

# Our Father

by Erlo Stegen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of praying to God as our Father, and cultivating a deep and intimate relationship with Him, which is reflected in our fellowship with other Christians.*

**Duration:** 1:15:29

**Scripture:** Isaiah 45:22, Matthew 11:28, Matthew 18:15, Matthew 19:12, Matthew 26:75, Acts 4:12, 1 John 3:9

**Topics:** "Prayer"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the challenges and responsibilities of being a wife and mother. He describes the exhaustion and difficulties of caring for children, especially when they are sick or crying throughout the night. The preacher then shares a personal story of attending a church service where the minister was absent, and a young man with poor English skills delivered the message. Despite his initial doubts, the preacher is deeply moved by the man's message of salvation through simply looking to Jesus. He compares this experience to birds feasting on worms behind a plow, rejoicing in the newfound knowledge of salvation.

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## Transcript

As I prayed, Lord, speak to us. I remember that Spurgeon once said, He says, whenever he prays he remembers that rooster, the cock that crowed. And he says that whenever he preached, he saw himself as being that rooster.

Because it crowed. He said, when that cock crowed, his eyes and Peter's eyes met, and that is where the heart of Peter broke. Peter was a grown up man, a strong man, but at that moment his heart broke and he started weeping.

And so Spurgeon said, Lord, whenever I preach, may it be like when that cock crowed, where your eyes will meet our eyes and our hearts will be melted and will break. And he said, Lord, what does it help, even if the cock crows and that happens, and even if Peter hears it, but what does it help if the eyes of the Lord and Peter's eyes don't meet? One can hear a sermon every day of one's life, but if one's eyes don't meet with the eyes of the Lord, you will continue living in sin and it will help you nothing. So when I prayed and said, Lord, speak to us, then I remembered what Spurgeon said about that cock that crowed.

I'm so aware that I could preach here and I could preach here till we die, and you can hear every sermon, it won't touch you if the eyes of the Lord don't meet your eyes. Matthew 6, verse 9, pray then in this way,

Our Father, so far, Our Father, The Lord Jesus taught his disciples saying, when you pray, you should pray like this, Our Father, that's how he started. And if we pray, Our Father, he's not just our Father, but even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when he came in the flesh.

But the difference is this, that when we pray and say, Our Father, we say it as his children. But Jesus never referred to himself as being the child of God, or a child of God. So not once do we hear him referring to himself as a child of God, or even his disciples referring to him as such.

But he referred to himself as the son of God, or the son of man. I didn't have the time to go into it, and make a study of it, but I do think in the Old Testament the prophet does refer to the Lord as a child being born, and to us a child is born, and is given. Now I don't know in the original text whether it's a child or a son, but normally where it's referred to the Lord Jesus, it's referred to as the son of God, or the son of man.

When the Lord Jesus asked his disciples, and he said, What do the people say who I am? The disciples answered and said, Well some say you are Elijah, or Isaiah, or one of the prophets. And Peter then said, But we say you are the son of God, the Messiah. Jesus then asked them, What do they say of the son of man who he is? So he never spoke of himself as the child of God, as we are, but he referred to himself as the son of God, or the son of man.

And even when he spoke of his second coming, he said, No one knows the time or the hour that the son will return, only the father knows, he said. Even when Mary was brought the news that she would bear a child, she was told that she would bear a son, not a child. And by that signifying also that he wouldn't just be an ordinary person like all of us, but born of the Holy Spirit.

We are children. In 1 John 3 it says, Behold the great love of God, that we should be called the children of God. Now we who are born of God, we are the children of God.

So Jesus said, When you pray, you should pray this, Our Father. He doesn't say, My Father. When you are born again, you become a child of God, then you cannot say, Well, you do your thing, I'll do mine.

I'll just go my own way, I'll just serve the Lord in my own quiet way, just leave me alone. Such a person is on the wrong track. If we are born of God, we are His children, we belong to the same family, a spiritual family.

When we are born, we are born into an earthly family, we are part of that family in the flesh. But like Johannes, when he got converted recently, he became part of the spiritual family. There is such a spiritual family.

