



Devotion - Fathers Day - JUNE
C-2003-PE-01

You Are Our Father

Reading: Isaiah 64:8

"O Lord, *you* are our Father." Humanly speaking, what does it take to be a father? Is it simply that one is involved sexually in an act which results in the conception of a child? Is it simply that a person provides for a child, a home, food on the table, a decent education? Some families function that way. Again and again, one hears of young people who get into trouble, often very serious trouble. Investigation reveals that these young people don't come out of deprived families in the inner city but out of wealthy families in the suburbs, from families who give their children everything except the one thing they need: the care that one should expect from a father. Some of you may be familiar with a TV program called *Everwood*. The story line is that of a family where the father was a famous New York surgeon who was too busy saving people's lives to be involved in the lives of his two children. The mother was the only parent who the children knew. Then the mother died. In his grief, the father decided to change. He moved out West with his children and tried to be a good father to them but they had a hard time accepting him as their father. In many ways, this is a mirror for us. Are we too busy at our jobs, our hobbies, or being caregivers to others while the family is neglected? Do we have priorities over those of the family? Is that the kind of father the prophet, Isaiah, is speaking about? No.

Realizing that the situation looks dismal, that there is no hope to be found in his own righteousness, the prophet prays, "O Lord, *you* are our Father." A father who accepts and loves His children even as He recognizes that they don't deserve His love.

The prophet continues, "We are the clay, *you* are the potter." As the potter, God has not only formed us but as the potter, God has lavished His creative care to make us pleasing in His sight. We may have our flaws. We may deserve to be thrown on a junk heap, but He doesn't do it for He has not only lavished His creative care upon us, but His redemptive care as well. He sent His Son on that first Christmas to be our Saviour.

So it is that the prophet said, "Do not be angry beyond measure, O Lord; do not remember our sins forever... for we are all your people." It's like a child who had been caught doing something naughty, climbing on his dad's knee and saying, "Don't be mad, Daddy." He is looking to his dad to love him. As we get carried along in Advent, as we move toward Christmas, that's one of the themes. For God came at Christmas to be our Saviour and that means forgiveness and life through the Son of God, our Light and our Hope.

So we sing: Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has truly kept His Word And the sinners' Help and Friend, Now at last to us doth send. (#91 TLH)

Prayer: Abba Father, dear heavenly Father, we thank you for being our Father, for loving us no matter what we do. Thank you for sending Your Son to us in little Bethlehem and to the cross for us. We know we don't deserve Your love. It cost You the ultimate price — the death of Your Son. Abba Father, we are so thankful and praise Your holy and perfect name. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn: "How Great Thou Art" (519 LW)

