

The Fatherhood of God

According to a survey, only 31.7% of black children stay with their biological fathers, compared with 51.3% of coloured children, 86.1% of Indian or Asian children and 80.2% of white children.

The Human Sciences Research Council 2021 survey reveals that over 60% of children in SA don't live with their biological fathers, and 20% only have contact with their biological fathers twice a week.

The non-governmental organisation, Father a Nation (FAN), has pointed out that research has shown a clear and undeniable link between fatherlessness and major social issues such as violent crime, corruption, gender-based violence, low education outcomes and mental illness.

We are in desperate need of fatherhood, even as believers.

Matthew 6:9-13

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

1) God our Father

- In a time of fatherlessness, God is the Father to the fatherless
 - Psalms 68:5 A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.
- Jesus always referred to God as Father, but here, when teaching the disciples to pray, taught them to say "Our Father"
 - God is not only the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, but He is also our Father.
- Knowing God as Father means that God is a personal God
 - He is not an impersonal being somewhere in an unknowable distant place
 - He is not an authoritarian dictator who merely demands submission
 - He is a personal, knowable God who seeks relationship with us, besides our submission to His will.
- He is a God of love and wants us to love Him primarily above all else
 - 1 John 4:16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.
- He is our Father into whose presence we can freely and confidently come without fear.
 - We experience all the fulness of the goodness of God in His presence
 - It is in His presence that we have our spiritual, mental, and emotional needs met
 - It is in His presence that we find our purpose in life

2) Attributes of the Father

- He is holy
 - Matthew 6:9 Hallowed be your name.
 - A Holy Father is a father who can be trusted as He has no deceit or ulterior motives in Him at all – His love is completely pure
 - A Holy Father wants us to be holy because He is holy, but also because holiness is the best thing for us as sin is what harms us.
 - Leviticus 11:44 I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy.
 - Hebrews 12:6 The Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.
 - Hebrews 12:10 God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness.
- He is our authority
 - Matthew 6:10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
 - Our Father is the king of all the earth
 - Psalms 47:7 For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise.
 - If our Father is the king of all the earth and has dominion even over all things, then we have nothing to fear
 - We live our lives in this world under His authority and care, which makes us live with confidence in all that we are and do.
- He's our provider
 - Matthew 6:11 Give us today our daily bread.
 - A good Father always provides all the needs of His children
 - Jesus said that our Father does the same
 - Matthew 6:25-26 Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?
- He gives second chances
 - Matthew 6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
 - Good fathers expect their children to mess up in life, but they don't judge them for that, but forgive them and give them a clean slate to start again.
- He's our protector
 - Matthew 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.
 - A good father will always protect their children from harm from evil and won't lead them into harm themselves.

3) Having the Father's character

- As God the Father is to us, so He expects us to be to others, except where His traits are of Him alone, such as His sovereignty
 - Matthew 10:8 Freely you have received; freely give.
- As He provides for us, He expects us to be generous to others
- As He forgives us and gives us second chances, so he expects us to forgive others and give them second chances
- As He protects us, so He expects us to protect others