Remember when they came to the Lord Jesus and they said, Your mother and your brothers, James and them, they are waiting for you outside, they want to speak to you. And then he asked them, he said, Who is my mother and who are my brothers? Then he pointed to his disciples, to Nathaniel and them, and he said, Well, that is my mother, there's my mother, there's my brother, these are my brothers. So if someone is born into the family of God, then the Christians, they become the family.

There is the earthly family, but there is the spiritual family as well. To a Christian, the spiritual family is far more important than the earthly family. And far, far more important, Jesus said, Well, who is my mother? He doesn't even know and acknowledge his earthly mother when she is not in the will of God.

You are far more connected to the spiritual family than you are connected to your earthly family. If you are more connected to your earthly family than you are to your spiritual family, it shows that there is something wrong with your faith, with your Christian life. And you'll end up where those end up who are non-believers, they end up in hell.

That child that is a Christian child living for the Lord, you have more to do with that child, you are more connected to that child, you have greater fellowship with that child, than to your own child that you've born but that is not in the will of God. Naturally, you should be much closer to that. If your child is not in the will of God, you're as far apart as the east is from the west.

I mentioned Spurgeon who was a great preacher in England, in London. They called him the Prince of Preachers. He never went to Bible school.

He never studied theology. But he was greater than those who did all those things. When he was 15 years old, just listen you mothers, listen very carefully to what his mother did regarding him or said about him.

His name was Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon is surname. Now he was with his brother.

They lived a life that was not fitting for a Christian. There was lot of disunity, they'd fight each other and just be nasty to each other. But their mother often reprimanded them, telling them that that was not according to God's will.

One day the mother then went into her room, she closed the door and then she prayed. Now Spurgeon was close by, close to the wall. And so he could hear his mother praying next door.

Now listen to this mother, this is for all you mothers. And if you don't catch hold of it, you'll go to hell with your children. And he heard his mother pray.

She prayed this. Now Lord, if my children go on in their sins, it will not be from ignorance that they perish. And on judgment day, my soul will be a swift witness against them.

To hear this mother. Can you mothers say that? I mothers like that. Can you say not only in the presence of God, but to God.

If my children don't stop sinning, it's not because of ignorance. I've told them over and over. And on judgment day, I'll be a swift witness against them.

She'll be the first one there. They need to be condemned. They need to go to hell.

They didn't part with their sins. They didn't stop sinning. You see mothers that bring forth princes into this world, what kind of children they are.

She didn't defend them. She didn't excuse them. Oh Lord, please forgive them.

She says, God, I'll be a swift witness against them. Are you mothers prepared to take such a stand? If your child carries on in sin, to say God on judgment day, I'll be a swift witness against them. I'll witness they sinned, not because of ignorance.

I told them they knew what they were doing. And I'll stand up against them. Are you mothers, are you the daughter of such a woman? Maybe many children don't get saved and don't get onto the right track

because of you bad mothers.

So if you're part of that spiritual family, that is where you have the closest fellowship with those who are on the right track. And in that same family, you would even distance yourself eternally from a child that doesn't belong to that spiritual family. And she prayed and said, Lord, if my children don't take hold of Christ, I'll be the swift witness against them.

And Spurgeon says when he heard his mother praying like that, speaking to God, it pierced his heart, his soul, his conscience. And he couldn't get rest and peace again. He said it stirred my heart that my own mother was willing to be a swift witness against me on judgment day.

And he said, I'll go to every church in London. And London is a big city and some churches are far away and he had to walk. And every Sunday, he says he didn't miss one service.

He went into this church, he went to the next church, he wanted to know how can I be saved? How can I stop sinning? And one day it was very, very cold. And he made it his aim to go to every church in London, he said, for one reason, and that was to get saved. He said one day it was icy cold, it was in the middle of winter.

He said the cold went right through you. It was bitterly cold, the wind was blowing. He walked in snow this deep.

He wanted to go to a church far away. Walking along, looking down, shielding his face. And as he was going along, he saw next to the road a small little insignificant church.

