

*Come to the Father*

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Pastor Stevens can be seen weekly on cable television stations throughout the United States. Call us for information regarding programming in your area.

*All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.*

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## INTRODUCTION

“A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation” (Psalm 68:5).

“When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up” (Psalm 27:10).

So many dear folks may have lost or may not have had a good relationship with their fathers. Some lost their fathers at a very young age. My dad died when I was three years old. I can barely remember him. And though I did have a beautiful mother and family, I know what it means to grow up without a father.

God, however, is the Father of the fatherless. Many have claimed Psalm 27:10. They know what it means to have God lift them up and take over as a loving Father.

The purpose of this booklet is to move us to think of God, our Father who planned every event in the universe and who billions of years ago planned to send His only begotten Son to

die for the sins of the world because of His love for us. Our hope is that these words will cause us to meditate on that truth and to help us understand that we can now address Him as our Father, or, our “Daddy.”

## *Chapter One*

# THE FATHER OF ALL MERCY AND ALL GRACE

As you consider God as your Father, your Daddy, think of His love. His love for you was so deep that He called you by name. He made a decision to pay for every sin you would ever commit by shedding His blood and dying in your place. Yet, we must be very careful when we describe God. Sometimes, we think that God deals with His own the same way He deals with those who rebel against Him. But God's attitude toward His people is described consistently throughout the Scriptures. In 2 Corinthians 1:3, God is the Father of mercies.

A man who had been shuttled through ten foster homes became a Christian through our bus ministry. He accepted Jesus Christ and went on to graduate from Bible college.

He once told me, "I began to know God so well because I never knew my parents. I was

taken from them and lived in foster homes since I was a baby. But after I was saved, I got to know God very personally as my Father without anyone explaining that to me. I would just pray, 'Father, help me, in Jesus' name. I am so wounded, so scared, and so bruised.'

God did love him. This man told me that Christian after Christian loved him beyond what he deserved. "Then all of a sudden, the Spirit of God and the Word of God filled me," he said. "Even to this day, I always address God as, 'My Daddy, in Jesus' name.'"

### *The Giver of Mercy, Comfort, and Grace*

He is the Father of all mercies. Can you comprehend this as you look at the world as we know it today? Remember, mercy is God not giving us what we rightly deserve—judgment.

God is also the God of all comfort. Anyone who needs comfort will receive it from the Father who calls us by name, just as Jesus does (John 10:3). We will never be able to figure out how God gives us grace that goes beyond measure (see Ephesians 3:8, Romans 5:20-21). But the work is finished, and His grace is eternal, so there is no way to measure His grace.

"But the God of all grace, who hath called us



unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Peter 5:10).

### *Grace That Lifts Us Up*

I have tried so hard to comprehend "the God of all grace" through the Holy Spirit's presence. I understand that grace is God giving us what we don't deserve—but this is the God of all grace. When sin abounds unto death, grace reigns through the righteousness of Jesus Christ unto eternal life (Romans 5:21).

Every time we feel alienated, frustrated, defeated, we say, "Father, reveal to me all of Your grace through Your Son at this moment." When a person fails—even if he fails seven times in a day—the God of all grace lifts him up (Proverbs 24:16). The Father prevents him from falling as he keeps getting up in rebound (Jude 24). He begins to grow in the strength of the grace that was given to him. This grace is now in him to teach him. The mercy that is for him is now enduring through him.

A precious father asked his five-year-old son who was dying, "Son, do you fear death?" The boy said, "Not if God is like you, Daddy."

This is just a simple heart-to-heart message

to establish your capacity to know God as you consider Someone who forgives all you have ever done and will not impute a single sin to you. When we encounter a question about a doctrinal difference, we should always race to the nature of God first. When we run to the refuge of God's nature, God's essence, then we can answer the question based on what God thinks and says in His Word.

## *Chapter Two*

# HEARTS AFTER THE FATHER

God has cast all of our sins into the deepest, deepest sea. Now, he who has the Son has life (1 John 5:12). God remembers our sins no more (Hebrews 10:17). Even the sins of Israel and of Judah will never be found (Jeremiah 50:20). This should give us such an entrance into the Throne of Grace and Mercy to find God's help in times of need. If God did all of this for us when we were lost sinners, imagine what He will do for us now that we are His sons and daughters according to Romans 8:32.

Consider Jacob, who was far from a perfect man. But one thing we know, Jacob's life blessed his uncle Laban (Genesis 30:27). Laban said, "I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me." Jacob was conniving and cheating, and he always tried to outwit others for his own advantage. But at the end of his life Jacob laid his hands on his grandsons, Ephraim and Man-

assah, the sons of Joseph, and blessed them as his own sons. Jacob's sons became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, representing God's mercy, God's grace, and God's forgiveness.

In John 15:9, Jesus said, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you." Then in John 16:27a, He said, "The Father himself loveth you." Can you comprehend this? What did God the Father do with Jacob? He blessed him again and again. Did Jacob earn these blessings? No. Was there something about Jacob that deserved these blessings? No. Did he backslide for twenty years? Yes. Did God touch his heart and transform him into the father of a nation, Israel? Yes, the Father did all of that.

### *A Father Who Loves at All Times*

Jacob represents a transformed father, and Abraham is called the father of our faith. But another person who represents a lot of fathers is King David. When he heard that his son Absalom was killed, David became a weeping father.

"O Absalom, my son, O Absalom, my son, O I would to God that I could have died for you!" That is how David responded to the news of Absalom's death. This is why, in Acts 13:22, David is said to have had a heart after God. David

didn't consider that his son tried to take away his kingdom. He didn't consider that his son had spoken out against him. David only considered his son and the love he had for him. Therefore, David had a heart after God—a heart after mercy, grace, love, and forgiveness. That is what was in David's heart.

