

The Fatherhood of God

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[0 : 00] And we want to look tonight at the subject of the fatherhood of God. I know it's Mother's Day so it's going to be a bit radical and we're going to look at the fatherhood of God. God is our father and as much as we can learn about that.

You know we're living in a fatherless world. A world that Time Magazine said of our world, rising divorce rates. And out of wedlock births mean that more than 40% of all children are likely to spend much of their childhood living in single parent homes.

Lots of today's kids are growing up in homes without fathers. And a book called Fatherless America says the United States is becoming an increasingly fatherless society.

A generation ago an American child could reasonably expect to grow up with his or her father.

Today an American child can reasonably expect not to.

The book calls Fatherlessness, the engine driving our most urgent social problems. From crime to adolescent pregnancy to domestic violence, school dropouts, child abuse, welfare dependency.

[1 : 09] The data shows beyond any doubt, says this book, that fatherlessness is the crisis of our day. Research now shows that fatherlessness is the greatest predictor of criminal activity, teen pregnancy, school dropout, joblessness, drug addiction and suicide.

God intended that a father brings stability, character and strength to the home. And sadly many fathers are not fulfilling that role. The greatest problem today is that fathers have abandoned their role.

A leading psychiatrist has said, if the husband or father is not the head of the family, there can be nothing but chaos. The problem of a fatherless world.

And the picture of the father. Think of the father through history and through our own experiences. You know, the ideal of a father, of course. Because we know that many fathers don't measure up to the ideal of the father.

But there was a time in our world, during World War I and II, when many men and women were separated. As they went and served their country, their fathers often would go off to a distant land.

[2 : 17] Many times they would be gone. Sometimes even for four or five years at a time before they ever came home. And we're told that there's a story of a good Marine serving his country.

He went off to fight. And when he left, his wife was expecting a child. That child was born. A beautiful little girl. And because this was a special home, the mother would never let the little girl forget her father.

Every day she showed her father, talked of her father, of the girl's father. She showed her pictures of her father. She talked about the father's love and care for her.

And about how someday her father would come home. When the little girl was four years old, she was playing in the front yard. She'd never seen her father. A man came to the gate.

She looked up. She looked into his eyes with love. And he looked into her eyes with love. Then he said, she said, brother. Then she said, Daddy, you're for real.

[3 : 17] Daddy, you are for real. She saw her father. She recognized him. And friends tonight, our heavenly father is real. God the father is real. And we only have a picture of him.

Really, as we read his word, it's like a photo album of God, isn't it? We see the description of him, the pictures of Christ, of our father, God the father in his word.

And we've only got the pictures of him. But one day we'll see him. We'll see him. We'll see his face. And one of the most wonderful revelations of the Bible is God, our father.

And I'll put it to you tonight. There's four different ways we could think of this picture of God as our father. Four ways in which God is our father.

And number one is by choice. By choice. In Romans 8, verse 15, it tells us here of how we are born outside of God's family, but he adopts us into his family by faith.

[4 : 18] It says in Romans 8, verse 15, For ye have not received the spirit of bondage against a fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

That's a word that means Daddy in the original. Abba, Father. Daddy. It's that closeness of that close relationship with a father. And friends tonight, the Lord God Almighty, God the Father, he is our father by choice.

Our father chooses us. He's taken us from our natural family, because we know the Bible says that our father, the devil, that is where we were born in effect, into the devil's family.

But God has taken us out of that family and put us into his own family by adoption. It's a wonderful picture, isn't it? That we can enjoy that wonderful privilege of being God's children, of being adopted into God's family.

Finally. Mary Ann Byrd wrote this. She said, I grew up knowing I was different, and I hated it. I was born with a cleft palate. And when I started school, my classmates made it clear to me how I looked to others.

[5 : 28] A little girl with a misshapen lip, crooked nose, lopsided teeth, and garbled speech. And when schoolmates asked, what happened to your lip, I tell them I've fallen and cut it on a piece of glass.

