

A WILD & KINGDOM
PUBLISHED WORK

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GodFATHER


That Part Of God Often Overlooked

8 Minutes 42 Seconds.

That's the amount of time you'll invest in reading GodFATHER.

For what it's worth the experience is far better on an iPad or Desktop.

My belief is that the next 8 minutes could re-route your journey with God. See you on the other side.



Jason

THERE IS NO GETTING AROUND IT.

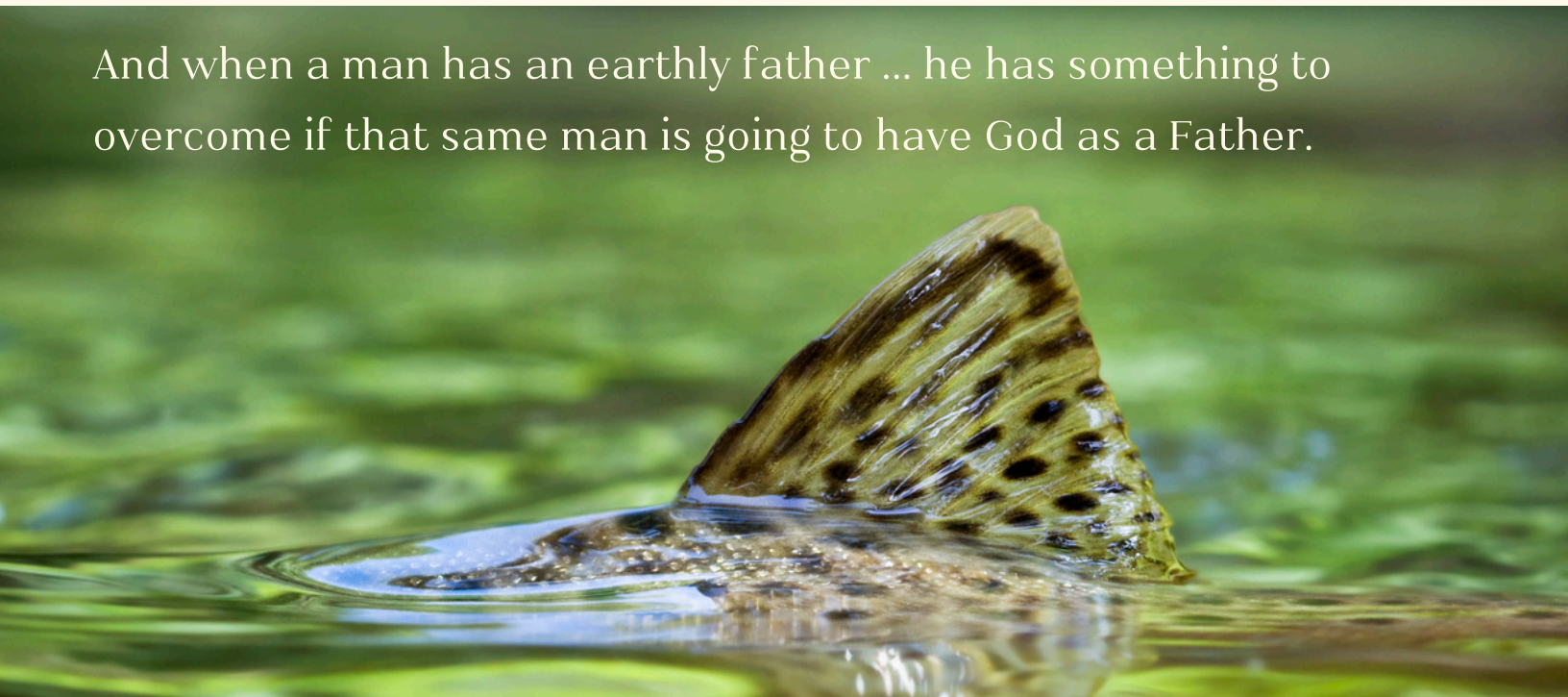
The problem with God being a father is that every man has one on earth, too. Which means that a man has a battle on his hands right out of the gate. And such battles are forever fought on the battlefield of the soul - that place where a man's will, and attitude, and deepest sense of self are formed; and it's also the place God communicates with us.

