

We Call Him Father by LaBreeska Hemphill



A few weeks back I was awakened at midnight with my heart out of rhythm. I don't know what brings it on and it only happens on rare occasions, but it's impossible to ignore. My pulse races and becomes irregular. But it doesn't worry me other than it takes a while to get back to normal: sometimes an hour or more. The first time it happened was years ago when I was at the hospital with my mother for a biopsy on her lungs. The doctor found cancer and told me that she had about three months to live, (she died before the three months were up). Now, every so often, this problem with my heart will show up unexpectedly - several times a year. There's a medical term for this strange occurrence, but my last physical exam proved my heart to be sound and strong. Therefore it isn't a concern, just an annoyance.

It was a Saturday night. Joel and I were sound asleep in a motel room just outside Columbus, Ohio. We had gotten into town at a decent hour, gone to the church to set up our equipment and did a sound check for the Sunday morning service. We went back to the motel and turned in early. Then I was awakened with a run-away pulse and a heart that seemed to be beating *side-ways!* I eased out of bed so I wouldn't wake Joel, stayed up a few minutes, and then laid back down. I did that once, twice, three times. By then Joel aroused, reached out and laid his hand on me and prayed. Then he went back to sleep. But nothing had changed, my heart was still pounding. I was lying there in the darkness and decided there was nothing to do but get up and sit in a chair until it subsided. Then I whispered, "Father you are so near, thank you for your nearness." At that instant my heart stopped pounding and became normal! It happened so suddenly that it made me laugh. David was right when he said:

*"God is our refuge and strength, **a very present help** in trouble" (Ps. 46:1).*

Jesus taught us many things about the Father, and talked about him more than any other subject. 170 times he mentions the Father because he wants us to know Him as he knows Him. He wants us to establish that father-child relationship that Jesus has with Him.

*“Jesus said when we pray **say** ‘Our Father which art in heaven’...” (Luke 11:2).*

Over and over you can find where Jesus addresses God as *“Father:”*

“Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me...” (Luke 22:42).

“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).

“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit...” (Luke 23:46).

Possibly the hardest thing for Christians to realize is the access the word *Father* gives us. We are awed by the majesty; the power and glory of this great and mighty King who has set the boundaries of the oceans with His hands. He is the one who exalts whom He will and abases whom He will. He sets up kings and in turn, brings them down as He sees fit. We think: how can such a one even know that I exist? The answer is plain and simple, **He** is our Father, and because of this we have access to Him by the blood of Jesus. We have special privileges because we are His children. When we come before Him and say *“Father”* we are acknowledging that we are **of Him, by Him, for Him** and **through Him**. Then He, in turn, calls us daughter or son. He is the most blessed and complete Father there has ever been, or will ever be. He protects us, supplies our needs, and takes up for us.

*“Behold, what manner of **love** the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the **children of God**” (1 John 3:1).*

The amazing thing is: He listens all day long for the voice of His children. What pleases Him most, and causes Him to rejoice over us, is when we express our love and appreciation to Him by the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His holy name, *and* by obedience to His word. We grieve him when we exclude Him from our lives and ignore the fact that **He** brought us into being.

In the last book of the Old Testament, hear the cry of God the Father's heart.

*"A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a **father**, where is mine honor?" (Mal. 1:6).*

There are many ways to honor our heavenly Father in word and deed. I have found that it is very important to declare who he is every time I go to Him in prayer. To give Him great respect as Creator of the universe. To tell Him that He is the true and living God, and there is no other. I let Him know that He is right in all His dealings with me. He's right when He speaks and He's right when He keeps silent. His ways are perfect. He has my best interest at heart, and I trust him. I am constantly trying to adjust my will to His, to reverence His holy name and worship Him with a heart full of love and adoration. I believe our heavenly Father listens when we acknowledge His truthfulness, His trustworthiness, His reliability. He is pleased when we show deep respect together with love for Him and His word. To honor Him is to love Him for who He is. It is wonderful to know that Jesus' Father is *my* Father and *his* God is *my* God!

The resurrected Jesus told Mary Magdalene at the tomb, before his ascension:

*"...go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto **my Father and your Father and to my God and your God"** (John 20:17).*

Paul, the great apostle, knew how to honor the Father. Therefore, miracles, signs, and wonders followed his ministry and many, many souls were added to the kingdom. Here's what he told his followers:

*“Grace be to you, and peace, from **God our Father** and from the Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 1:2).*

*“For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, **for we are His off spring**” (Acts 17:28).*

I am convinced that when we really know who our Father is, as Jesus and Paul did, we too will have miracles, signs, and wonders following our ministry! Our heavenly Father is all powerful and almighty and He has caused great nations and mighty men to quake in His presence. Yet we bask in His love and affection. Even though He can be "terrible" out of His holy place, we have nothing to fear because we are the apple of His eye. We have never known or felt the demonstration of the power of His wrath simply because He loves us. We are His heirs, *“heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ” (Rom. 8:17)*. There is no good thing that He will withhold from us. You see, **He is our Father** and **we are His children!**