Somehow it seemed more acceptable to have suffered an accident than to have been born different. I was convinced that no one outside my family could love me. There was, however, a teacher in the second grade whom we adored, Mrs. Leonard by name.

She was a round, short, happy, sparkling lady. Annually we had a hearing test. Mrs. Leonard gave the test to everyone in the class. And finally it was my turn.

I knew from past years that as we stood against the door and covered one ear, the teacher sitting at her desk would whisper something and we would have to repeat it back.

Things like, the sky is blue. Or, do you have new shoes? I waited there for those words that God must have put into her mouth.

[6 : 28] Those seven words that changed my life. Mrs. Leonard said in her whisper, I wish you were my little girl. God says to every person, deformed by sin, I wish you were my son.

I wish you were my daughter. And friends, he says that to us and he does so. And he welcomes us into his family by adoption. God compares our entrance into the family of God, into salvation, as being an adoption process.

The word here used is the technical Greek word for adoption. Adoption. And adoption is the procedure by which a person is taken from one family that is unable or unwilling to provide the nurture he needs and is placed into another family.

Adoption. It confers upon that son or daughter a very special status. It was not easy to adopt a child because natural fathers were considered to have absolute control over their families, even to the power of life and death.

Once the formal adoption procedure was done, the adopted son was completely severed from his old family. In effect, his old life was legally wiped out and he was regarded as a new person entering into a new life with which the past had no connection.

[7 : 49] He gained all the rights and privileges of a natural son in his new family. Even if other sons were born later into the family, that did not affect his right to become the heir to his new father's estate.

It was impossible to un-adopt a child. A person could disown and give up for adoption a natural child, but they could never do so with an adopted child.

Adoption is a legal action which conveys upon the adoptee a new status with all the rights and privileges of a natural child. Isn't that a wonderful picture for us of our salvation?

How God adopts us into his family. And Christ always called God Father. And when he did so, he did not use the normal word for Father. He used the Aramaic word Abba.

A term of security and intimacy. Abba was what little children called their fathers. Literally, Daddy or Papa. A very intimate term.

[8 : 48] A term of endearment. And the Jews would have thought this irreverent. Irreverent to call the Almighty Daddy, God, Father. But this is how our Lord prayed.

And it is how he encouraged us to pray. As his disciples to think of him. To think of God. And you are chosen tonight. If you're in his family. If you're saved tonight. If you've got that experience of that wonderful transaction of salvation.

You are his. And he is yours. You're adopted. And he is your daddy. You've got a wonderful closeness and intimacy with your heavenly Father. He deserves such respect and honour. What a wonderful picture of that great and glorious choice that God made in choosing us. And adopting us. And secondly, another word that comes to mind as we think of the fatherhood of God. Is the care that he gives to us. In Matthew 7 verse 11. You might like to turn there. Our Father cares for us. He cares for us. When a newborn baby is born into the world.

[9 : 50] He is totally dependent. And helpless. And that is really a picture too. Of us and God. And we're utterly dependent upon God. Totally reliant upon him.

And friends tonight. Your heavenly Father cares for you. In Matthew 7 verse 11. It says. If ye then, being evil. Know how to give good gifts unto your children.

How much more shall your Father which is in heaven. Give good things to them that ask him. He's as close as a prayer away. If you just cry out to him.

Ask him. He will give you good things. Isaiah 66 verse 13. It says. As a mother comforts her child. So shall I comfort you. God's comfort is like a mother's comfort of a child.

God is compared to a mother cuddling her child. Soothing him when he's upset. Showing him love. What a picture. Of peace. Of contentment. That's the picture for us.

[10 : 47] Of the comforter. The comfort of our God. The God of all comfort. Is one of his names. The comforter. And we see God's gracious tenderness.

Don't we? In that picture. As a mother comforts her child. So shall I comfort you. He's tender. Loving. Understanding. And caring.

His ear is open. To your prayer. He deserves our love. And our trust. The Greek word for father. It means nourisher. Protector. Upholder.

