



**GOD THE FATHER**  
Scott Hansen, Lead Pastor  
September 15, 2013

**ROLE OF A GOOD EARTHLY FATHER**

- ❶ Reproduce
- ❷ Offer spiritual leadership for his family (Ephesians 5:23)
- ❸ Love his children consistently (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)
  - “Abba”/Daddy - Mark 14:36; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6
- ❹ Protect his children (Matthew 6:13; 1 Corinthians 13:7)
- ❺ Provide for their physical needs (Matthew 6:11; 7:9-11; 1 Timothy 5:8)
- ❻ Contribute to their emotional, social & spiritual development (Ephesians 5:4)
- ❼ Discipline when needed (Hebrews 12:7-9)
- ❽ Launch his children into independent & purposeful living

**NOTABLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GOD THE FATHER & GOOD EARTHLY FATHERS**

- ❶ All the Heavenly Father’s children are adopted (John 1:1, 2-13)
- ❷ God’s wants a huge family because His resources are limitless

**CORE BELIEF ABOUT GOD THE FATHER**

- ➔ We believe the Father passionately pursues people who are separated from Him by sin.
- Psalm 68:5 – Our God is... *A father to the fatherless...*
  - Jesus refers to the Father in the Gospels more than 150 times!
  - From Acts to Revelation – Another 77 references to God the Father

**CORE BELIEF ► CORE VALUE**

- ➔ Therefore we will continually reach out to people separated from God.

**CORE BELIEF ► CORE VALUE ► VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

- ➔ Deliberate outreach
- “*As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.*” (Jesus – John 20:21)

- I am committing myself to join in God’s mission of deliberate outreach.
- I’m becoming a follower of Jesus today!
- I want to be baptized.



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**Lesson Aim:** To dig deeper in our understanding of who God the Father is so that we can climb higher in our ability to live out the life of passionately pursuing people who are separated from Him by sin.

**Prayer:** Ask the Holy Spirit to lead your personal study time and/or discussion together.

**Icebreaker:** Who is one of your all-time favorite “television dads”? (examples: *Father Knows Best*, *The Cosby Show*, *Modern Family*, etc.)

1. In Sunday’s teaching, Pastor Scott talked about *God the Father*. Describe one or two ways your experience with your earthly father has influenced the way you understand the name and/or person of “God the Father.”
2. Look at the section of your message notes “Role of a Good Earthly Father.” What is one characteristic listed here that is easy for you to apply to how you perceive God? What is one characteristic that is difficult for you to apply in how you perceive God? Why?
3. **READ** the following verses and next to them write down some key ideas they communicate about how God feels about us and wants to relate to us.  
**Romans 8:15:**  
**Galatians 4:6:**  
**1 John 3:1:**

4. **READ Hebrews 12:4-11.** Part of a good father’s role is to discipline those He loves. What reasons does the text cite for why we may experience God’s discipline in our lives?
5. There is difference between God the Father’s wrath (punishment) and His discipline. God’s punishment looks backward and requires payment for crimes committed by unrepentant rebels. God’s discipline looks forward and lovingly corrects the behavior of His children to create a healthier future. Are there any problems you are going through right now that make this understanding (distinction) especially important?
6. **READ Luke 15:1-32.** The Core Belief from Sunday’s teaching was “We believe the Father passionately pursues people who are separated from Him by sin.” How is this belief reflected in these three parables? What words would you use to describe the heart of God our Father as described in these parables?
7. Where in your life has God placed you where you are in close proximity to “people who are separated from Him by sin”? What are some ways you can join our Heavenly Father in His mission to adopt these people into His family?

**Close in prayer as the Lord leads you.**

This **LifeGroup** Study Guide is designed to help you apply Sunday’s message. You can do this homework on your own; however we encourage you to check out our warm and friendly message-based **LifeGroups!** Get a copy of this Study Guide at [theBridgeFresno.com](http://theBridgeFresno.com) by clicking on the “Messages” link.