

215. Our Father, Who Art in Heaven.

One God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all. *Eph. 4, 6.*

"Many pray the Lord's Prayer a thousand times a year, and though they prayed it a thousand years, they would not have prayed one letter thereof properly." These words of Luther are a sweeping and striking assertion. Still, are they not true? Take, for instance, the opening words of that divine prayer, the familiar words "Our Father, who art in heaven." They are recited in every public service; every day they are on the lips of all Christians; yet, have we ever regarded the deep significance and inspiration hidden in them?

"Our Father." What sacred associations cluster around the word "father"! The thought of it fills us with tender remembrance. A true father is the best earthly friend. But the earthly significance of the word "father" does not exhaust the meaning of this blessed name; it is but a mere shadow of that relationship which God sustains to us. God is our Father. To Him we owe our whole being from the very first moment of our existence and also our preservation up to this hour. Whatever we are and have and hold we must ascribe to the love and kindness of our Father in heaven.

Again, if He is our Father, we must be His children, and therefore we may go to Him and with all confidence and boldness ask Him as dear children ask their dear father. Now, if that is true, if God is our kind and loving Father, and if by faith we are His children, it follows that we are heirs of our Father's estate in heaven. And though all unbelievers reject that inheritance, all who believe in Jesus Christ will attain it.

Our heavenly Father surely has the power to make His promise true, for He is "in heaven," that is to say, He is the almighty God. The Father to whom we pray is the Exalted One, who dwells in the high and holy places from eternity. He possesses infinite power to aid and help us. He is our Refuge and our Fortress.

Prayer.

Lord God, heavenly Father, Thou art the Father of lights and the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, the eternal Father, of whom and through whom and to whom are all things. In Christ Thou art our Father and the Father of all believers, whom Thou hast brought to the adoption of children, and into whose hearts Thou hast sent the Spirit of Thy Son, teaching them to cry, "Abba, Father." Thou art our Father in heaven, and therefore we lift up our souls in prayer unto Thee and come to Thee with all boldness and confidence. Amen.

Starting forth on life's rough way,
Father, guide us;
Oh, we know not what of harm
May, betide us;
'Neath the shadow of Thy wing,
Father, hide us;
Walking through this world, we pray,
Go beside us.

This devotion is one of 318 taken from *Daily Bread* by F. E. Pasche, published by CPH in 1926, but now in the public domain. They have been copied and reformatted by Rev. Bruce G. Ley and made available for distribution by pastors and missionaries. You may contact Rev. Ley at: pastorley@leychalet.com.

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