He guides. And he provides. As a good provider. Our heavenly father shows his care. For his children. He provides for our needs. Look at the colour. The complexity.

The design of God's creation. He's given us so much. Hasn't he? Just the nature. The world around us. So much. In God's creation. Think of what he's given to you.

[11 : 44] In just every day. Around about us. God our father. He is the source. Of every blessing. Of every good gift. That we enjoy in this life. And in eternity.

James 1.17. It says. Every good gift. And every perfect gift. Is from above. And cometh down. From the father. Of light. The blessing of salvation.

Comes from. God the father. The one whose plan. Was carried out. At the cross. And God gives us his protection. In Psalm 68. Verse 5. It describes God.

As a father. To the fatherless. And a defender. Of widows. A father. To the fatherless. You know. For many. In our world. Family.

We don't have that closeness. With a father. Or it's not always. A pleasant relationship. With our earthly father. But whatever the case. You have. A heavenly father. That you can certainly.

[12 : 39] Depend upon. You can certainly. Find your comfort. In him. God is. A defender. As a father. He protects those. Under his care. He's a good father. To those in need.

The Bible says. The angel of the Lord. En camps around. Those who fear him. And he rescues them. Psalm 34. Verse 7. A father. And we that are fathers.

Can take note. Of the great example. Of our heavenly father. As this is the kind of father. That we should be. As fathers. A father must be. The defender. Of his family.

And keep his house safe. A safe place to live. He must watch out for danger. And take steps to defend. His wife and children. As the old cliché.

About a sinking ship. Women and children first. Women and children first. The man's job. Is to. Take that second place. To the women. And the children.

[13 : 35] It's a man's job. To pay any price necessary. Including his own death. To defend his family. To defend the women and children. Especially his own household.

And we have that great picture. Of God our father. Who is that great father. That great father. That ideal father. That one. In whom we have. Such safety and security within.

That we can put our trust in. Matthew 10. It tells us. In verse 29. Onwards. Are not two sparrows sold. For a farthing. And one of them. Shall not fall on the ground. Without your father.

But the very hairs. Of your head. Are all numbered. Thin ye not therefore. Ye are of more value. Than many sparrows.

Our father. Has even numbered. The hairs on our head. Not that he's concerned. With mathematics. But he cares about you. He's concerned about you. Each one of you tonight. [14:29] You know. I'd have trouble. You know. Just try to count them. And they'd be less. By the time I finish. You know. But you know. Think of that. The intimate detail. The intricate detail. With which God.

Pays attention to you. That he numbers the very hairs. On your head. What a picture. Of how concerned he is for you. How he cares so much for you. And it says. In 1 Peter 5. Verse 7. Casting all your care on him. For he careeth for you. He's listening. He's listening. His ear. Is always listening. It says that he doesn't slumber or sleep. Does he? He's got a 24-7 service to his children. His ear is always waiting. To hear our crying. He's listening for your call. He's listening for your prayer. Go tell him. What you want. Tell him what you need. You can depend upon him. And his care. And he's always got time. To be with you. So we see the great picture. The choice. We see the care. Another C word about our father. Is correction.

[15:27] Not always a pleasant word. So think of our father. It's one of the jobs of the father. Is to bring correction. I know I needed a bit of correction. As I was growing up. And our father who corrects us.

We need that sometimes. I know I still need it. I still need some correction. It's like. You know. When the pilot of the ship. He needs to bring some correction. To the rudder. To make it go in the right direction.

And it's the same picture. Of God our father. He's the one who provides the direction. For the ship. For the family. And some families. Are like rudderless ships. A father acts as a rudder. And a pilot of the family. He should do. A rudder corrects the ship's course. When it is going astray. And you know. Sometimes we can shy back. From having correction. Can't we? I know. We all might have. Childhood memories of being spent. When we did something wrong. And yeah. It was for our good. It was for our learning. It was for our nurturing.

[16:24] For our growing. And Hebrews 12 verse 6. It says. For whom the Lord loveth. He chastens. He scourges every son. Whom he receives. Who the Lord loves.

