

***Our Father***  
***By Pastor Donald Neidigk***  
***Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2026***  
***Matthew 6:6-15***

*"This is how you should pray, Our Father in Heaven . . . ." Matthew 6:9*

In a lifetime, how many times does a Christian pray the Lord's Prayer? I've known the Lord's Prayer since I was little. It was part of my bedtime ritual along with "God bless Mama, God bless Daddy," and so on. If I prayed it once a day for most of my life, that would be over 25,000 times!

Most of us probably love this prayer. But if your only example of fatherhood, your own natural father, was absent, or abusive, you might not like it. But God our Father is neither absent nor abusive. He is a loving, totally trustworthy father, the perfect example of fatherhood. He's also a perfect, loving example of motherhood. That's reassuring because sometimes moms and dads have to assume each other's roles.

We can learn a great deal about parenting from this prayer. The actual prayer is unique to Jesus; no one else teaches it. Even so, the picture of God as Father appears often in the Old Testament.

- God says of himself in *Jeremiah*, "I am a father to Israel." (31:9).
- He says, "You shall call me "My father" and shall not turn away from me." (*Jeremiah 3:19*)
- Isaiah speaks to God and says, "You are our father; . . . and we are
- all the work of your hand." (63:16)
- Malachi says, "Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us?" (*Malachi 2:10*)

You get the idea. God is Father to his people Israel all through the Old Testament. And in the New Testament, he's Father to all who are redeemed by Jesus Christ, born into his family through Holy Baptism by faith.