The father's effect on a son is unavoidable.

A man's earthly father is real. You can see him. While there are men who never knew their father, in most every case, you knew him. His voice could penetrate the loudest crowd. His presence hovers like no other presence a man faces.

Every man has an earthly father and that is something with which every man must reckon.

And when a man has an earthly father ... he has something to overcome if that same man is going to have God as a Father.



Even still, God is a Father.

There's no getting past that fact.

By His own admission and by the proclamation of His own Son, the Scriptures refer to Him as such.

"Our Father, who is in Heaven ..." is how Jesus taught every man to pray.

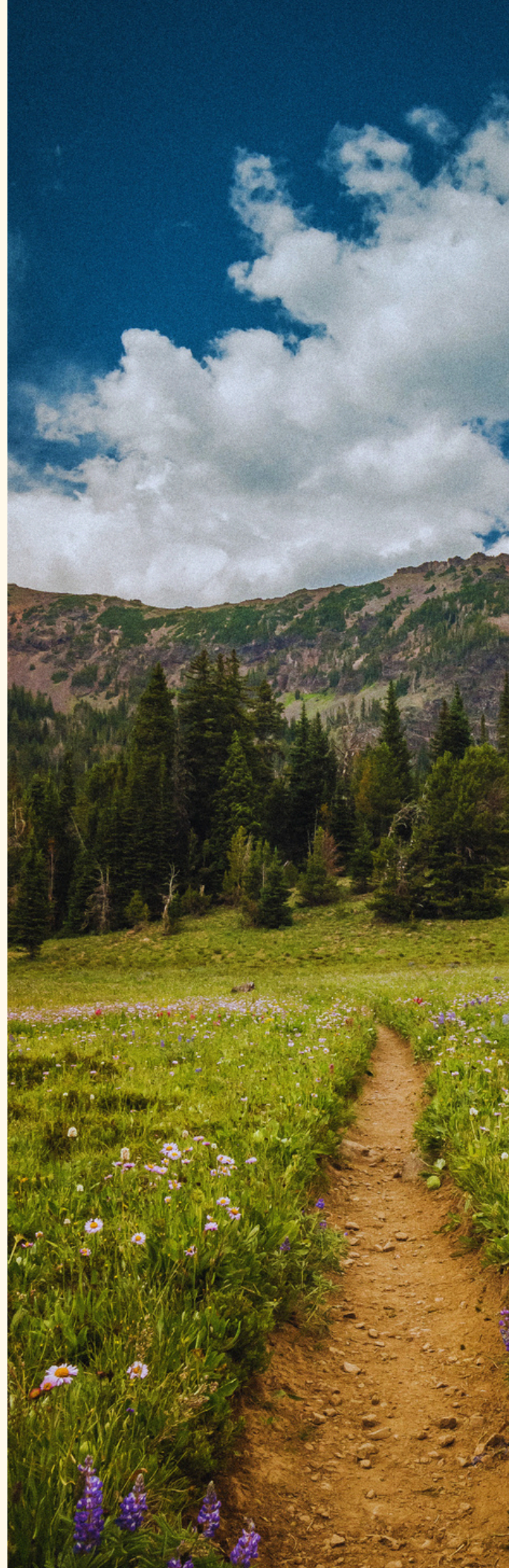
To that end a man must reckon.