And then he noticed, when he noticed the church, he remembered that his mother had once told him to go to that little church. It was a Methodist church. He wasn't really keen to go there.

And one of the things that put him off from going to the Methodist church is that they had a reputation of singing very loudly. He said they sang so loudly that you wanted to close your ears. And they also preached very loudly, so maybe I have something in common with them.

If something has happened to you, you don't just speak like a little mouse. When you feel something in your heart, you speak loud enough that people can actually hear what you're saying, because you want to share it with them. Now Luther also had a friend, Melancthon.

And he was very gifted, a very bright man, but he had a very soft voice. And Luther would always reprimand him and say, look, when you preach, speak loudly. Speak like a man.

He always told them that we need preachers that know what they're talking about, not to speak as if they're not sure of what they should say. So Luther would always say, when you preach, speak loudly. So Charles Spurgeon, when he saw this church, he eventually decided, let me just go inside, it's so cold, it'll do me no harm.

So as he entered the church, he took off his hat, shook off the snow, and his jacket was full of snow, shook it off, and his gloves as well, and went inside. So he went inside, and inside was a very small church, and on that particular day, the minister wasn't there, so there were only about 12 people that had gathered there. He went inside and sat in the back of the church, and then he heard them announcing that the minister was not there, and he thought, oh, well, I've definitely ended up in the wrong place today.

Then a young man got up, very frail man, thin, went forward, started speaking. He said, well, the minister couldn't make it, and that he would be bringing the message. Now Spurgeon said of this man, he said he couldn't even speak English properly, in spite of the fact that he was an Englishman.

He said, but this man is stupid in his own words. What can this man tell me? He's stupid. And he thought, well, what's this man going to say? This frail, thin man, he's probably just a shoemaker, or maybe a tailor.

And then this man started speaking, and he read from Isaiah 45. So it helps to have children. They can be quite a help sometimes.

It's good if you have children. But if you've got no husband, don't worry, you're better off than those that are married. And if you've got no children, well, happy you are, you can sleep right through the night.

That will be gone if you've got children. Turn to me and be saved. Now Spurgeon says the translation this man had was, look unto me and be saved.

That is the translation they used there, look unto me and be saved. Now Spurgeon said this man didn't speak eloquently, and he just often repeated what he had said already. But he had some very good points.

And he said, the Lord says, look unto me. Don't look at yourself. You won't be able to comfort yourself.

Look unto me. He says, it doesn't say if you're a millionaire, you'll be saved. If you are well educated, you'll be saved.

Or move your finger, lift your finger, then you'll be saved. Or lift your leg, and you'll be saved. He says, look, just look.

You need to be educated to be taught to look. Just look unto me. He says, look unto me as I sweat drops of blood.

Look unto me as I'm nailed to the cross. Look at me as I die. Look at me as I'm buried and go into the grave.

Look at me as I am raised from the dead. Look at me as I ascend into heaven. Look at me as I sit at the right hand of the Father.

Look, look, look at me, and you'll be saved. This man just crowed like the rooster. But he says, when he said, look, look, look, all of a sudden, it was light all around him.

He didn't know what was happening. And he says, the light broke through into his heart. He saw Christ.

And he said, he felt as if he could shout like the Methodists. That he could sing loud as the Methodists. That was the turning point in his life.

He was 15 years old. With 19 years, he was the minister of a congregation already. Hundreds and thousands of people came to listen to him, this young preacher.

All the newspapers, negative and positive, all the city of London was shaken because of a young man, 19 years old. We don't know the name of this skinny man. We don't know who he was or his surname, the stupid man.

But just imagine, in the kingdom of heaven, what a crown he is wearing. And Spurgeon said, I've never tried to preach the gospel with clever words. I know how I will say it.

Spurgeon said, I've never tried to preach the gospel with clever words. I know how I will say it. He said, he remembered another man of God.

And this skinny man said, oh you look, you young man, you look very miserable. He said, he had been in many churches. But never had a preacher addressed him about his awful looks while he stood on the pulpit.

He said, you young man, you'll be miserable all your life. Spurgeon didn't get angry. He says, he landed a good blow on me.