When David died, God didn't emphasize his sins or his iniquity. God looked beyond his faults and saw David's heart. He saw his desires beyond his weaknesses. He saw David's hunger beyond what he accomplished.

May I tell you that God does the same for us, too. "I know my thoughts toward you," God says. "They are thoughts of peace and not of evil, that I may give you an expected end" (see Jeremiah 29:11). Please get to know the Father's heart, the Son's love, and the Holy Spirit's compassion.

Joseph is one of the great men of God in the Bible (Genesis 39:7-13). He was so unique because he resisted temptation. Prosperity didn't change Joseph's attitude of humility. When the brothers, who had sold him into slavery, came before him in a time of great need, Joseph said, "I am Joseph your brother. Do not be sorrowful or blame yourselves for what happened. God

sent me before you to preserve life, to give food, and to salvage my own people. So do not condemn yourselves" (see Genesis 45:4-7).

Joseph represented the Father's heart of forgiveness, the sovereign plan of God's purpose, the sovereign provision of weakness. Joseph represented so deeply and so richly the heart of God the Father.

### *Chapter Three*

## COME JUST AS YOU ARE

One of the great opportunities I had as a young pastor was in knowing a shipyard worker whose wife left him and their four children. She took off with another man and no one knew where she went.

We visited this man at home one day, and he told me his story. After we led him to Jesus Christ as his Savior, he started bringing his children to church. Soon they all got saved, and they were in church three times a week.

Three years after they started coming, the kids asked if they could say something about their father on Father's Day. They got up on stage and said, "You are our daddy, the greatest daddy in the world. We don't know where mommy is, but you have been everything to us." Everyone in that place was weeping.

Some otherwise godly people are quick to judge others when things go wrong. Often the

people who appear to be guilty are innocent, but they may be covering a friend or loved one. The heart of Jesus identifies with both—the victim as well as the guilty. He took every sin on His body and paid for all sins with His blood. That is the heart we are to have—the heart of God the Father, our “Daddy.”

Christianity is Christ; the Word of God is light. The nature of God is to save. The heart of God is to redeem. The purpose of God is to heal. The joy of the Lord is to forgive. This is our God.

More than that, we need to understand that through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we can say privately to God, “You are my Father. I thank You for my physical father on earth, but You are my Daddy. You are my Father.”

As a pastor, I have worked with so many great fathers over the years. One daughter wrote me a letter describing her love for her father: “All of us adore him. Why? Because he serves everyone from the bottom of his heart day or night. He loved us so deeply that we just couldn’t fail. When we were tempted, his love just kept us from failing as he revealed Christ.”

### *Receiving the Lost*

Picture the prodigal son after he came to the



end of himself (Luke 15:17). He went home, planning to say to his father, "I have sinned against heaven and against you, my father. I am no longer worthy to be called a son." I am sure he rehearsed what he wanted to say. I can picture him limping, almost naked with scraggly clothes. Picture how he came from this affluent farm. Then, taking all of his possessions and going to a far country, he ended up in a place where he would gladly have eaten the husks that were being fed to pigs.

As this son was on his way back home, he thought, "Father, just let me be one of your servants. I don't expect sonship ever again because I am not worthy."

Now, picture the Holy Spirit's revelation of the Father through Jesus Christ. The prodigal's father ran to meet his son and began kissing him over and over on the neck. While this was going on, the son said, "I have sinned." He had rehearsed it all and memorized his statements. "I have sinned against heaven. I have sinned against you. I am no longer worthy to be your son. I want to be treated as a hired servant."

But the father paid no attention to this. He just kissed the son. Then, to his servants, the father said, "Bring the best robe. Bring the ring.

Bring the shoes. Kill the fatted calf. My son was lost, and now he is found. He was dead, but he now has life.”

Oh, what a picture of God the Father this is! Never forget His loving compassion for every one who is called by His name.

## CONCLUSION

If God marked iniquity, who could stand (Psalm 130:3)? There is forgiveness in God—He can be trusted. Who could trust a God who would not forgive? We could not trust a God who would not forget. We couldn't trust Him because we would always be in doubt. Everything we did would be measured by something we could not attain. Our souls would be seriously damaged because we could never know when His justice would be satisfied. But of our Father, the Word says, "Trust in him at all times" (Psalm 62:8). God our Father will never, never leave us or forsake us.

"Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD" (Psalm 112:6-7).

These are the words of a man who knew his Father, his Daddy. And when we know Jesus Christ and his deep love for us, our hearts will

be fixed toward mercy, grace, love, and forgiveness. When our hearts are fixed toward God's capacity to keep us, we know what it means to come to the Father. Therefore, we will not be afraid of the future or of the evil that is in this world.

## *God Really Cares For You*

Jesus loves you deeply. However, the fact that all have sinned separates us from God (*Romans 3:23; 6:23*). Still, God cares for you and He provides a way to share His love with you.

Jesus Christ's love for man was so great that He came and died on the cross for all the sins of mankind. He shed His blood for you so you can be forgiven and have eternal life.

The only thing He requires of you is to come to Him in simple faith trusting His character and love for you, and accepting Him as your Savior. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (*Acts 2:21*) .

Simply pray, "*Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I receive you as my personal Savior. Thank you for loving me so much that you died for me so I can have eternal life with you. Amen.*"

He promises that He will never stop loving you and that He will never leave nor forsake you (*Hebrews 13:5*). Develop your relationship with Him by reading the Bible, praying, and attending a good Bible-believing church.

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