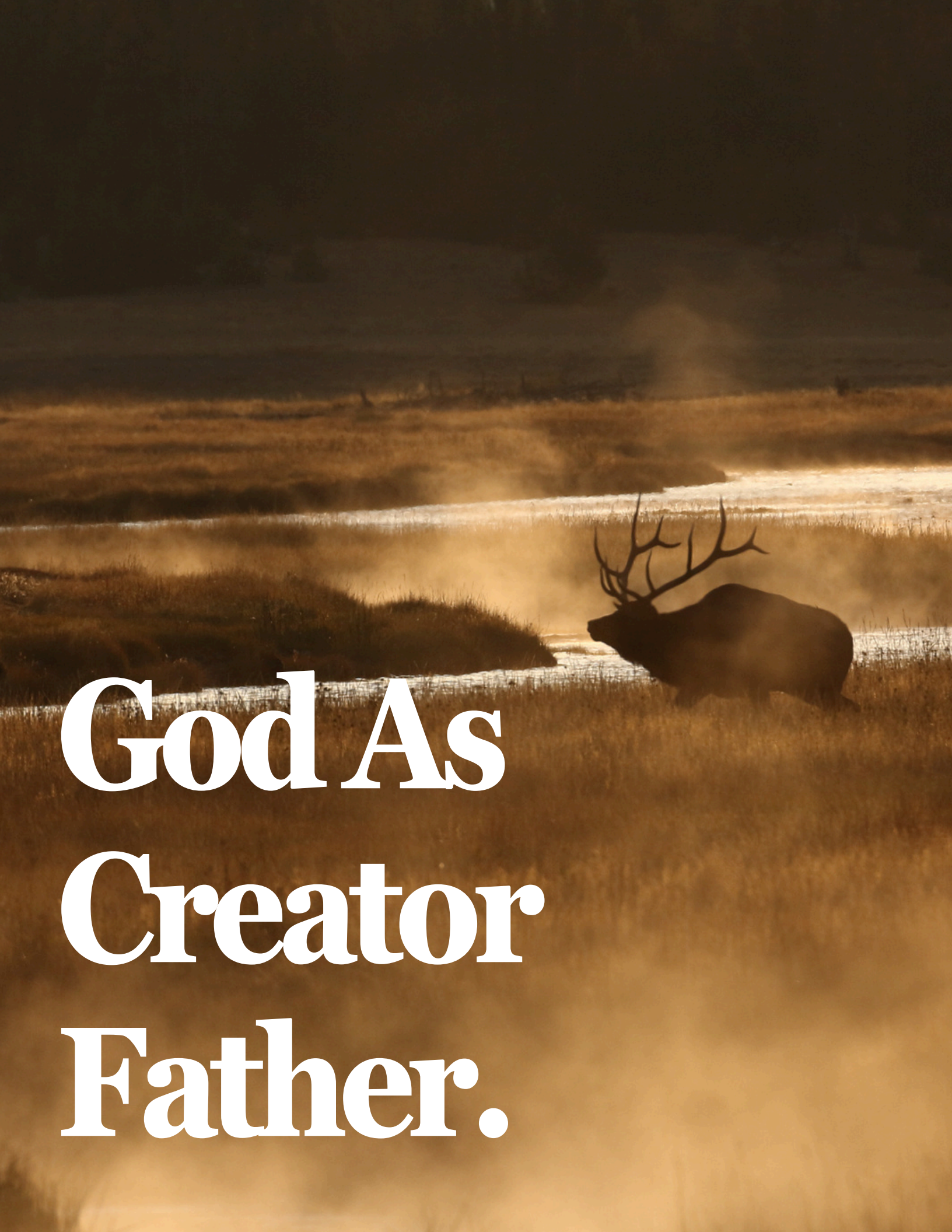
And wrestle.

For the outcome will set the pace for how that man deals with the world around him. All of it.

Let's start with a truth . . .

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God As
Creator
Father.



"In the beginning God created ..." Genesis 1:1

From the very first word, He lets us know He's the originator of life. Nothing exists that He didn't create. Outside of Him life does not, nor cannot, exist.

As Creator, He showed Himself. Literally manifested Himself to the world. If He didn't show Himself, you'd never find Him. Out of Him all things come forth, and that matters. It matters because He is, by His own act of creating, demonstrating His ability to birth life.



**THE HEAVENS
DECLARE THE
GLORY OF GOD...**
PSALM 19:1

In and of itself, creation was God's first missionary. Creation draws a man to a reckoning - maybe the first reckoning - that must be confronted. And that is ... something or someone is behind what a man sees around him.

