

## **THE FATHER OF ALL**

By the Rev B. David Holm

Lessons: Luke 11:1-10; *Arcana Coelestia* 2535

When we pray to the Lord, we call Him “our Father”, for He is our *heavenly* Father who loves us and takes care of us every minute of the day. The Lord is our Father who lives in heaven. He is the one God who made heaven and earth, the sun, moon and stars. He also made all the beautiful and wonderful things that grow upon the earth, and of course He made all the animals that live on the earth. But what is most important to know and remember is that He created people—all the people who have ever lived and all those who are now living. So we can see that the Lord is really the Father of everything that is living, for He made them all. But especially He is the Father of all human beings. Only the Lord has the power, strength and wisdom needed to do these things. And because only He can do them, we call Him “Divine” to show that He is far different than we are.

The Lord loves everything He has made, and most of all He loves the people He has created. To show how much He loves us, He tenderly takes care of us at all times and gives us all the good things which we receive. And in the Word, which is His Book, He teaches us everything that He wants us to know. When we hear the Word read or read it for ourselves, we learn all about the Lord and what He wants us to do—what kind of life He wants us to live so that we can go to heaven.

The first thing that the Lord wants us to know is that we should love Him. Now why should we love the Lord? We should love Him because of all the good things He does for us—because of all the wonderful gifts He has given us. We should love Him because he loves us and takes care of us. But the most important reason why we should love the Lord is because we can only become good people if we love Him and do what He tells us to do in His Word, living as His faithful and true servants.

How can we show the Lord that we love Him? We can do it only by trying our very best to do what He wants us to do, just as the only way we can show our parents that we love them is by cheerfully doing what they tell us. The Lord wants us to be kind and gentle with our friends and playmates. He wants us to love and help everyone who is good. He wants us to be obedient to our parents and honor them. He wants us to listen carefully to the Word, and to read it and the Heavenly Doctrine for the New Church for ourselves, when we are old enough. And He wants us to go to church and learn about Him and worship and pray to Him.

If we try our best to do all these things that the Lord wants us to do, then we are truly showing that we love Him and know that He is “our Father in the heavens.” And when we do these things all our lives, then we can feel the Lord’s love with us—in our work, in school, in our play, and even when we are asleep. At all times He will be looking after us. And even though we cannot see Him with our natural eyes, still if we think about Him we will feel Him near to us taking care of us with love and mercy; for He is our Lord Jesus Christ, our only God, our merciful Heavenly Father.

*Amen.*