He chastens. He disciplines us. And sometimes. Especially when Christians start to get off track. And into the wrong things. We get a bit of chastening. We get a bit of correcting. Don't we? And God tries to get our attention. He shakes our cage a little bit. To get a hold of our attention. To get us to look to him.

And to get us back on track again. And verse 10. The object of all of this. Why does he correct us? In Hebrews 12 verse 6. It talks about. He chastens.

He scourges. Verse 10. So. So. We can be partakers. Of his holiness. It's to make us more like Christ. It's to make us more like. The one that he wants us to be.

[17:19] To grow into. That son. That daughter. That is strong. That is firm. That is grounded. And the father corrects. And trains his children. In Ephesians 6 verse 4. We've got that picture of.

The father is due a respect. And there's a nurture. There's a training. There's an admonition. A warning. An instruction. That comes from the father.

From the parents. To the child. The instruction. The father provides instruction. And friends. We need the teacher. We need the Lord to be our teacher. We need the Lord to be.

That one who corrects us. And brings us back. Into the right path. And sometimes. Friends tonight. You might experience. The loving. Chastening. Of our Lord. He doesn't do.

These things. To make life unpleasant. For us. But he wants us. To get. Back on track again. And I know. We can all shy back from it.

[18:12] But sometimes. When trouble comes. It helps us. To turn to the Lord. It helps us. To be stronger. In our faith. As it says. The trying of our faith. Will make us.

As it were. Gold. That is tried in a furnace. That is our faith. Will be made strengthened. And stronger. And more purer. And more firmer. And this is the.

Picture of the father. Of our father's discipline. As he gently. And lovingly. Disciplines his children. So we see. Just to recap. Thus far.

The choice. The father that we have. Our heavenly father. He adopts us. Into his family. The care. That he considers us. Of more value. Than a sparrow that falls.

And he knows about every sparrow. That falls. He counts the hairs on the head. Our father. He cares for you. He cares for you. We see. Thirdly. The correction. That he brings to our lives. As he

scourges.

[19 : 06] He chastens. The ones that he loves. So that he can. Bring us back gently. Back into the right path. And lastly. Number four. Is our compassion. Of our father.

Our father loves us. He's a loving father. This father is one. That cares so much. So much. That we can't put it into human words. Really. Can we? How much.

Does God our father love us? His love. Is the love of a father. The love of compassion. Of understanding. God. Loves you. You are worth something to him.

And it's wonderful to know. That God. Is our father. Now. And forever. He's a father. Who loves us. And he delights in us. In Psalm 103.

Verse 13. It says. As a father. Has compassion. On his children. So the Lord. Has compassion. On those who fear him. God is full of compassion.

[20 : 01] For us. Why? We are his children. Think of. The great love. The picture of love. As we see. The picture of the very cross. Where God the father.

Sent his only begotten son. Christ. As God. Manifest in the flesh. Clothed in human flesh. Coming down. To. This sinful earth.

To live a life of. Of. Temptation. And trial. And lastly. The cross itself. For you. For me. What compassion. That he has.

In 2 Corinthians 1. Verse 3. Paul says of God. That. He is the father. Of mercies. And the God. Of all comfort. Who comforts us. In all our trouble.

The father of mercies. He's got mercy. He's got compassion. It's like. As we know. Of our Lord. That. As he beheld the city. He had compassion. He wept over it.

[20 : 55] Didn't he? As he saw the city of Jerusalem. As he was trekking there. On the way to the cross. And friends. He is the father. Of mercies. The God of all comforts. 1 John 3.

It says. Behold. What manner of love. The father. Hath bestowed upon us. That we. Should be called. The sons of God. It's a great privilege. Isn't it?

As many as received him. To then gave you the power. To become. The sons of God. Even to them. That believe on his name. And Romans 8. 32. It says. He that spared not his own son.

But delivered him up. For us all. It's immeasurable. Isn't it? It's. We can't comprehend it. We can't take it in. It's beyond all comprehension. The great love.

