



## Prayer Corner

*“...how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”  
(Matt. 7:11)*

In following Jesus throughout the New Testament, we hear him reference God as Father repeatedly. This reference appears one hundred times in the Gospel of John alone<sup>1</sup>. In the Lord’s Prayer, we are prompted to call Him “Our Father” (Matthew 6:9).

Having welcomed our first child in the last days of 2016, I have considered more than ever what it means to be a parent. The concept of the God of the universe as my heavenly parent holds a new depth for me.

In these early days especially, our newborn daughter requires our complete attention. In caring for her we have spent hours learning preferences, observing subtle patterns and studying the nuances of her developing personality. As her parents we orchestrate the events of her day and ensure conditions of utmost comfort and safety each time she lays her head down to sleep. We delight in every sound, cry, grin and grimace. Now, we think differently about every choice, weighing how it might influence her life in the present and future.

There is something very humbling about knowing that a child depends on you for her every need. Knowing she relies on our grown up knowledge of the world, I pray we will help her flourish in it, and have the wisdom to protect her from it when necessary.

How much more so then does our Heavenly Father care for us? Our Father considers the nature of our personalities and gifts, our strengths and weaknesses (Psalm 103:14). He delights in us! He is present for our joys and is ever near in our sorrows. Our Father is working out the plans He has for us (Jer. 29:11), ordering the events of our lives and callings. Our Father understands that as His children walking in faith, we rely on His infinite knowledge of the universe.

At this stage of life our newborn daughter is not able to see or understand that we constantly watch her even when she does not see us and that every need met comes with forethought and intention. Yet from the first moments of her life, she has been able to unmistakably distinguish the voices of her parents. Like her, we are likely unaware of the full depth and scope of His workings in our lives. Yet, there He is, Our Father, watching, protecting, comforting, and guiding His children through Word and Spirit, His voice.

What comfort might this bring to us in our journey as Christian social workers? Perhaps we need the occasional reminding that His calling on our lives was/is indeed intentional and based on his knowledge of our inner workings as Creator. Maybe we need to lean in and trust that He will provide for, protect and comfort, when it is not easy serving people and communities as Jesus did. Possibly, quieting ourselves to perceive the voice of our Father is what our present circumstance requires.

Prayer:

*Our Heavenly Father, how can it be that you, the God of the universe, bend down low to care for us (Hosea 11:4)? We are in awe of your great love for us. Thank you for choosing us, your adopted children. Forgive us when we fail to appreciate or trust your guiding hand in our lives or make the mistake of not listening to your voice. Help us to more fully perceive the plans you have for us, so that we may look more like Jesus in our service to you. Amen.*

Reference:

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/fatherhood-of-god.htm>.