

**PARTICIPATORY PARENTING:
PARENTS' PARTICIPATION IN RAISING GOD'S AND OUR CHILDREN**
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Part One—Heavenly Fathering: God's Model for Human Parenting

- I. Introduction – “Our Father . . .” How astonishing, remarkable, nearly unbelievable that Jesus would command His disciples to address God, in prayer, with, “Our Father.”

Now, what does it mean to address God as Father? Just what kind of Father is He?

God, our Father: deserves . . . our worship, our reverence, our loyalty, our following, and He desires . . . our well-being, our renewal, our loveliness, our fullness

- II. God, our Father, deserves our worship, our reverence, our loyalty, our following

Matthew 6:9-10

Malachi 1:6 If

1 Peter 1:14-17

Hebrews 12:7-11

Summary: God deserves honor and respect; He expects His will to be done; He will judge and discipline to bring about obedience and holiness

- III. God, our Father, desires our well-being, our renewal, our loveliness, our fullness

Matthew 6:11-12

Psalm 89:20-29

2 Corinthians 1:2-4

James 1:16-18

Summary: God has an unfaltering, unwavering commitment to the well-being of His children; He delights in being the One who meets their every need, helps them when in trouble, comforts them when sorrowful; His presence brings grace, peace, goodness and joy.

- IV. Application

Fathers

All of us

Part Two—Earthly Parenting: Our Participation in God's Fathering

- I. Introduction – “Participatory parenting.” What is this? This concept comes from the observation that in parenting, just as in every other aspect of the Christian life, we are to understand what we do as active participants with God in His work.

- Phil 2:12-13 Work out your salvation . . . for God is at work in you
- Col 1:29 I labor, striving according to His power
- 1 Cor 15:10 I labored more than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God with me
- Psalms 127:3 children are a blessing from the Lord
- Matt 10:37 If you love father or mother, son or daughter more than Me, you are not worthy of Me. Our and their first and only ultimate loyalty is to God.

So, in what ways does the Bible indicate that we are participants with God in the parenting of our children?

II. Aspects of Participatory Parenting

A. Participatory creation of our children

Gen. 1:26-28 male and female in God' image; fill the earth (traducian model)

Gen. 5:1-3 Adam has Seth, in *his* likeness and image.

B. Participatory authority over our children

Exod 20:12 the fifth commandment, stands between the first four (vertical) and the last five (horizontal)

Eph 6:1-4 we are to raise our children "in the Lord"

C. Participatory nurturing of our children

Deut. 6:4-9 taking every opportunity to train our children in the Lord

Psalms 127 the Lord must build the house. We trust, he builds

Psalms 128 fear the Lord in order to raise a family that prospers

Prov 1:8-9; 4:1-9 pleading with children to learn from us—we must teach them

Malachi 2:15 the goal is to raise a godly heritage

Eph 6:1-4 we nurture them in the Lord. Instruction with patience and love

D. Participatory releasing of our children

Matt 10:34-39 "He who loves father, mother, . . . son, daughter, more than Me . . ." — Our children need to learn that their first and only ultimate allegiance is to God. We need to embrace this concept and prepare ourselves to release them fully into God's will.

Matt 12:46-50 "Who is my mother and brothers?" — Ultimate allegiance is to Christ. All else must be subordinate to this and this alone. As stewards of our children, we must release them to the One who has absolute rights over them, for His glory and their good.

III. Conclusion