That Christ demonstrated. God's love for us. At the cross. And God is a loving. And a forgiving father. He's gentle. And he's patient. And we see. Pictured in that parable.

[21 : 49] Of the prodigal son. The great. Graphic picture. Of God's love. It says there. Of Luke 15. Verse 20. Of the prodigal.

There he was. In the slimy. Smelly pig pen. Stinking from head to toe. With pig. Slime. And. He'd been right down in the dirt. Right down in the depths.

The sinner dragged him down. To the very gutter. The very slime. Slime pit. Of the pig pen. And. It's a picture for us. As it says. In verse 20.

Of Luke 15. Here he was. Down there. Feeding the pigs. With the pig swill. And. Feeling so hungry. He wanted to eat it himself. It said. And he arose. And he came to his father.

But when. He was yet. A great way off. His father saw him. The father was there. You know. Perhaps. It pictures for us. How the father was even. Looking. Scouring the horizon.

[22 : 45] Seeing. In the. Far distance. Hoping. Praying. That his son would return. And as his father saw him. And had compassion. And he ran.

The father ran. And fell. On his neck. And kissed him. The father ran. The son was. Probably just. Kicking a few stones. Along that path.

And he said. What am I going to say to my dad. After I've gone and blown. My inheritance. And I've wasted. What the father has given to me. And my dad's going to be so mad at me. And I'm not even fit. Just to.

Even be his servant. And there he was. The father. Saw his son. And ran. Embraced him. And had compassion. Fell on his neck. And kissed him. The compassion.

And God the father. Is pictured for us there. In that picture. Also. Of how God. Comes and. Races down. From heaven's glory. And reaches out.

[23 : 39] As we. Just turn our faces. Towards him. God the father. Comes. And races towards us. And embraces us. He is rich. And mercy. In his great kindness to us.

He yearns for us. He pities us. With great compassion. And he sets his affection. On us. And. What do you do. In response to that. Friends tonight.

Can you get a grip on that tonight. How we should. Have that earnestness. Of prayer. Prayer is talking to daddy. It's listening. And talking to our God. Our heavenly father.

Our daddy. In heaven. Our papa. It's a term. Of fond affection. How we should. Renew. And refresh that. That wonderful relationship. That closeness. With our God.

With our heavenly father. That intimate relationship. He wants to keep in close contact. With us. And he shows us his love. As he protects us. And he comforts us. It's like some have said.

[24 : 32] Oh I don't feel as close to. To God. As I used to. And. That someone said. Well who moved. You know. Who moved. Did God move away from you. Or did you move away from God.

Maybe if that's the case for you. If there's a big gap. Between you and God. Maybe get a bit closer tonight. And it says. As we draw near to God. He will draw near to us. And God's love.

It's unconditional. It's undiscerbed. And as an extra blessing. We've got a family. Of brothers and sisters. As well. Isn't that great. We've got brothers and sisters. And we're called to show brotherly love.

To each other. And to accept and support each other. In 1989. There was an earthquake. In Armenia. It flattened the country. This deadly tremor.

It killed over 30,000 people. In less than four minutes. In the midst of all the confusion. Of the earthquake. A father rushed. To his son's school.

[25 : 30] When he arrived there. He discovered the building. Was as flat as a pancake. There was no hope. It seemed. Standing there. Looking at what was left of the school.

The father remembered. A promise he made to his son. No matter what. I'll always be there for you. Tears began to fill his eyes. It seemed like a hopeless situation.

But he could not take his mind off his promise. Remembering that his son's classroom. Was at the back right hand corner. Of the building. The father rushed there. And started digging. Through the rubble.

As he was digging. Other grieving parents came. Clutching their hearts. Saying my son. My daughter. They tried to pull him off. What was left of the school. It is too late.

They're dead. You can't help. Go home. Even a police officer came. And a firefighter told him. Just go home. Old man. Just go home. To everyone.