His glory is revealed, and it shows His power. The power to create, and govern, and sustain life. Life exists because of Him. And it is His desire to create life in His own creation that chose to rebel. Even in our rebellion against the Life Giver, it has yet to stop His offering of life.

The Son said, "The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come that they may have life ... " (John 10:10)



**God As
Good Father.**

There's a big shift in the human story in how God deals with people and it happened when Jesus entered the human race.

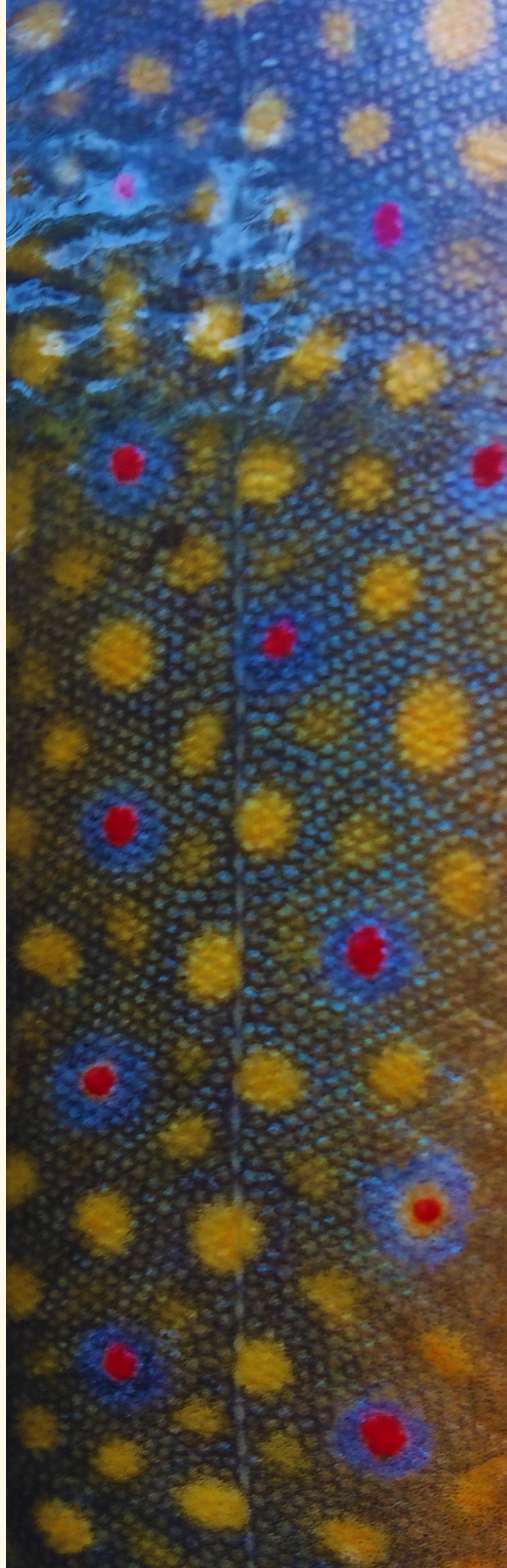
In the Old Testament, God's "father" nature is more often than not "community" in nature. Meaning, God was a "Father" to His people.

"For I am a father to Israel ..." are the kinds of statements you'll often see such as in Jeremiah 31:9.

God dealt with individuals, sure, but His governance was often trended as much communal as it was personal.

All of that changed with the Son.

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“HE WHO HAS SEEN ME HAS SEEN THE FATHER ...” JESUS.

