgive,  
if we keep on asking, You will answer.  
So I'm here, Lord,  
in all my ugliness and sin –  
weak,  
selfish,  
greedy,  
thoughtless –  
but I'm here,  
and I'm asking You, despite it all:  
hear my prayer.

My child,  
don't stop,  
keep talking,  
for I'm here too,  
delighted to listen,  
drinking in your every word.  
It's a joy to hear you, believe me,  
music to my ears –  
no need to apologise or excuse yourself.  
I've looked forward to this moment for so  
long,  
your coming openly & honestly to meet me.  
For it's *you* I want to talk to,  
not the mask you wear for the world –  
*you* as you really are –  
the face you show, the face you hide,  
the person you love, the person you hate.  
They're both you,  
two halves of the same whole,  
inseparable as light and dark, substance and  
shadow,  
and unless you bring all, openly and honestly  
before me,  
you bring nothing.  
You're not perfect, I know that,  
but I don't ask you to be –  
it's not me who twists the knife, only you.  
I love you as you are,  
with all your faults and fragile faith,  
and I'll go on loving you day after day,  
drawing you closer to me  
not as a condition  
but as an expression of that love.  
So come now, gladly and confidently,  
bring yourself with head bent low  
but soul held high,  
and find in me,  
your kindest critic and truest friend.