

DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

FATHERS

There are so many verses in the Bible about FATHERS because God is our Heavenly Father and our earthly fathers are a mere reflection of Him! Our relationships with our fathers is a crucial issue in our nation and God knows it. Spend this week understanding more about your Heavenly Father and your earthly father, and in the process, become a better mother/father and child. And I write this from Los Angeles, the City of Orphans...

Each day this week we are pleased to include videos of songs about fathers, written by Jim Covell. Find them all at <https://www.fathersongs.com/>

DAY 1

GOD OUR FATHER

"HE ADOPTED A ROLE CALLED 'BEING A FATHER' SO THAT HIS CHILD WOULD HAVE SOMETHING MYTHICAL AND INFINITELY IMPORTANT: A PROTECTOR."

-TOM WOLFE

New International Version

Isaiah 64:8

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.

2 Corinthians 6:18

I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

DAY 1

PRAY: Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You that You are my true Father. Thank You that we are your true sons and daughters, and that though we are only the clay, You are the potter and we are all the work of Your hand. I want to trust You and fall more in love with You more than I even trust or love my earthly father. I praise You, my eternal Father! Amen.

REFLECT: Have you ever thought about why God made Himself our father and not our mother? It's because a mother's love is instinctive, but a father's love is a choice. God chose to love each and every one of us. We can love because He loved us first. He is the ultimate, perfect Father whom earthly fathers try to be like, but only as a mere reflection of Him. God tells us that He creates us, molds us and completes us, as a potter does to a lump of clay. How perfect, powerful and precious is our God, our Father!

DAY 1

ACT: Do you have expectations of God your Heavenly Father, based on your relationship with your earthly Father? Do you have hurts, anger or numbness toward your earthly father that has hindered your relationship with God the Father? Right now, write God a love note, as your perfect Father, and thank Him for everything He is to you. How big and mighty is your God? Stretch out of your emotional comfort zone and thank God for being your creator, potter, supporter, supplier, care-giver, friend, advisor and more. Then save your love note and go back to it in the future. Never forget how amazing your Heavenly Father is.

TODAY'S SONG: *A Father's Prayer* at <https://www.fathersongs.com/>

DAY 2

FATHERS, DON'T DISCOURAGE YOUR CHILDREN

"WHEN I COME HOME, MY DAUGHTER
WILL RUN TO THE DOOR AND GIVE ME A
BIG HUG, AND EVERYTHING THAT'S
HAPPENED THAT DAY JUST MELTS AWAY."
-HUGH JACKMAN

New International Version

Colossian 3:21

Fathers, do not embitter your children, or
they will become discouraged

Ephesians 6:4, Luke 6:36

Do not exasperate your children; instead,
bring them up in the training and
instruction of the Lord....Be merciful, just as
your Father is merciful.

DAY 2

PRAY: Father, I pray for people who are deeply hurt by their earthly fathers. You tell fathers not to embitter their children or they will become discouraged, but to bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Please come into the hearts of hurting children, of any age, heal them and fill them up with Your unconditional love and hope. I praise You for the fathers who are merciful and loving, like You, the Father to the fatherless. Amen.

REFLECT: Did you or any people in your life have bad or non-existent fathers? That is so damaging to children. The role of the Father is crucial and yet many fathers embitter their children. What can you do to help in that desperate situation? Can you show mercy to hurting children or mentor prodigal children? Chuck Colson once said, "The problem of so many Americans being in jail is not because of too many guns, but because of too few fathers." What is your place in changing the fatherless crisis in our country?

DAY 2

ACT: Choose three people you know, including yourself, if it applies, who have been damaged by a bad father. Commit to pray for them every day this week, asking the Lord to come in as their Heavenly Father, to train and instruct them and show mercy to them. Pray for their hearts to heal, their emotions to be restored, and for the ability to embrace their Heavenly Father. Make an eternal difference in three people all week because of your prayers for them, inviting our God of mercy to take away their bitterness and discouragement!

TODAY'S SONG: *Someday* at <https://www.fathersongs.com>



DAY 3

HONOR YOUR FATHER

"MY FATHER GAVE ME THE GREATEST GIFT ANYONE COULD GIVE ANOTHER PERSON: HE BELIEVED IN ME."