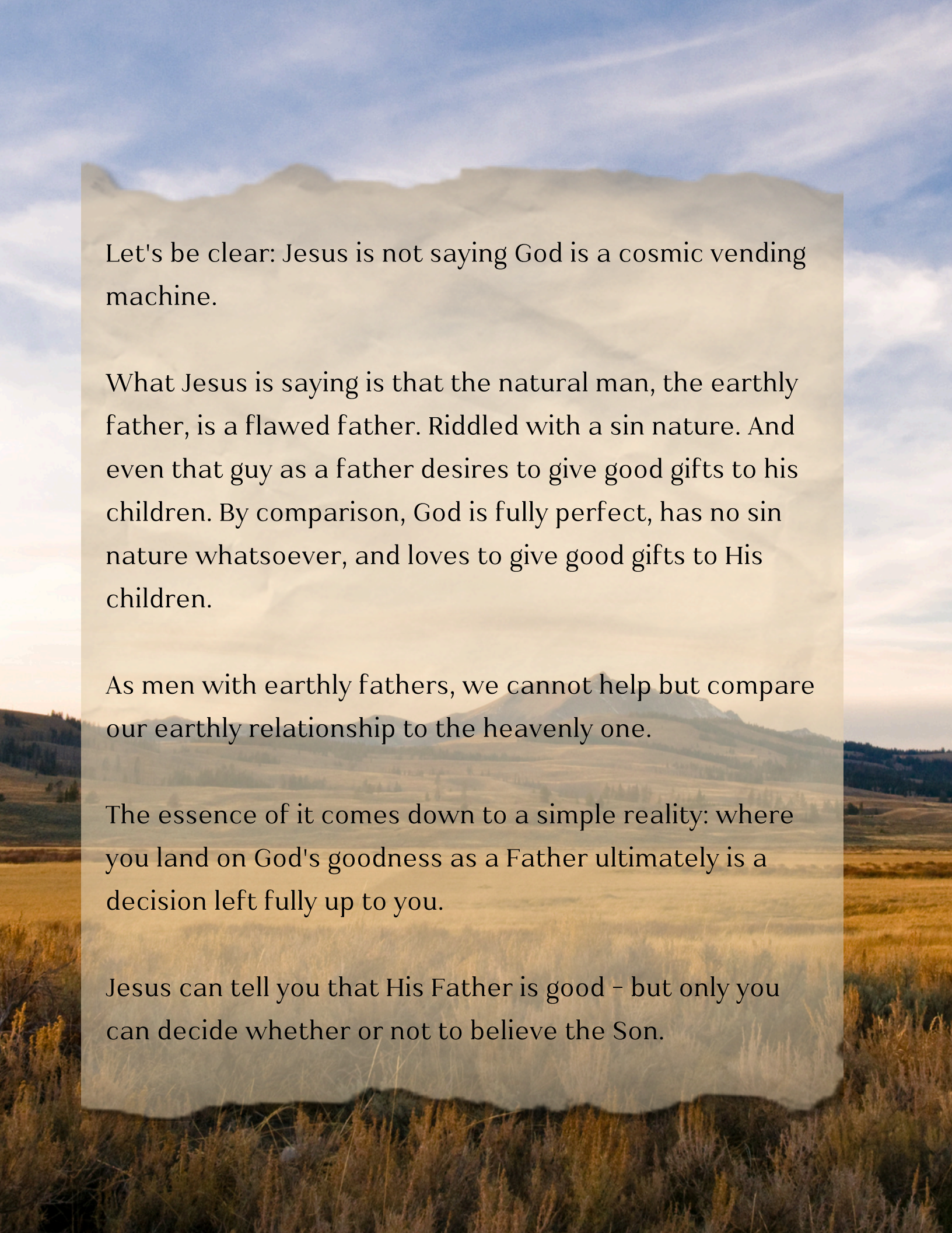
The relationship with humanity that ignited at the coming of Christ was a personal one. God was reconciling all sorts of things, changing even how He dealt with His creation.

So when Jesus is in this discourse of teaching people how to pray, He breaks for a second and riffs about the nature of His Father; and let's face it, He should know!

Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

Matthew 7:9-11





Let's be clear: Jesus is not saying God is a cosmic vending machine.

What Jesus is saying is that the natural man, the earthly father, is a flawed father. Riddled with a sin nature. And even that guy as a father desires to give good gifts to his children. By comparison, God is fully perfect, has no sin nature whatsoever, and loves to give good gifts to His children.

As men with earthly fathers, we cannot help but compare our earthly relationship to the heavenly one.

The essence of it comes down to a simple reality: where you land on God's goodness as a Father ultimately is a decision left fully up to you.

