

# I Believe

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.  
(Genesis 1:1 ESV)*

*And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.  
(Hebrews 11:6 ESV)*

*I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God,  
that you may know that you have eternal life.  
(1 John 5:13 ESV)*

## **I Believe In the Father Almighty Maker of Heaven and Earth**

**January 24<sup>th</sup> 2021**

**Matthew 6:9, Revelation 4:8-11**

**Scott Hogeveen**

Good Morning everyone, if you have a Bible with you would you please open it up to Matthew Chapter 6, verse 9. We will be continuing in our series on the Apostles' Creed this morning and I have the great privilege of preaching on one of the most amazing truths in all the Bible. That is that God is the Father Almighty Maker of Heaven and Earth.

The Father Almighty.

I want you to take a minute and reflect on those words. While they may only be two words, only fourteen letters altogether, they are full of indescribable depth and beauty. It is impossible to fully wrap our minds around how much these two words teach us, but It is my hope this morning that as we begin to unpack what we mean when we say we believe in God the Father Almighty that we will all grow in our awe and love of how great our God is.

You see, when we say that God is the Father Almighty what we are saying is that he is simultaneously

Transcendent and Imminent.

Now some of you might be taken aback or alarmed at large theological words like transcendence and imminence but these words are immensely helpful for us this morning. When we discuss God's transcendence, we mean that God is greater than we can imagine. I want you to imagine that Scene in Revelation 4 that Pastor Levi painted for us in December. There we see God on his throne surrounded by angels and indescribable beauty and power. That is what we mean by Transcendent; God is bigger and greater and so far removed from us by nature of his perfection, holiness, and Glory. Now at the very same time God is imminent. And that simply means that he is near. It means that God is close to us, that he knows you through and through, and that we can and do have a relationship with him. The fact that God is both transcendent, and imminent is one of the most beautiful truths imaginable. So, when we say that God is The Father Almighty we are saying that the all powerful, all knowing, all present, holy, God of the universe knows us like a father knows his child and that he cares for us the same. And I struggle to think of a greater truth than that.

Hopefully now you have your Bibles open with you to Matthew 6:9. You will notice that this verse begins and introduces the Lord's Prayer. This is the way the disciples were taught to pray. It is the way we were taught to pray.

Hear Now the Word of the Lord.

Pray then like this:  
"Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name. Matthew 6:9

This is the Word of the Lord; thanks be to God.

Here Jesus teaches his disciples, and us, how we ought to pray. While there is a lot to be gleaned from the Lord's Prayer, today I want to focus our attentions on the first verse of the prayer, and the first four words in particular: "Our Father in Heaven". I want to begin by looking at these words in reverse order. We will take time to see what it means that God is our Father, but I want to begin by understanding what it means that God is our Father IN HEAVEN.

You see, this opening line of the Lord's prayer communicates the same concepts as we do in the Apostles' Creed when we confess, I believe in God the Father Almighty. God is the Father Almighty. By addressing God as "Our Father in Heaven" Jesus is inviting us to address God in the same way<sup>1</sup>. Jesus is paving the foundation for the Apostles' Creed. This is the basis for us addressing God as the Father Almighty, He is our Father in Heaven.

## God is Almighty

I know that I have referenced that scene in Revelation 4 already this morning but I would like you to keep a thumb on Matthew 6 and flip to Revelation 4 verse 8 and we will read to the end of the Chapter.

And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say,  
 "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,  
 who was and is and is to come!"  
 9 And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,  
 11 "Worthy are you, our Lord and God,  
 to receive glory and honor and power,  
 for you created all things,  
 and by your will they existed and were created."  
 Revelation 4:8-11

This is the Word of the Lord, Thanks be to God.

In December Pastor Levi helped us to see what this passage teaches about the Holiness of God. Today I want to emphasize the way this text demonstrates God's power as the Almighty. And that is the beauty of the Word of God isn't it? We could come back to the same text week in

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<sup>1</sup> Ben Myers, *The Apostle's Creed - A Guide to the Ancient Catechism* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 19.

and week out and there would always be more to see. With that in mind, my goal this morning is to draw out a few ways that this text informs what we mean when we call God Almighty.

## 1. God is the Almighty Creator

The First thing I want to point out comes in verse 11

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.” Revelation 4:11

When we call God Almighty, one of the things we mean is that he is the Creator. Remember, these are the very next words in the Apostle’s Creed: I believe in God the Father Almighty *Maker of Heaven and Earth*. Remember last week that Pastor Levi pointed out four of the most fundamental words in the Bible found in Genesis 1:1 “In the Beginning, God”.

God is eternal, He is and was and will always be and HE IS THE CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

He is the one who deserves ALL glory, ALL honour, ALL praise.

For those of you who don’t know I work in construction and have been for the last 8 or so years. Having worked in construction for a number of years, I have had the joy of being on a variety of sites. I was on a team of framers that built a condo development right off the 401 in Milton and every time I drive past it I cannot help but feel a little bit of pride at seeing buildings that I helped create. My wife can attest to this, I am constantly pointing out the same projects that I have worked on every time we drive past. And I am sure that if there are spouses of any tradespeople listening, you too have been forced to listen as your husband shows you pictures or points out projects that he has worked on.

It is natural to feel pride in a job well done. It is natural to feel joy and excitement over creating something. We were created to be creators. However, I think we ought to be taking this excitement and letting it refocus and frame our own worship and praise of the ALMIGHTY CREATOR.

You see, God delights in his creation. God tells us that his creation was GOOD. He says that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. If God is the creator then you are a creation. You are not a tiny god of your own.

This world will tell you that you are your own god. That you must follow your heart and do whatever makes you happy. The Bible says that God is the creator and we have been created to honour and glorify him.

That is what we mean when we say God is the Almighty: he is the creator, we are his creation, and he is worthy of our praise.

The Second thing I want to point out from Revelation 4 is that not only is God the almighty creator he is also the Almighty King.

## **2. God is the Almighty King**

We see this in Revelation 4:8-10

“And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say,  
“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,  
who was and is and is to come!”

9 And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne”

Revelation 4:8-10

In this small passage we see the word throne used three times. It is abundantly clear that God is on the Throne! He is the King. He is the Almighty. When we call God Almighty we are professing that he is king over all. Albert Mohler, in his book on the Apostle's Creed says this well.

“All God's attributes – omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, self-existence, and immutability are summed up in this one word, *almighty*. Only the God who possesses the fullness of perfection and infinite majesty can truly be almighty and sovereign over creation”<sup>2</sup>

God is the ALMIGHTY KING. HE is on the throne. He is Sovereign. He is IN CONTROL. And what a good reminder that is for us today. As I look out my window I am tempted to be overwhelmed by the chaos of the World. The Global pandemic, the lockdown, the rampant rise of mental health problems associated with the pandemic as well as the overall trend, the complete breakdown of our society's morality, all of this is enough to drive anyone to sadness and despair.

Yet, God is the King. He is on the Throne. We can join together and declare with all the Saints “I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY. I believe that God HAS GOT THIS. I believe that there is hope beyond covid-19. I believe that God is in control and he is GOOD. I have NOTHING to fear. WE can rejoice and proclaim with the Apostle Paul.

“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38-39 ESV)

When we declare that God is Almighty, we are declaring that he is the creator of all and that he is the king of all. We declare his infinite greatness and that he is worthy of all praise and honour and Glory. Yet These things are made even more excellent by the fact that God is not just ALMIGHTY, he is THE FATHER ALMIGHTY.

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<sup>2</sup> R. Albert Mohler Jr., *The Apostle's Creed - Discovering Authentic Christianity in an Age of Counterfeits*, (Nashville, TN: Nelson Books, 2019), 10-11.

## God is Father

Hopefully you still have your thumb stuck in Matthew 6. Please flip back there now. If you look above our text this morning you will see that in verses 6 and 8 Jesus has already told us that God is in fact OUR Father. Now, before we dive into what that means for us as Christians, I think it would be wise to explain what we, and the Bible, mean when we use the word Father to describe God.

There are some who think that because we address God as our Father then he must be male. This is incorrect, and it is unhelpful. God does not have a Gender. He is not Male nor is he Female for that matter. The word Father does not refer to God's GENDER. It refers to his Relationship.

And as Ben Myers helpfully reminds us as well

“These words, “Father” and “Son,” are relational terms. Neither would make sense without the other.”<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, it is important for us to remember that God is neither male nor female. He does not have a Gender. This does not mean, however, that we should do away with the language of God as Father. As Robert Stein helpfully reminds us

“to avoid the metaphor of father as a description and designation for God is to lose sight of the fact that Jesus chose this as his metaphor to address God”<sup>4</sup>

Did you hear that? THIS is THE Language that God uses to describe himself. God describes himself as a Father. This is THE term that Jesus uses to Address God. In fact, Father appears

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<sup>3</sup> Ben Myers, *The Apostle's Creed - A Guide to the Ancient Catechism* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 22.

<sup>4</sup> Robert H. Stein, “Fatherhood of God,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, electronic ed., Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996), 247.

165+ times in the four Gospels compared to only 15 times in the entire Old Testament! As Robert Stein reminds us and he concludes

“This was not just *a* way Jesus taught his disciples to address God; it was *the* way.”<sup>5</sup>

It is clear then that it is right for us to call God our Father. Therefore, this morning I want to spend sometime unpacking what it means when we say that God is our Father.

The first thing the Bible tells us is that:

## 1. God provides for his children

We see this in In the Lord’s Prayer as well. Look to verses 11-12 in your Bibles with me.

“Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” Matthew 6:11-12

Here Jesus is instructing us that it is proper and it is right for us to ask God to meet our needs, both physical and spiritual. In fact, in verse 8 Jesus says that God knows our needs before we even ask him. God is a loving and caring Father. He knows how to provide for his children. We see this exact idea communicated in Matthew 7:11

“If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!” Matthew 7:11

Now there are no doubt some people listening who have a hard time feeling the truth of that this morning. There are times and there are season in life when it does not feel like God is answering our prayers. Sometimes you are asking for good things and it seems like God is ignoring you. I get that, I have been there. It is in those seasons that the truth of this passage, the truth of the Apostle’s Creed is so potent and powerful.

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<sup>5</sup> Robert H. Stein, “Fatherhood of God,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, electronic ed., Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996), 247.



God is our Father. HE is our Father ALMIGHTY. Remember that dear brothers and sisters. That he knows you more intimately than you can ever imagine. He knows what you need without him even asking. God knows what you need, and he will NEVER give you less. He is sovereign and he is the king of all. If he wanted your circumstance to be different. IT WOULD BE. Remember that God is our loving father, and he is doing everything for the good of those who love him. IT may not feel like it. is for your good. But the Consistent teaching is that literally every moment of your life has been ordained by the FATHER ALMIGHTY in the best possible way.

Trust in that. That is what it means that God is our Father in Heaven. He is a father who provides for his children.

The second thing we see in Scripture is that:

## **2. God Disciplines Children**

This is the consistent teaching of Scripture, Remember these words from Hebrews 12:5-8

<sup>5</sup> And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him.<sup>6</sup> For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."<sup>7</sup> It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?<sup>8</sup> If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Hebrews 12:5-8

God is a loving Father. And Loving Father's discipline their children. I don't think I need to belabour this point. We all know that a parent will smack their child's hand away as they reach for the red-hot stove element. Sometimes parents make their kids endure a little discomfort and pain in order to save them from something much worse.

That is exactly what God does as a father. He disciplines his children. He disciplines them away from sin and disobedience so that they may come to him. God poisons the wells in our deserts of disobedience so that we might return to Jesus, the living water and so that we would NOT BE DESTROYED IN THE DESERT.

I find this to me a powerful and timely reminder. Many of us are experiencing immense discomfort and pain as a result of Covid-19 and the Lockdown. I wonder though, how many of us, instead of lashing out at the government or being grumpy and cynical about the whole thing; I wonder how many of us responded to Covid-19 with reflection and repentance. Maybe God is using this global pandemic to discipline his people, I am not saying for sure that is the case but it could be. Maybe God is shocking us awake, teaching us not to take Church for granted. Maybe he is reminding us that we aren't in control.

God disciplines his children. He is our Father in Heaven and as our Father he will put us through seasons of discipline in order that we might grow in holiness and righteousness; in order that we might reap the ETERNAL BENEFITS of following Jesus.

God's discipline is always for your good Christian. Always.

God disciplines his children because of his great love for them.

