

A Father's Love

Father's Day Sermon - June 16, 2019

We are together, remembering our fathers. May God bless them for all those gracious things they have done for us. Thank God, there were always great fathers around us who lived their lives as role models, and they were heroes, fathers who were gladly imitated by their children.

I remember my father as a manly man who was able to sacrifice everything for his children. Even in those times when we had financial shortness, he never put the burden on us. He gave up his comfort and kept us financially happy in the best way he could. He supported me in every decision in my life and always said that whatever my decisions, he would support them. I will never forget that, when I went to university, he bought me a very expensive gift to take with me. I have been thinking since then: How was he able to buy that for me in those financially difficult years? Also, he always made jokes and made people laugh.

I am sure that we all also have negative memories of them. This is the day when we have to forgive and forget.

With those fathers who are here today, I would like to share a few ideas about: how we can make our children's lives happier and more complete and how we can pass on faith to our children. Through faith, solid spiritual values will make them well grounded in this world and will sustain them in their challenges.

As a parent and a minister, I noticed that, these days, even those children who grew up attending the church with their parents, rarely or never come back to continue to grow in spiritual values. I was wondering: Why? To find the right answer, like always, I went back to the Bible and analyzed a few stories, which can help us, the fathers, today in our parenting.

King David had a son, called Absalom. I am sure David raised his son with love and compassion. But as Absalom became an adult, he tried to take the throne away from his father, David. Why?

Next story: There was a high priest, called Eli, who had two sons, Hophni and Phineas. These two sons were horribly immoral and unbelievers. Why were they that way?

Another story: Job was a great example as a father. God blessed him with ten children. Job every day prayed and offered sacrifices for his grown children because he was concerned about the possibility of sin taking over in their lives. On Sabbath day, Job ordered them to get themselves ready to present themselves before the Lord. He was a man of authority, position, and wealth in their community. Job, a man of wisdom, was well known and well respected.

He loved his family but did not lose any of his authority with his children. He still told them and expected from them to do certain things and to worship the Lord. Daily, he stood in the presence of God on behalf of his children, offering sacrifices. He is a great example for all fathers of every generation.

Job, as a caring father, cared for his children even after they were grown. He knew that the devil never sleeps, and his children could get in trouble, could be involved in bad things or peers, and they could disappoint him and God. As a good father, he wanted them to stay right with God. Job was concerned that his children might become so involved with their daily responsibilities that they might begin to neglect God. He knew how quickly and quietly friends or temptations could draw them away from God and, for this, he encouraged them to examine their hearts before God frequently.

Another significant thing. He knew that the old sin, our human nature, can separate us from God. Job knew that each of his children was accountable before God. For this, he offered a sacrifice for each of his children, whether they had sinned or not.

Dear fathers, God expects us to raise our children in the ways of the Lord and to lead them to our Lord Jesus Christ in order to find Him, to create a personal relationship with our Saviour, and to be with us in heaven. We all should be concerned if our children are in Christ and if this way they would go to heaven. We all should be concerned to pray for our children, to bring them up in the ways of the Lord and never cease to be concerned for them even when they are grown.

Since my children are already grown up and they are adults, and they are on their own, my fear is that under the worlds pressure, they may depart from our Lord and they might lose their faith, and we will not reach Heaven. For this, my constant prayer is to my Lord to keep them safe, to draw them closer and closer to Him, to pour out His Holy Spirit into their lives and to lead them until they are in heaven, where we would love to be together.

My father would do everything for me to make me happy and successful. He was very proud of me. He was a builder, building homes. Some of my best memories with him were those days when he took me with him to work; I would sit at the top of 3 storey homes and I enjoyed the view from there. As he was working, he sang folks songs, and joked with other workers. No matter how tired he was, every evening before he went to bed, he knelt next to their bed and at least for 5 minutes he prayed. On Sundays, the whole family went to the church.

Dear fathers, one of the best things we can do to our children is to show them how much we love them and how much we love God. We have to show them our love with words and actions. Moreover, we have to tell them that Jesus Christ loves much more than we can love them. To give them an excellent example as Christians, our prayers are more important than anything else on this earth. We should not rest until every one of our children knows the Lord Jesus as Saviour.

We have to teach them to walk rightly with God by truly trusting Him. “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths”. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Trust in the LORD: Solomon advised his son to live a life of trust in God. Solomon had found that God was worthy to be trusted. It is our nature to put our trust in something or someone, even if it is ourselves. Solomon told us to consciously put our trust in the LORD with all our heart. We should endeavour to give God all our conscious trust.

I found this story on the internet. “A German botanist, who was traveling in Turkey, saw a rare flower hanging from an inaccessible precipice. He offered ten – let’s say dollars -, then twenty, then finally one hundred dollars, to a tempted but hesitating boy, if he would be slung over with a rope, which he already had in his hand, and cut the plant. The boy, struck with a new thought, said, “Wait a moment, and I will go for my father to come and hold the rope; then I will willingly go down and get it.” <https://ministry127.com/resources/illustration/the-believer-is-safe-in-god-s-hand>

Dear fathers, I am encouraging you that, in all our ways, we should acknowledge God. Giving a great example, we should tell our children that we had a successful week and we prospered because God was helping us with energy, strength, and wisdom. Dear fathers, tell your children: “In all your ways, acknowledge Him.” Trusting God with all our hearts means to honour and acknowledge Him in all that we do.

Please encourage your children to invite God into their everyday lives, to be even more in His holy presence, and light of His countenance, and He will direct their paths. This is the highest principle we can give to our children. May the Lord bless us to fulfill our calls as fathers. Amen