Jesus can tell you that His Father is good - but only you can decide whether or not to believe the Son.

God As
Present
Father.





A FATHER OF THE FATHERLESS ... PSALM 68:5

If you look at research, about 50% of men have a decent relationship with their fathers. True, the idea of "decent" is subjective for sure.

What's more stark in contrast is where American men tend to go when they need guidance.

Pew Research Center conducted a survey and found only 28% of men would turn to their father for support if support were needed.



One of the unique optics afforded to me simply because of my career is that I get to speak at events all across the country. Doing that allows me to share conversations with scores of men, and in doing so, I've found that Pew's research holds true empirically. The average man's relationship with his father is strained.

Even though Pew's research states that around 50% of men have decent relationships with their fathers, my experience doesn't back that up. I've noticed that most men had a father who was rarely, if ever, emotionally there for them.

And to be honest, this wound of an absent father is hard for me to grasp, for my dad did have his flaws and they were evident especially in the early years watching him battle the bottle.

Even in his struggles with whiskey, my dad was present.

My dad was present emotionally. And he was equally as present physically. As normal as that upbringing was for me, I've seen that such a life is most definitely not normal for most men I've known.

In the world of steeples and stained glass standards, most in that tribe would say that his drinking made him a bad dad; it just is not true. He was there for me, but even by his own admission, he once told me, *"People who drink a lot think they are not hurting anyone, but it is not true. You're hurting those you love because you're depriving them of having you."*

My dad's drinking wasn't without effect.



My home was far from perfect.
There were loud arguments
between Mom and Dad.

Then there was the DUI. And the
subsequent night in jail.

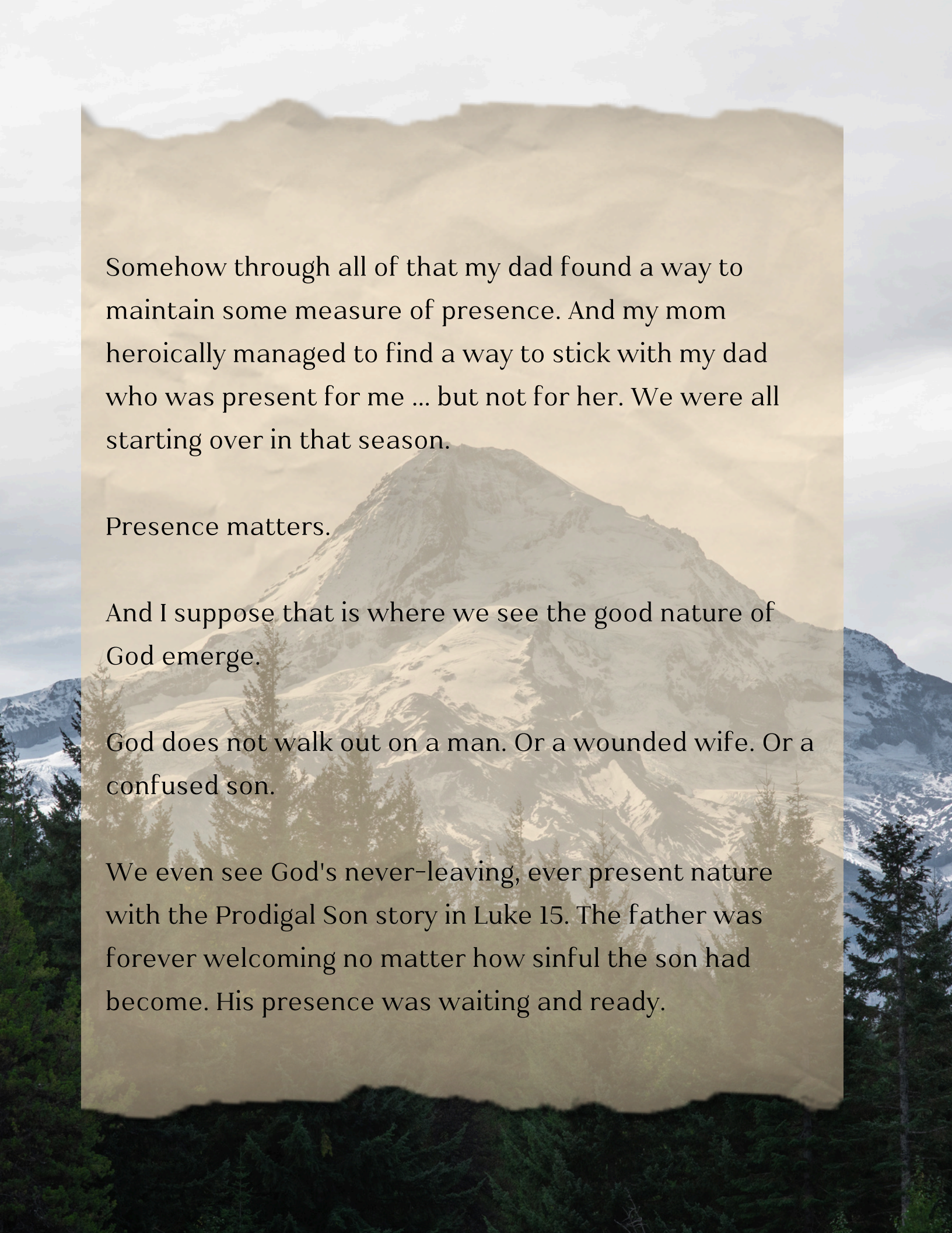
I remember vividly, with blue sky
clarity, the day my mom decided to
leave my dad, because the drinking
had just ruined their relationship
seemingly beyond repair.