He hit out at me, and I knew, this is my day. Marvelous how God can use people in their own way. Spurgeon's eyes met the eyes of the Lord.

Have your eyes ever met the Lord's eyes? Now before I carry on, I still want to go a few steps backward. I just want to go back to the point I made about you who are unmarried, that you should be happy as you are. Now if you get married to a man, that man will probably give you a very rough time, a difficult time, unless of course you get married to a man who is not much of a man.

I've been speaking to some young men about getting married, and some of them, now please forgive me, said, I wouldn't like to get married to an Afrikaans girl. I said, why not? He says, no, I'd rather go without a wife. I won't tell you why.

I just get the impression maybe they like to sit on the head of the men. Now I can understand my daughters that they say, Papa, don't worry that we get married to Afrikaans. They're much better than the German men.

Now, maybe it won't be your luck to sit, to get married to an Afrikaans man. Maybe the man that you will marry will not be a paparazzo. I hope in any case that when you get married, I said to my daughter, it won't go well if she tries to sit on her husband's head.

She will be a curse, and I will be ashamed that I am her physical father. Well, if you get a woman, if you get a man, if you get a woman, So if you get married, so if you get married, you'll have a husband. And fortunately, nowadays, for you, woman, the men don't carry a stick around anymore, a nobgeri to hit you on the head with.

They've become gentlemen, or more gentlemen-like nowadays. But it'll still be difficult for you. You'll want to go to service, and he'll say, no, not today.

Or you'll want to go to a prayer meeting, and he'll think otherwise. It's not all gold that glitters, let me tell you. You'll cry many a tear.

And if you cannot bow, you'll probably have to learn it fast if you do have a husband one day. And then, the children arrive. Now, children, that's even tougher than having a husband.

So, you have a tough day. You've got to do all the washing, the cleaning in the house. And then at night, you're totally exhausted, you want to sleep.

You just put your head down, the child starts crying. You have to feed it, you put it back in its bed, it starts crying again. Three, four, five times during the night.

And maybe if the child is sick, it's even more difficult. It's crying all the time. You have to drag yourself around.

Well, and then you can get a double portion as well when you have twins. When you have twins, you have to take care of them. Will you also be able to smile? Now, if you're an unmarried girl, make the most of that time because you can read the Bible when you want, you can pray when you want, you can go to the service when you want.

You are free. So use that freedom for the Lord for that time could come to an end and you can become like a slave. Alright, I was just trying to explain to the unmarried people that they understand it and rejoice and not cry, oh, I don't get the man, others get married and what and what not.

God's plans are perfect and if you've got no husband, don't worry about it. You could get a husband who's faithful to you and one day he'll be unfaithful and it will make you sick. I remember I remember a girl who said, well I don't want to just get married to any man, I want one who has got his own car and she got a husband with his own car but that car was used to load many prostitutes into it.

So you've heard that now so we can go to something else. Remember our text where Jesus is not referred to as the child of God but as the son of God or the son of man. Now there is a word that is absolutely wonderful concerning us children of God, Romans 8 verse 15.

But we have not received a spirit but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out ever father. And Zulu it says the spirit of sonship. That's according to the original text, the spirit of sonship, to be sons of God.

So that we too can be sons of God by which we cry out ever father. Abba is Aramea, Abba is Aramaic. So there were some Aramaic words which were adopted into the Greek translation and language.

So this word Abba is an Aramaic word. Now a small child when it was still small crawling along, when it started speaking the first word which it learned to say was Abba. That was Papa.

The first word of a child and the Bible says we call God Papa, Abba, Abba. That's the language of a child that learns to speak. So there's that childlike fellowship that we have with him, that connection like a child to the father.

What type of fellowship do you have with God? Do you know him as your own father? Just like a small child, the very first word it learns to speak, father, Abba, and that we know him in such a way. And then we continue where it says our father, not my father, but our father. That includes all the children of God.

As you draw closer to God, you draw closer to all the Christians. If you claim to be drawing closer to God, but there's a brother you have no fellowship with, then there's something wrong with your fellowship with God because you're both claiming to have the same father. You say our father, you are associating yourself with him, but in truth you are not one with him.

