

A Touch from the Father

The sounds of the delivery room receded to a quiet murmur of post-delivery activities and near-whispered comments between the parents.

The father, gowned with a hair net and masked face, leaned forward, touching their child cuddled to the mother. She looked down on the baby, who was scowling, her eyes tightly shut.

With a sense of awe, the mother stretched forth one finger to gently smooth the child's wrinkled forehead. The need to touch her daughter was urgent, yet she was careful.

Developmental psychologists who have examined the process of childbirth and witnessed thousands of deliveries inform us that the need to gently touch one's newborn is a near-universal impulse crossing all cultural boundaries. Obviously, we were created with an innate need to physically connect with our offspring.

In this sense, we are very much like God.

In *The Creation of Adam*, one of Michelangelo's famous frescoes that decorate the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, he portrays the hand of Adam outstretched with a finger pointed. Opposite to it, you see the hand of God in a similar pose, reaching toward man. The two fingertips are nearly touching.



No image more clearly reveals the Father's heart. He is ever reaching out His hand to touch, with gentleness and love, those created in His own image.

Painted in 1511 to 1512, the fresco illustrates the creation narrative from the *Book of Genesis* in which God breathes life into Adam, the first man.

Mothers and fathers and God share a common bond then, do they not? They possess a deep reverence for the life that they – the parents and God – have brought into the world.

Both yearn to touch those made in their image.

And no doubt, each of us can give testimony how God has recently reached out to touch us – in either a moment of pain or an instant of joy.

In Your steadfast love give me life (Psalm 119:88 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter