

STUDY NOTES

SUMMER 2019

at New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “The Perfect Father” on 6/16/19 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: ZEPHANIAH 3:14–20

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

The prophet Zephaniah uses the language of children for God's people. By doing so, he describes what our relationship with God should look like. Everything that he describes in this passage about God are ways that God interacts with us as Father. Some people can easily view God as father. However, for others it might be extremely difficult because of the example that they saw in their own earthy father.

- *What kind of relationship did you have with your earthly father? How might that relationship impact your views about God as father?*

THE PERFECT FATHER

Read Zephaniah 3:17 again. The prophet describes how God cares for his children. We could re-state the list like this:

1) God is with you.

There are no qualifications on this. Regardless of what life looks like, God is present with us. He will not abandon us.

2) God will save you from your mess while rejoicing over his relationship with you.

Not only will God rescue us despite our sin, but he will do so while rejoicing over being in a relationship with us. We will never be an inconvenience to our heavenly Father.

3) God wants you to know that everything is going to be okay—as long as you have him.

God wants each of us to feel safe in his arms so that we can find true rest in him.

4) God loudly proclaims how special you are to him.

- *Which one of these traits about God's fatherhood do you need to be reminded about most?*
- *Are there any ways that realizing these traits of the perfect Father changes your view of God? If so, how?*

GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES

In verses 18–20, God's voice steps in. He promises that he will accomplish these character traits listed by describing how he will do them. This plan in verses 18–20 should make us think about Jesus. The Father in heaven came through on his promises by sending Jesus as his image. In John 14:9, Jesus says that if people have seen him, then they've seen the Father.

God the Father is a father that keeps his promises.

- *Why do you think it is so important to recognize that God keeps his promises to his people?*
- *Pray that we all can experience the perfect love of the Father.*