-JIM VALVANO

New International Version

Deuteronomy 5:16

Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

DAY 3

PRAY: Heavenly Father, I want to pray for the people who have great fathers and for those who don't. It's easy to honor good fathers, and reap the results with a long life in the land. But would You help those who don't have great fathers to honor their fathers anyway? Heal broken fathers as You help their children show them Your love! Teach us the importance of honoring our fathers, how to love them more deeply, to forgive them and be patient with them. We all need Your help to love our fathers the way You have commanded us! Amen.

REFLECT: How hard it must be for angry, hurting, broken children of all ages to follow this commandment to honor their father? What does honor mean, in this context? We don't have to be buddies, spend lots of time, or even obey everything they say. The dictionary defines honor as "high respect; great esteem, adherence to what is right, or a conventional standard of conduct, fulfill an obligation or a contract." That's easy for great fathers, but what about abusive fathers? If your father was hurtful, then you can adhere to a right standard of conduct by not talking against him, or getting revenge, while honoring his position of father, versus his choices. And if your father breaks his contract with you, you can honor your end of the contract by praying for him. Is that possible in your relationship with your father?

DAY 3

ACT: Which part of the definition of HONOR above fits your relationship with your father? Reread "Reflect" and ask God to reveal to you if you're honoring your father. If not, ask how to honor him in a biblical way. Turn to Your Heavenly Father for guidance and direction on how you can fully honor your earthly Father, regardless of how he has treated you.

TODAY'S SONGS: *Thank That Man* and *Superman* at <https://www.fathersongs.com>



DAY 4

A LOVING FATHER'S DISCIPLINE

"TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE
SHOULD GO – BUT BE SURE YOU GO THAT
WAY YOURSELF."

-CHARLES SPURGEON

New International Version

Hebrews 12:5,7, & 9

And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,... Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father?... Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!

DAY 4

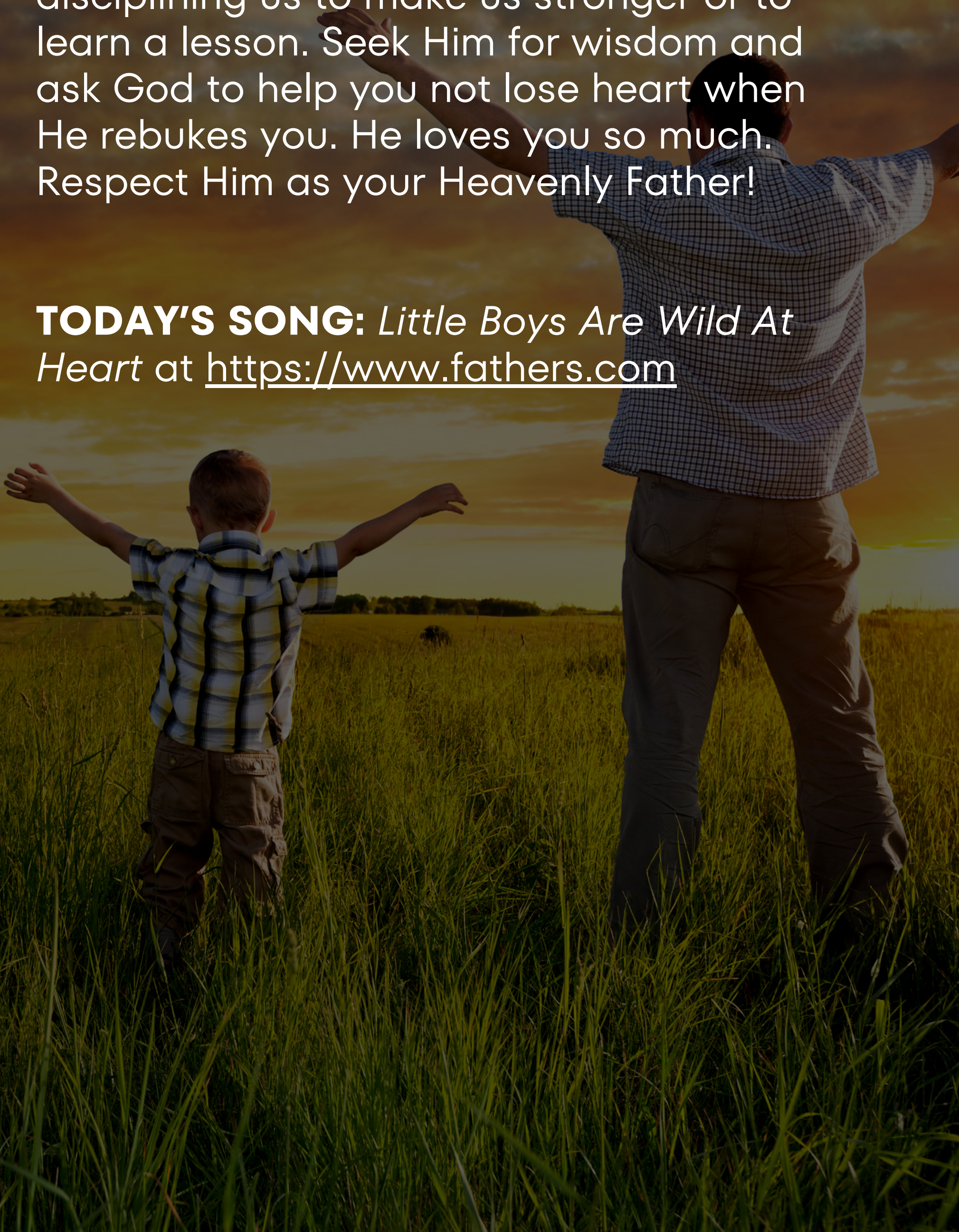
PRAY: Dear Father, I know that as a father disciplines his children, You must discipline me. Help me to not lose heart when You rebuke me. Help me endure hardship as discipline, for I know that You are treating me as Your child. Help me to both accept Your discipline, and respect You for it, as I am to respect my earthly father when he disciplines me. Father, discipline me into a Christ-like child of Yours whom You are proud of. Amen.