And while they signed divorce
papers, Mom actually never filed
them. In the days between the
separation and imminent divorce,
they reconciled.

That's worthy of a book unto itself,
for the grace and mercy of God was
holding on to us even though we
were not holding on to Him.

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Somehow through all of that my dad found a way to maintain some measure of presence. And my mom heroically managed to find a way to stick with my dad who was present for me ... but not for her. We were all starting over in that season.

Presence matters.

And I suppose that is where we see the good nature of God emerge.

God does not walk out on a man. Or a wounded wife. Or a confused son.

We even see God's never-leaving, ever present nature with the Prodigal Son story in Luke 15. The father was forever welcoming no matter how sinful the son had become. His presence was waiting and ready.

THERE'S A BIGGER TRUTH I'M PONDERING.

In Romans 8 we are told about the unique relationship a Christ-follower has with the Spirit of Christ Himself.

“For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God.” Romans 8:15-16

A person who is redeemed by Jesus now has Christ inside. Reach back to the earlier part of the journey; notice that God's father nature is different in the New Testament era than it was in the days before Christ was present on earth.

"Christ in you ..." means that the Father, the Son, the Spirit reside inside.





Regardless of the caliber of presence you experienced from your earthly father, your Heavenly Father, in His good nature, put all of Himself into your marrow. His counsel, and His protection, and His advice are always with you.

Look no further than Jesus who said it best ...

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

John 14:16-18



KNOWING THIS.

Given what the Scriptures say about the father nature of God the only thing left to do brother is accept it.

You are loved by God because He created you.

Whether he was a good man or a bad man or somewhere in between, your earthly father was a flawed and torn man. He was never created to be for you what God intended to be all along.

It's not that you just automatically give your earthly father a pass, for the wounds are real. And yet as real as the father-wound is, the wounds were the only possible outcome, for we live and move and breathe and experience life in a flawed and fallen world.

God is the life giver. He gives life to dead things. He binds up wounds and puts His sovereign salve over them. He restores the broken places.

More than anything, He is incapable of being absent.

"I will not leave you as orphans ..." is a promise.

And the promise He has kept.



This work was written that men might find healing and life in the fatherhood of God.

As outdoorsmen we have many men in our camp that need healing.

Be a digital missionary. Share this work with a few men in your camp.

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A scenic landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground, surrounded by rugged mountains and a cloudy sky. The water reflects the surrounding environment. The foreground is filled with large, smooth rocks of various shades of brown and grey.

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That Part Of God Often Overlooked

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