



DECEMBER 13, 2020

EVERLASTING FATHER

Isaiah 9:1-6

The Big Picture: In the previous chapters of Isaiah, everything looked black and ominous. A spirit of anguish and distress gripped the hearts of people. They felt utterly helpless, for they were living in a war-torn nation. Most of the nation had already fallen to the Assyrians, who had swept across the land like the mighty floodwaters of the Euphrates River. It was indeed a dark, dismal, and hopeless day for the people of Judah. Nevertheless, Isaiah closed his prophecy with a most beautiful promise: the people would be delivered by God’s light, His presence, shining in the agonizing despair of this world. He describes Jesus in four ways.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. - Isaiah 9:6

Earthly Fathers	Everlasting Father
1. Physically or emotionally distant or absent.	1. <i>Is present</i> (Matthew 28:20). <i>He is with us and wants us to be with Him</i> (Mark 3:14).
2. Taskmaster who demands perfection to earn love, acceptance, and affirmation.	2. Offers His love, acceptance, and affirmation to us unconditionally simply because we are His children.
3. Might constantly criticize and condemn.	3. <i>Through Jesus has set us free from condemnation</i> (Romans 8:1-2).
4. Gives the message: do more, try harder.	4. His message is that you do not have to do in order to be, but you are set free to do. God has done for us what we cannot do enough for ourselves through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
5. Impatient and on edge.	5. <i>Is patient, gentle, longsuffering.</i>
6. Bases his view of us on our performance, prestige, and title.	6. His view is based on our being His daughters and sons.
7. Can perceive us to be an interruption and inconvenience.	7. Always welcomes our presence, our voice, and never treats us as an interruption or inconvenience.
8. May withhold their approval and affirmation.	8. In His grace, showers us with approval and affirmation.
9. May not know how to communicate their love to their kids.	9. Goes out of His way to tell us and show us that He loves us.
10. Can help daughters and sons.	10. Can transform His daughters and sons.

1. OUR EVERLASTING FATHER IS COMPASSIONATE

Psalm 103:8 *‘The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.’*

Matthew 11:28-29 *‘Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.’*

2. OUR EVERLASTING FATHER IS ON YOUR SIDE.

Jeremiah 29:11 *‘For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’*

3. OUR EVERLASTING FATHER IS ALWAYS CARES.

Hebrews 13:5 *‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’*

Life Group Worksheet

ISAIAH 9:1-6

1. Reflect- *How has God been working in your life? How has He provided, comforted, answered, reconciled, or guided you? Be open to sharing both your successes and struggles.*

2. Review- LifeNotes on the opposite side.

3. Read- *Isaiah 9:1-6 carefully several times, both with your group and alone.*

4. Engage and Explore- *Try to answer at least one question.*

- a. Share something about your earthly father's love for you that has had an impact for good in your life. Talk a little about your relationship with your father. If you did not have an earthly father, did you have anyone in your life who was a "spiritual father" or someone who helped you, supported, and loved you?
- b. Whose life have you experienced the love of the Everlasting Father through?
- c. What aspects of His love have you experienced through them?
- d. What aspects of the Father's love are especially important for you?
- e. What aspect(s) of the Heavenly Father's love would you like to experience more fully, more consistently?

5. Connect- *how this passage applies to you and your relationship to Jesus and others. How is the Holy Spirit speaking to you through this passage? Try to answer at least one question*

- a. In what ways have you projected the image of your earthly father onto your Everlasting Father?
- b. If so, has that hindered your relationship with Jesus in any way?
- c. How is your Everlasting Father different than your earthly father?
- d. How does seeing God more clearly affect your relationship with Him?
- e. Extra Credit: Read – John 14:7-11 and Luke 15:22-24 carefully several times. Read – John 14:7-11 and Luke 15:22-24 carefully several times, both with your group and alone

6. Silent Meditation - *You may want to move away from the group to a quiet spot. Silently read the Scripture several more times. Write down the words/passage you want to focus on this week and how you plan to apply God's truth to your life. What is God saying, and what will you do?*

7. Share- *Key insights with your group from question #6.*

8. Close in Prayer- *Try using different prayer models found in the LifeGroup Leader Handbook*