[26 : 26] Who tried to stop him. He said. Are you going to help me now? They did not answer him. And he continued digging. For his son. Stone. By stone. By stone. He needed to know.

For himself. Is my boy. Alive. Or dead. This man dug. For eight hours. And then twelve. And then twenty-four. And then thirty-six.

Finally. In the thirty-eight. Hour. He pulled back. A boulder. And he heard. His son's voice. He screamed. His son's name. Amen. And a voice answered him.

Dad. It's me dad. Then the boy added. These priceless words. I told the other kids. Not to worry. I told them. That if you were alive. You'd save me. And when you saved me. They'd be saved. You promised that dad. No matter what.

[27 : 21] You said. I'll always be there. For you. And here you are dad. You kept your promise. That's a picture. Isn't it? Of the love of God. You can picture that God.

The father. Like that too. As he. Does everything he can. To save us. God has done everything he can. To save you. Hasn't he? As he spread out his arms. In the person of his son.

On the cross. In dying. In our place. For our sin. Paying the price for it. The penalty. All it there. God has done everything he can. To save you. Friends. Another story of a father.

I don't mean to. Labor on stories. But. Just to get the picture. To paint the picture tonight. I like to be a bit of an artist. And paint the picture. And it was a Monday night. August the 3rd.

At the 1992 Olympics. In Barcelona, Spain. At the track and field stadium. The gun sounded. Bam. For the 400 metre semifinals. As the gun sounded.

[28 : 15] Good for the race. Great Britain's Derek Redman. Knew that his lifelong dream. Of winning the gold medal. Was in view. But as he entered. The back stretch.

Redman was sent sprawling. By the ripping pain. Of a torn hamstring. He crumpled to the track. Medical attendants rushed out. To assist him.

But as they approached Redman. He waved them all aside. By an act of sheer will. He struggled to his feet. In excruciating pain. And began crawling. And hopping.

In a desperate effort. To finish the race. He said. I'm not quitting. I'm going to finish the race. He worked his way. Hopping. Crawling. At times down the lane. Up in the stands. A big guy wearing a t-shirt. Tennis shoes and a cap. Barreled out of the stands. Hurling aside a security guard. Ran to Derek Edmund's side.
[29 : 08] And embraced him. He was Jim Redman. Derek's father. He threw his arms around him. In a voice choked with emotion. He whispered. Come on. Son.

Let's finish this together. Come on. Son. Let's finish this together. Now. Arm around his son's waist. Derek's arm around his dad's stick. Shoulder. And neck.

They continued down the track. The crowd cheered. And wept. As they watched the father. Half carrying. His wounded son. Jerkily down the track.

Derek and his daddy. Working their way. Around the track. Until finally. Arm in arm. They crossed the finish line. What a picture again.

If that's the way. That an earthly father. Responds to his son. Who's determined to finish his race. No matter what the price. How much more does God.

[30 : 03] The father. Run to the side. Of his heavenly son. Or daughter. Who says. I'm finishing. I don't care. How much it hurts. I don't care.

If I'm hanging on a cross. I'm finishing. Friends. Our heavenly father. Cares for you. He cares for you. He has great compassion. For you. And. I want to.

Urge you tonight. I'm not sure. Whether you're. Part of his family yet. I urge you tonight. To put your trust in the heavenly father. God the father. It takes God.

To make a home. We can trust him. God can. Give you a heavenly home. A heavenly mansion. A heavenly future. And a. Here and now future. As a life that is lived with purpose.

And. Meaning. And. Isaiah 64. It says. But now. O Lord. Thou art our father. We are the clay. And thou. Our potter. And we are all the work.

[31 : 00] Of thy hand. Let him be that heavenly potter. That shapes you. That moulds you. That fashions you. That shapes you into the person. That you can be. One atheistic father.

Was trying to teach his child. That there is no God. After he had gotten finished. With his long drawn out explanation. Of how everything just happened.

The little child looked at the daddy. And said. Daddy. Do you think God knows. We don't believe in him. It's inbred in the human heart. There is a God.