REFLECT: It is so difficult to know how to discipline a child well. Should we “spare the rod,” or use the spoon? Do we give time-outs, take things away, or give lectures on right and wrong? Human beings are still trying to figure it out. Only God knows exactly how to perfectly discipline His children. So why not seek insight on parenting skills by studying how God disciplines us: Read scripture, pray, and seek wise advice from Godly mentors.

DAY 4

ACT: Read Hebrews 12:5,7 & 9 again and pray over each verse. Seek wisdom about how you were disciplined and how you should discipline your children. Ask the Lord for insight into how He is disciplining you, for we need to submit when God is disciplining us to make us stronger or to learn a lesson. Seek Him for wisdom and ask God to help you not lose heart when He rebukes you. He loves you so much. Respect Him as your Heavenly Father!

TODAY'S SONG: *Little Boys Are Wild At Heart* at <https://www.fathers.com>



DAY 5

ABBA FATHER

"EARLY ON IN MY LIFE, I HAD A BROKEN SOUL. I WAS ABUSED BY MY FATHER, ABANDONED BY MY MOTHER AND ENDED UP IN A DESTRUCTIVE FIRST MARRIAGE. BY THE TIME I WAS 23, I WAS BROKEN IN MY SOUL. I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO THINK RIGHT. I FELT WRONG ABOUT EVERYTHING. BUT GOD STEPPED INTO MY LIFE, AND I CAME OUT ON THE OTHER SIDE AND DIDN'T EVEN SMELL LIKE SMOKE."
-JOYCE MEYER

New International Version

Psalms 27:10

Though my father and mother forsake me,
the Lord will receive me.

DAY 5

PRAY: Abba Father, I thank You that even though my father may forsake me, You will always receive me. Will You please fill up the holes in me that my father has not been able or has chosen not to fill? Will You be the father that I never had? Will You show the men in our world how to be good, strong, loving fathers to their children, even though their fathers never taught them how? Because You are my true Father, I turn to You to be a tangible father to me and to all of the hurting children in the world. Come, dear Father and fill me up. Thank You for receiving me as Your precious child. Amen and Amen.

