

Bridgeway Community Church  
Gary Coiro & Tracey Tiernan-Coiro  
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## Father's Day

### Fathers Need Grace A Reflection on our Earthly & Heavenly Fathers

**Pastor Gary Coiro & Minister Tracey Tiernan Coiro**

We all have father! Some are dependable, some are not. Some are funny, some are not. Some we wish would let us get closer. Some we struggle forgiving.

Tracey: "How we think about our earthly fathers often times can affect how we see our heavenly father."

Gary: My father was a do-it-yourself-er and so I struggle sometimes in my spiritual life to work independently from God. I need to work at learning and relearning how to be dependent on my heavenly father.

John 15:5 NIV84

[Jesus speaking] I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; **apart from me you can do nothing.**

Gary: We are instructed to honor our fathers and our mothers but those relationships can get quite complicated.

Ephesians 6:2-3 NIV84

Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise—<sup>3</sup> "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.

Question: How do you find good in these complicated relationships?

Matthew 7:9-11

[Jesus speaking] Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup> Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? <sup>11</sup> If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

There are good things our earthly fathers give us.

Question: What are those good things you received from your earthly father?

Tracey: The gift of music

Gary: Environments that were beautiful, home & cottage on Long Island sound.

Gary: "In reality, we've all, even through the hands of our fathers, have had sin imposed upon us. Part of the reality is that we are all just fellow strugglers and our dads were fellow strugglers."

Romans 7:15-16 NIV84

I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. <sup>16</sup> And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good.

Gary: "We experience wounds from our father."

Book: Wild at Heart by John Eldredge

"Every boy in his journey to become a man, takes an arrow in the center of his heart, in the place of his strength. Because the wound is rarely discussed and even more rarely healed, every man carries a wound. And the wound is nearly always given by his father."

Question: What can God do with these wounds?

Romans 8:28-29 NIV84

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup>For those God

foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Gary: “All things were used of God to make me who I am today, to be someone who fulfills his purposes. As we look in the rearview mirror, we have to accept the wounds that we’ve received and hopefully find God’s healing in those and recognize the fact that in the sovereign grace of God that he is using that to make us who we are.”

#### GAP FILLERS

Tracey: “God is so gracious that often times in those areas we may have deficiencies, he will provide what we like to call ‘gap fillers.’

Question: “Are there people in your life that have stepped in to play an important part in securing your heart and filling that void that has been perhaps left by imperfect parents.”

#### OUR HEAVENLY FATHER - LOVE GIVES

Tracey: “What we want to do...is now take that filter that maybe you have that maybe is erroneous because you’ve attributed some characteristics of your earthly father to your heavenly father. Let’s flip it around...The clearer, the more accurately we understand who our heavenly father is and the gifts that he’s given us, the better that we will be able to give grace to our earthly fathers...helps us become healed people, healed children of God.”

Question: What are some of the good gifts that he has given us?

Mark 12:29-31 NIV

“The most important one [commandment],” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup> Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ <sup>31</sup> The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

Gary: “When you see ‘love’ in the scripture, you often times see it with the word ‘give’ because love gives.”

John 3:16 NIV84

[Jesus speaking] For God so **loved** the world that he **gave** his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Question: What is this love gift that God has given us in his son Jesus Christ?

1 John 2:1-2 NIV

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. <sup>2</sup>He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Gary: First notice that we are called “children” and God is called “the Father” so Happy Father’s Day our heavenly father!

1 John 4:10 NIV84

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

“Advocate” - to speak in one’s defense, to be a mediator, a helper, a legal assistant

1 Timothy 2:5 NIV84

For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus

Gary: Wouldn’t it be great that when we stand before the court of heaven, to have the best attorney present with you?! Someone who argues for you that all of your offenses have already been paid for.

Romans 8:34 NIV84

Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Revelation 12:10 NIV84

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.

“atoning sacrifice” (1 John 2:2)

Propitiation - a means of appeasing

Jesus offered himself as the sacrifice for the payment of our sins

Gary: “The beauty of what Jesus did in these two roles that he fulfilled it is really exposed to us in the book of Hebrews.”

They show Jesus as the high priest AND the atoning sacrifice

Hebrews 4:14-16 NIV84

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 9:11-15 NIV84

When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. <sup>12</sup> He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. <sup>13</sup> The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. <sup>14</sup> How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! <sup>15</sup> For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

## THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

Leviticus 23:26-32 NIV84

The Lord said to Moses, <sup>27</sup> “The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves, and present an offering made to the Lord by fire. <sup>28</sup> Do no work on that day, because it is the Day of Atonement, when atonement is made for you before the Lord your God. <sup>29</sup> Anyone who does not deny himself on that day must be cut off from his people. <sup>30</sup> I will destroy from among his people anyone who does any work on that day. <sup>31</sup> You shall do no work at all. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live. <sup>32</sup> It is a sabbath of rest for you, and you must deny yourselves. From the evening of the ninth day of the month until the following evening you are to observe your sabbath.”

Gary: “What we now have is Jesus is this atoning sacrifice and he is brought into the presence of the Father, he is brought into the Holy of Holies by the high priest who is himself!...Jesus Christ, as the high priest, he goes into the presence of the Father, he goes in there to appeal on our behalf...he presents the sacrifice which is himself! He is the high priest who represents us to God and makes sacrifice of himself to God for our sin.”

## FATHERS NEED GRACE

When I stand in wonder and gratitude for what God has done for me, how can I NOT be an extender of grace to a dad who is trying his best, failing as he did.

Tracey: “All of us have something in common with our earthy fathers...that we need grace.”

“What do we do with our earthly fathers? We come to our heavenly father and we recognize we have so much in common with our earthly father...we stand on even ground saying, ‘God we need your mercy and your grace.’ Our fathers need grace...”

Tracey: “As flawed and as imperfect as our families have been, as much brokenness there might be in your family, it’s not too much for God to handle. God is not a victim of our brokenness. He’s the victor over our brokenness.”

LIVE THE FATHER'S GRACE - THIS ENDS NOW

Question: What if we put a stake in the ground and say, "that brokenness doesn't have to define me!"

Don't let the fear of 'being like my father' stop you. That does NOT have to be your destiny. You can say, "It ends with me!"