And we are going to have to give account to him. One day. The Bible declares the fact of God. The creation. As you step outside. And see the glorious universe. And the stars around about us.

How can you deny. That there is a God. Creation shows his hand. All around us. And he is the one. Of whom it says. A father. Of the fatherless. And a judge of the widows.

[31 : 55] Is God in his holy habitation. Psalm 68. As the saying goes. Like father. Like son. The Bible says. We should clothe ourselves with Christ.

If he is your heavenly father. You should start living like. He would be pleased. For you to live. And we should have. A striking family resemblance. To our father. There should be a striking resemblance.

In how we learn. That people will notice. Jesus. Wow. You belong to him. You are one of his. Yeah. And he is yours. Do we make our dad proud. Our heavenly dad.

You know. We would like. In a sense. To make our earthly family. Proud of us. Wouldn't we. As we go through life. But how much more. Shouldn't we make our heavenly father. Proud of us. Yeah.

Are we acting like his son. Or daughter. Yeah. The Lord Jesus. Was a perfect picture. Of the ideal son. Wasn't he. In Luke 2. 49. In human form.

[32 : 52] He represents it. Really the ideal. Of what we can aspire to be. In Luke 2. 49. He says. When questioned. He was out there. His parents were worried. Where he had gone. And it's a bit like.

Sunday school. When they go scarping. You know. Where have they gone. But. You know. They were worried. Where the son had gone. And when they found him. He was there. In the temple. Talking.

Teaching. Probably. Well. And learning. The teachers in the temple. And they asked him. They questioned him. And he said. I must be about. My father's business. Luke 2. 49.

I must be. About. My father's business. What is the father's business today? God's. What is God's business today? We should be about it. Like the.

The Lord Jesus. Picked it for us. Including. Maybe. Including. Helping the helpless. Being a peacemaker. Soul winning. Telling others of the saviour.

[33 : 45] Keeping unspotted. From the world. Are you about. The father's business. Make it your business. Make it your plan. Make it your intention. Your endeavour. To be about his business.

To be. Pleasing your father. He'll be proud of you. So just to wrap up. We're a son. Of God. The father. By choice. By his choice. By his adoption.

We've got his wonderful care. As he brings us into that wonderful relationship. We've got that correction at times. When we need it. To steer us back. In his way. And we've got that great compassion.

That he demonstrated at the cross. In Christ for us. And friends. Think of that today. If you're outside of his family. It's so simple. To put your trust in him. Just to cry out.

In simple prayer. In simple faith. To cry out. He's the only one. Who can save a soul. He's the only one. That can forgive a sin. And take it away. And cast it into the bottomless pit.

[34 : 40] And cast it into the sea of forgetfulness. That even God wipes it. From his very memory banks. And he cannot remember what we've done. Anymore. That's how great God's forgiveness is.

If we'll but receive it. And call upon him. Let us pray. Heavenly Father. We thank you. We can call you that tonight. That you are our Father. By faith in Christ. Lord. If there's any here. That haven't taken that step.

Of saying. Father. Forgive me. Forgive me of my sin. Thank you for Christ. Dying. In my place on the cross. And taking that punishment. For my sin. That I can be forgiven. And Lord.

For everyone today. We thank you for each family. We know Lord. It's Mother's Day. And we think of mums. And dads. And parents. And children. Lord. That it's a time of reflecting.

On that earthly home. And yet Lord. Help us. Also to prepare. For that heavenly home. By living a life. That's pleasing to you. And that's walking in your steps. That when you come.

[35 : 34] Or if we go to you. That we'll be ready. And we'll be prepared. That we'll have received you. As Saviour and Lord. And as our Father. And thank you Lord. For that privilege. To be called.

Your son. Your daughter tonight. By faith in Christ. We thank you Lord. Help us each one. As we go. Our different ways. And through the tests. And trials. Baby ahead. But Lord.

The blessings too. Of knowing that faith. Is the way to walk. As we live for you. And we thank you Lord. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen.