

# Lesson 1 - God as Father

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## INTRODUCTION

Over the next several weeks we will begin to discover some principles that help grow our relationship with Jesus Christ. One of the most important aspects of a growing relationship with Jesus Christ is a proper understanding of God. This lesson will help us understand who God is and what He thinks of us.

## WHO IS GOD?

As you read the Bible you discover there are many ways God identifies Himself: Creator, Provider, Helper, and Deliverer. However, there is one way God identifies Himself more often than any other. Read the following verses and identify the most frequent way God is referred to in Scriptures.

*Romans 1:7*

*1 Corinthians 1:3*

*Galatians 1:3*

*Ephesians 1:3*

*Philippians 1:2*

*Colossians 1:2*

*2 Thessalonians 1:2*

*1 Timothy 1:2*

*Titus 1:4*

*Philemon 1:3*

The most frequent way God is identified in the Bible is as a Father. How would you describe an ideal father?

What are some ways God is described as a father in the following verses?

*Matthew 7:9-11*

*James 1:16-17*

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Can you imagine the awesome Creator God of the universe as your Father? Some people find that thought comforting. Others find it frightening. Your reaction might depend on the kind of father you had. In a couple sentences, describe your father and the relationship you have with him.

## WHAT DOES GOD THINK OF ME?

Nearly everyone's image of God is affected to some degree by the personality and characteristics of an earthly father. Sometimes that's positive. Sometimes it does God a terrible injustice. Read the following verses and identify the ways God thinks and acts toward you.

*1 Peter 5:7*

*Philippians 4:9*

*Romans 5:8*

*Ephesians 4:32*

*Hebrews 12:5-6*

*2 Corinthians 1:3-4*

*Romans 15:5-6*

*Psalms 103:13*

A good father will never do anything to purposely hurt his son. He will only do those things that will help him grow and mature into the young man he wants him to become. Our heavenly Father operates in the same way, only His ways are perfect. Unlike earthly fathers who sometimes err, God never makes a mistake in His dealings with His sons.

*Hebrews 12:7-11*

## CONCLUSION

Imagine a father who is perfectly caring, giving, patient, understanding, encouraging, wise, and forgiving; one who would guide and lovingly correct you without destroying your independence so that you could develop your full potential. Probably all dads would like to be this way, but few come close on a consistent basis. However, that description fits God perfectly.

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## **HOMEWORK OPTION #1**

As we've made our way through this lesson, you've probably been reminded of some experiences you've had with your father. No doubt, some were good experiences. Make a list on the page below of the good things you experienced with your father. Write a letter to your father. Thank him for the experiences you shared and the positive influence his example is having on your relationship to God as a father.

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## **HOMEWORK OPTION #2**

As we've made our way through this lesson, you've probably been reminded of some experiences you've had with your father. No doubt, some were disappointing experiences. Make a list on the page below of the disappointments you experienced with your father. Now read Ephesians 4:31-32. Write a letter to God. Express to Him any disappointments you have with your father and extend forgiveness. Then thank Him for the good experiences you shared as a father and son.