The devil loves that obviously. In the church, in Corinth, there were some of the congregation and Christians that said, well, we're going with Paul. And others said, well, we're following Peter.

Paul appealed and meant more to them than Peter. Some said, oh, no, we're more spiritual, it's Jesus. And they were all the same.

In that, they were a rotten company. It's not a healthy situation where you feel, well, I'm really one with this one, but with that one, no, I can't really get along so well there. The Bible says we are one body.

I cannot despise one member of my body, be it the thumb or the toe or the foot or the eye and say, well, I don't really need that. No, we are all one body, all needing each other as members. Remember, if any one part of your body or one member of your body is not healthy, the whole body suffers.

That's why Jesus in John 17 taught us and prayed and said, Lord, help them to be one as you and I are one, I in you and you in me. And as the Trinity is one, so may they be one. And there, it doesn't matter whether you're Jew or Greek or whether you're old or young, male or female, we are all one in Christ.

We are one in Christ. I said recently that some people are saved from anger or from other things, but there are some people who need to be saved from discrimination. Where they still say, yes, but well, I'm black and he's not black.

I'm a white. He's not. Or he's an Indian or a colored and we discriminate.

We make differences. But if there's someone, even if it was a young black boy, he would be closer to me than my own brother. If that little boy is in Christ, then my brother not.

And I'm more united with an Indian brother who's in the will of God than with my own child that is not in the will of God. Are you one with those that are in the will of God? Maybe you're one with your own little family and you're united with your family and your own home, but you're not united. You don't have fellowship with the other children of God.

That shows that you're spiritually dead. We need to be one and we need to have a burning love, godly love for each other. And Jesus himself said, they will know that the father sent me if they see that you love one another.

But it's sad and tragic. When you are one with your family and your children, when they are living in sin, they are spiritually dead, but you are united with them. You're one with them, but not with the children of God.

That shows you're spiritually dead. And that's why I said that you should remember Charles Spurgeon's mother. The early church in Jerusalem, they were united.

They were one in the Lord. They gave up what they had. They shared everything that they had.

And they were one heart, one soul, even one mind. And spoke like with one voice. Are we united like that? But if we are together and we live like cat and dog together, or a bunch of dogs that are just fighting each other.

Then we are not children and sons and daughters of God. No, then we are like dogs before God. These days someone told me about his dog that was bitten by another dog and the intestines were hanging out.

But we are just like those dogs if we are here and we fight each other and are going against each other all the time. And criticizing each other. You're a dog.

Your name should be mentioned. That everybody knows that's what you are before God. The Bible says if your brother sins, go to him and speak to him.

If he doesn't listen to you, take somebody else with you. If you can't go, go to your counselor. Let him speak to him.

If he doesn't listen, take him before the church. But God doesn't allow you to mention a name of a brother and you don't go to him. And speak to him.

You are sinning. You are living in sin. Like Mrs. Spurgeon's two sons.

The Bible says if your brother sins, go to him and speak to him. If he doesn't listen, take somebody else with you. If you can't go, go to your counselor.

If you can't go, go to your counselor. The Bible says if your brother sins, go to him and speak to him. You can see we are one family.

Now before God, when you count the members of your family in God's eyes, then it's those who are in the will of God, not the others. For the outside, that's a terrible thing. One man of God said, some people pray for the salvation of their children, but they don't get saved and God doesn't answer their prayer.

Just because they won't take a firm stand and say, my child is lost and hell bound. God has a pen dog. Remember, our father is our father, not just your own father.

And he's also not the father of those that are living in sin. Those who are living in sin, their father is the devil. He's only, he's the father of those who have parted with sin.

Lord Jesus, we thank you for teaching us how to pray. That when we pray, we shouldn't say my father or the father of my just physical family, biological family, but that we pray in the name of the spiritual family. Teach us what it means to say Awe.

And that that includes even those which are the smallest amongst the children of God in our eyes. Lord, may your word bring forth much fruit and that from now on we won't live as we lived in the past, but that we'll live on a higher plane. Amen.

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