

Text: 1<sup>st</sup> Article of the Creed and Meaning

## Outline

1. Earthly Fathers love you
2. Your Heavenly Father loves you, provides for all you need.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation is found on page three hundred twenty-two of our hymnals, the First article of the Creed. “I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. What does this mean? I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve, and obey Him. This is most certainly true.”

Boys and girls, I pray that you are doing well today. How do you know that your dads love you? They tend and care for you! When you are hurt they pick you up, comfort you, and help you feel better. They play games with you. They make sure you have clothing, food, drink, that you learn what you need to learn to be good members of society. Does your heavenly Father love you? How do earthly fathers show us the great love of our Heavenly Father? Ponder that question as you hear the rest of the sermon. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

### **1. Earthly Fathers love you**

How many of you still have, or had, a father who loves you? I am sure that many of us do or did. How did you know that your father loved you?

Many fathers do not always get emotional and love-dovely. Yet they still love their children. Father's show their love by their actions. Earthly fathers do things like work hard or long hours that way their children can have everything that they need. A house to live in, clothing to wear, food to eat and drink so that they do not starve. Father's give of themselves so that their children can have everything they desire for their well-being.

Alas, living in a sin-filled world, not everyone has a good father. There are some fathers who work too hard and do not make time for their children. They neglect their children by trying too hard to provide for them earthly things rather than memories and experiences. There are some fathers who, no matter how hard they work, cannot provide for what their children need to flourish in life. There are even some fathers who abuse, hurt, and even kill their own children. Earthly fathers are by no means perfect. They will fail. Yet, even in their failures, they remind us to trust in the one Father who will never fails us.

## **2. Your Heavenly Father loves you, provides for all you need.**

Whose is that? God the Father, the first person of the Holy Trinity. His love for you never ends. He will never abuse you or hurt you. He will always love you and be there for you with an everlasting love. How do I know this? Look at everything that your Heavenly Father has done for you. Look at everything He has given to you. He has created you. He daily gives to you breath and life. He gives you your eyes, ears, and all your members, you reason and all your senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives you everything that you need for this earthly life. He gives you clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all you have. He richly and daily provides you with all that you need to support this body and life. He daily preserves and defends you against all evil and misfortune, averts all sorts of danger and calamity; and that He does all this out of pure love and goodness, without your merit, as a benevolent Father, who cares for you that no evil befall you.

If all of this is not enough, He even provides everything you need for the life to come. He sends you His own beloved Son, Jesus, to bear your sins in His holy flesh. To bear your sins on cross, to bear the full

punishment on your behalf, die a horrible death, that every single one of your sins covered by His dear and precious blood. That you may be His own dear and beloved child and He your heavenly Father.

Does your Heavenly Father love you? Yes, beyond a doubt. As His child, you get to share that wonderous news to those around you. You get to tell others, “Hey, your Father loves you. Your father cares for you and is always there for you no matter what. Just look around you at all the wonderous blessings you have.”

“We ought, therefore, daily to practice this article, impress it upon our mind, and to remember it in all that meets our eyes, and in all good that falls to our lot, and wherever we escape from calamity or danger, that it is God who gives and does all these things, that therein we sense and see His Paternal heart and his transcendent love toward us. Thereby the heart would be warmed and kindled to be thankful, and to employ all such good things to the honor and praise of God. Thus we have most briefly presented the meaning of this article, both as to what we have and receive from God, and what we owe in return, which is a most excellent knowledge, but a far greater treasure. For here we see how the Father has given Himself to us, together with all creatures, and has most richly provided for us in this life, besides that He has overwhelmed us with unspeakable, eternal treasures by His Son and the Holy Spirit, as we shall hear. (Source: <https://bookofconcord.org/large-catechism/apostles-creed/#lc-ii-0023> )

May our heavenly Father be with us as His children, that we may show others the great and wonderous love that He continues to show to us every day of our lives, and daily thank and praise Him for it.

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.