And that is the third thing we mean when we call God our Father. We mean that:

### **3. God Loves his Children**

I think most of you can probably quote John 3:16, if you can please do as I read it now

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

That verse is the Gospel in a nutshell isn't it? It is one of the most concise proclamations of the Gospel in the Bible. We have rejected God as our creator and as our father and we have turned to our sin. We have sought to do things our own way and have trod down the path of sin, death, and destruction. We would have no hope of redemption from this path. We would have no way off this hellbound train if it were not for the grace of God the Father Almighty. In the Father's LOVE he sent the Son to live the life we never could, and to take our place upon the cross so that we might have a relationship with the Father and we might have life eternal if we put our faith in Jesus.

The Gospel is God's Love on full display. It is the amazing, unfathomable love of the Father Almighty for his children.

God's love for his children is beautifully illustrated in the parable of the prodigal son found in Luke 15. I am sure most of you are familiar with the story. A son demands his inheritance from his father, basically saying that he wishes his father were dead. He then takes his money and squanders it by living a life of excess and debauchery. Eventually the son is reduced to longing to eat what the pigs eat. By the way, that should be bringing back some reminders of Romans 1 from last week. Eventually the son hits a breaking point and decides to return home to his father in the hopes that he might become a servant in his father's house. I want you to pay close attention now, see how the Father responds to his son in verses 20-24:

"And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup> And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' <sup>22</sup> But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. <sup>23</sup> And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. <sup>24</sup> For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate." Luke 15:20-24

THAT, my friends, is God's attitude towards repentant sinners. THAT is his attitude towards his children. HE RUSHES OUT TO MEET THEM ON THE WAY. God is filled with compassion for those who would turn from their sin and turn back to him. He runs to them with arms wide open.

So, if you are listening to this and you have not done that. If you have not turned from your sin and put your faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus then you must. It does not matter who you have been, or what you may have done. God is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love! Your sins can and will be forgiven if you lay them at the feet of Jesus. We have a Heavenly father who Loves his children. You can count on that.

This is the incomprehensible beauty of the Fact that God is our FATHER ALMIGHTY. HE is the only one who can drag your life up from the pit. He is the maker of Heaven and Earth, he is the Almighty, the only being in the entire universe powerful enough to change a human heart and make it new. AND HE WILL! He is your father. He knows you; He loves you, and he is waiting at the door to rush out and greet you as you return to him.

## Conclusion

Brothers and Sisters, you could spend the rest of your life on earth digging into the beauty of the tension and harmony between God as Almighty and God as Father and it would never grow dreary or dull to you. Listen to the way R.T. France describes the way Jesus addresses God as “Our Father in Heaven”. He says,

“This address does, however, express forcibly the tension in the disciples’ attitude to God, who is at the same time *in heaven*, transcendent, all-powerful, the Lord of the universe and yet *Our Father*, concerned for the needs of each disciple, and entering into an intimate relationship with them.”<sup>6</sup>

Through Jesus Christ, God has made a way for you to enter into an intimate relationship with Him. The All-powerful God, the MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, the one brought everything into existence with a BREATH has made a way for you to have an intimate, personal, and ETERNAL relationship with him.

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<sup>6</sup> R. T. France, *Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 1, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 138.

Through this prayer Jesus invites us to stand alongside him and to address God as our Heavenly father just as Jesus does.<sup>7</sup> Picture that. If you have put your faith in Jesus Christ, you get to stand alongside Jesus Christ before the Father Almighty and he will not see your sins, he will not condemn you, he will see you as his beloved Child with whom he is well pleased. That is the doctrine of adoption. We are adopted into the family of God by faith in Jesus Christ. We are entitled to all the benefits and inheritance that is due to a child of God.

By Faith in Jesus Christ, we become Children of God. We receive the right to call on God as our Father in Heaven. We get to confess that we believe in God the Father Almighty. We get to proclaim with confidence that the creator of the universe, the God who sits on the throne in heaven is king over all creation and HE is the one who knows us, who provides for us, and who is abounding in steadfast love for us.

This is what it means to say that God is the Father Almighty Maker of Heaven and Earth, and this is the Word of the Lord, Thanks be to God.

Let's pray.

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<sup>7</sup> Ben Myers, *The Apostle's Creed - A Guide to the Ancient Catechism* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 19.