REFLECT: It's amazing how God acknowledges that some fathers and mothers do forsake their children. That means that it's not that rare, and that if we're from families with broken fathers, the Lord knows it, loves us, and even tells us not to worry because He will receive us. This is important to encourage others, believe it ourselves, and pray for the broken fathers in our world. This might be why God has chosen to be our Father – because He knows how many fathers can't live up to the task and so He is our loving Father! What a revelation!

DAY 5

ACT: Reach out to one person you know who has no father, or is angry, hurt, or bitter because of a bad father, and tell them the good news that God knows, and that He receives them with open arms! He knows that many broken fathers and mothers forsake their children. And yet, He tells us in Psalm 27 that He is our loving father, and He is there for ALL of us. Encourage your friend, co-worker, or family member today with this loving promise of God.

TODAY'S SONG: *Daddy Please Hurry Home* at <https://www.fathersongs.com>



DAY 6

THE GREAT LOVE OF THE FATHER

"A FATHER ACTS ON BEHALF OF HIS CHILDREN BY WORKING, PROVIDING, INTERVENING, STRUGGLING, AND SUFFERING FOR THEM. IN SO DOING, HE REALLY STANDS IN THEIR PLACE. HE IS NOT AN ISOLATED INDIVIDUAL, BUT INCORPORATES THE SELVES OF SEVERAL PEOPLE IN HIS OWN SELF."

-DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

New International Version

1 John 3:1

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

DAY 6

PRAY: God my Father, I know You have lavished great love on me, so please let me love others the same way. Many people live dark lives because they have never known You. Give me patience and understanding for the people in Hollywood who don't live according to Your laws, because they don't know You and many of them never had loving fathers. I want to pray for them with the same love that You have shown me, in Jesus' name. Amen.

REFLECT: Have you thought about WHY people are sinful, nasty, abusive, or angry? Most often it's a spiritual issue. Because they don't know God and His ways, some people in Hollywood don't act or talk the way we want them to because of their broken backgrounds. That's why Christians need to pray for the Hollywood decision-makers and celebrities. Many come from broken homes and don't know the love of their earthly or Heavenly Father!

DAY 6

ACT: Would you join us at www.hollywoodprayernetwork.org and pray for the people in Hollywood who have bad, abusive, or distant fathers, for this hinders them from embracing their Heavenly Father. Pray for the Holy Spirit to grab their hearts with His unconditional love, and set them free. Then even their programs will also reflect His heart, His perspective, and His values. You can change the world by praying for Hollywood professionals to be healed from the hurts of their earthly fathers and for their acceptance of their Heavenly Father.

TODAY'S SONG: *Tell Them That You Love Them Every Day* at <https://www.fathersongs.com>

DAY 7

THE PRODIGAL

"THERE IS NOTHING THAT MOVES A
LOVING FATHER'S SOUL QUITE LIKE HIS
CHILD'S CRY."

-JONI EARECKSON TADA

New International Version

Luke 15:20 & 31

So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him... 'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.'

DAY 7

PRAY: Father, this story of the prodigal son is so powerful and shows unconditional love from the father as he tells his wayward son, “you are always with me and everything I have is yours,” And that’s just how You feel about me! Thank You that You ran to me and embraced me before I ever loved You. And now I see that my earthly father is only a mere reflection of Your unconditional love, even when I don’t deserve it. In Jesus name. Amen.

REFLECT: This story is one of the best analogies of God’s love in the Bible. The prodigal son is selfish, arrogant, foolish, and greedy – just like us. And his father is forgiving, loving, affectionate and embracing – just like God. It’s humbling to see that the father is not judgmental or trying to get justice. He doesn’t even mention the wrongs done to him. He is just overjoyed to see his son. How can we be that way to other people? We have to learn from our Father and choose to act and speak more like Him. How would you start to do that?

DAY 7

ACT: Are you a prodigal son or daughter, father or mother? As a parent, do you need to ask forgiveness for any of your actions or words. As the child, do you need to forgive your father for whatever he's done? This is the moment to trust in God and His love. Choose one relationship that needs to change and take action. Forgive your prodigal self, child or parent. Then commit to write a note, make a call, or plan a meeting to offer unconditional love to your child or your parent. Your most intimate relationships will change because God is with you!

TODAY'S SONGS: *The Prodigal Dad & Did I Ever Please Him* at <https://www.fathersongs.com>