



## The Father Heart of God Jimmy Evans

**Focus** God is the perfect Father, and His love for us is multifaceted.

**Fun** What attributes do you think make a great father?

**Review** Key Scriptures: Matthew 6:25–33; Ephesians 6:1–3

**1. God is a faithful, attentive Father.**

God promises in Matthew 6 to take care of us and provide for our every need. God is faithful to take care of us and has even numbered the very hairs on our head. As a father, you can emulate God's attribute of faithfulness by sacrificially committing yourself to God, your wife, and your family. God is also attentive to our needs. The Bible says God's thoughts toward us are more in number than the sand. You are on God's heart.

**2. God is a Father who takes time for us and is full of mercy and grace.**

God loves spending time with you. He made you for relationship, and He will spend as much time with you as you want to spend with Him. As an earthly father, one of the most valuable things you can do is spend time with your children; spending time with them equates to showing love. Time is the essential commodity of relationships; it is impossible to build relationships with people you don't spend time with. God is also tenderhearted and gracious to us. He has mercy on us by not giving us the punishment we deserve. He shows us grace by giving us blessings we don't deserve.

**3. God expresses His love to us and is relational in His authority.**

Matthew 3 tells us about Jesus' baptism. When He came up out of the water, God spoke affirmingly and said: "This is my son, in whom I am well pleased." When a father speaks and shows affection, it builds self-esteem, approval, and

security. God loves to express His love to us. He is also relational in how He corrects us. The purpose of correcting lovingly and guiding is to train through patient, relational parenting. As an earthly father, if correction is not relational, it will provoke children to wrath. You have to fight for your relationship with your child. God has laid down His very life to have relationship with us.

**\*Group Dynamics Idea\*** Some people grew up having a good father. Some people grew up without a father or with an ungodly father that brought more pain than joy. As you discuss the attributes of God being a loving earthly father, focus on the aspects of our heavenly Father. You may want to address the issue of those who didn't have good earthly fathers and take time to pray for and minister to those who need healing.

### **Discuss**

1. What are some of the attributes of God that make Him a good Father? Which of His loving attributes do you enjoy the most?
2. Jimmy Evans made the statement: "Time is the essential commodity of relationship." How does the amount of time we spend with people affect the level of relationship we have with them?
3. What does the enemy do to keep us from spending time investing in relationships with others?
4. Read Psalm 103:8–13. What stands out to you in these Scriptures about *how* God loves us? Share about a time when God showed His love to you in one of these ways.
5. How has God shown Himself as a good provider in your life?
6. As you think about the ways God is a loving Father, what is the Holy Spirit saying to you? Is there an area of God's love that the Holy Spirit is highlighting? Is there an area of your own life or the way you parent your children that God is speaking to you about? How can you respond to the Holy Spirit in these areas?

**Take Home** As we conclude, remember the following:

- God is a faithful, attentive Father.
- God takes time for us and is full of mercy and grace.
- God is expressive and relational in His love for us.

### **Prayer**

Heavenly Father, we praise You and thank You for being such a perfect and loving Father. Thank You for making it possible for us to have a relationship with You through the blood of Jesus. Thank You for expressing Your love to us in so many ways. Help us to reflect Your attributes in our own lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.

**\*New Leader Tip\*** One of the best ways to get a group to bond is to do something together to make a difference in the community. If there is someone in your group who loves to plan, ask them to help plan a way your group can impact your community. Ministering together at a nursing home, serving at a food bank, serving in an area of the church as a team, or doing something as a group outreach will not only bless others, but it will bring a strong relational bond to your group.