

# Our Father In Heaven

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## Matthew 6:9-13 (NLT)

Our Father in Heaven, may your name be kept holy.

May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins,  
as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.

Can I just take a minute to point your attention back to the first two words of this prayer? Our Father. I'm sure right away there is the option of overlooking these words, and another option of reading and getting a very quick picture of some characteristics of a father, maybe one that you've known or heard of that is less than perfect.

Have you heard of what the bible described THIS father this prayer is speaking of? The characteristics of "our father" that's in heaven are so numerous it's hard to describe them in one simple way but every day, what if you could wake up to have a person in your life that you could rely on as a father? Not someone that you 'knew' in your own definition but more of the type of father you could also call a 'best friend' in your life who demonstrated ideal traits like instilling security...security that is felt to your core. Providing the kind of security that would make you less anxious about the future and your own personal safety. Providing the kind of security that would allow you to enlarge your emotional capacity to create, dream, cultivate vision and generously pour yourself into others without reservation, having courage to face whatever circumstance comes your way.

An amazing father provides acceptance that is not based on a measuring tape of your behaviour but accepts and loves you each day, no matter what weakness or struggle you may feel have. This father is aware of your weakest areas and still embraces you fully and consistently. When you need a really amazing father, he has also provided access to all of the perfect characteristics in the time that you need them. He is accessible, not just for you but your friends and whole family too. There is always time made for each person, even when we can't explain in words what we need in that moment.

Loving and healthy fathers provide guidance, teaching and positive discipline when needed. This type of investment into those the father cares about is not always easy to find in today's culture. There are different perceptions of discipline but healthy guidance that this type father provides produces integrity and healthy boundaries and lifestyle choices that lead us to rest and peace. This kind of discipline doesn't leave scars of trauma, fear or confusion. It helps teach self-regulation and comes from a heart of absolute love for future success.

This father also provides instruction and is a wealth of knowledge and wisdom. I think wisdom comes from knowledge and experience but not everyone knows how to apply this or teach others in a way they understand. Our father knows just how to lead us as his apprentice in a way that we truly understand the instructions for every area of life.

A really good dad is a good provider for the whole family. Sometimes that means using creativity in providing and not just for financial and physical needs either, although these

are foundational in having provision. What if you could rely on someone that takes care of all your needs, physical, emotional and spiritual? This father even cares about needs like encouragement, affirmation, community and opportunity. He covers everything! But the best deal with this dad, is that there are absolutely no strings attached to the things he provides to us and even before we really understand what are true needs are, sometimes because we can't think straight or we are too overwhelmed to prioritize, he can pick up the smallest need so intuitively. How amazing. This is the person you're talking to when you start praying.