

Father of Fathers

Galatians 3:26-28 (NIV) - So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 4:6 (NLT) - And because we are His children, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, “Abba, Father.” [Abba is Aramaic for “Father”; it is a term of utmost respect]

Earthly fathers were created by God to be a reflection of His love and character. Earthly fathers are meant to help their children better understand and relate to our Heavenly Father.

Dysfunctional Fathers vs. Our Heavenly Father

1. The Absent Father - not there
 - **Deuteronomy 31:6b** - ...the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.
2. The Distant Father - no affection or affirmation
 - **Jeremiah 31:3** - The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.”
3. The Critical Father - no encouragement.
 - **Psalms 37:23-24** - The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand.
4. The Abusive Father - angry; emotional, physical, or sexual

- **Psalm 86:15** - But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.
- **Jeremiah 29:11** - “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

5. The Addicted Father - unstable

- **Hebrews 13:8 (NIV)** - Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
- **Malachi 3:6** - “I the Lord do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

Love Like Our Heavenly Father

Matthew 3:17 (NIV) - And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.”

Luke 9:35 (NIV) - A voice from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to Him.”

- 1. Acceptance - “This is my Son”**
- 2. Affection - “Whom I love”; “Whom I have chosen”**
- 3. Affirmation - “With Him I am well pleased”; “Listen to Him”**
