The Importance of A Godly Father
(2008 Revision)
EPHESIANS 6:1-4

Read Scripture Text

PRAYER

Introduction

illustration: The late Johnny Carson used to tell the story about the day his son came to him with a piece of paper which read:

“To the man who has inspired me with his fatherly wisdom.”

With tear-filled eyes, Johnny said, “Son, I didn’t know you felt that way about me.”

His son said, “I don’t! I need you to fax this to Bill Cosby.”

Well today is FATHER’S DAY, that one day of the year we GIVE HONOR to and SHOW OUR APPRECIATION for our fathers.

Ironically, today is also the ONE DAY when more COLLECT TELEPHONE CALLS are made than on any other day of the year.
A lot of times on Father’s Day we hear sermons that remind all us dads of our many shortcomings and failures as fathers. Well men, my message today will not be one of those sermons.

Instead, I want to preach a message to ENCOURAGE you and REMIND YOU OF YOUR IMPORTANCE AS A GODLY FATHER.

Let’s briefly consider these three points………

I. The Importance of A Father’s Touch
II. The Importance of A Father’s Time
III. The Importance of A Father’s Training

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First of all, let’s consider………..

I. The Importance of A Father’s Touch

Turn with me in your Bibles to GENESIS chapter 27. Before we read our text, let me give you some background.

As you may remember, ISAAC and REBEKAH had twin boys named, ESAU and JACOB.

Although these boys were twins, they weren’t anything alike.

ESAU was a tough, rugged outdoorsman who loved to hunt and fish. He was also very hairy!

JACOB on the other hand was a smooth-skinned homebody who would rather spend time in the kitchen with his mom than hunting and fishing with his brother.
Well as we come to Genesis chapter 27, ISAAC, the twin’s father is now old and blind. Knowing he is in the twilight years of his life, ISAAC decides it is time to PASS on his blessing to his oldest son, ESAU.

But one day while ESAU was out hunting, REBEKAH, his own mother, concocted this scheme to trick her frail, blind husband into giving the BLESSING to JACOB rather than ESAU.

In order to pull off this scheme, Rebekah had Jacob put on some of Esau’s clothes so he would smell like Esau. And she covered his hands and neck with some hairy goat hide to make him feel rugged and hairy like ESAU.

Now let’s pick up the scripture record in VERSE 18.

**READ GENESIS 27:18-29**

1. In these verses we see the vital importance of a **FATHER’S TOUCH.**

   Every time a family blessing was bestowed in the ancient Hebrew culture, it involved a meaningful touch from the father.........either the laying on of hands........or........a kiss on both cheeks........or a loving embrace.

   It was through this meaningful touch the Hebrew father conveyed HIS LOVE........HIS ACCEPTANCE......and HIS APPROVAL of his children.
2. Although our American culture is quite different from that of the ancient Hebrews, as Christian fathers, we must understand the vital importance of MEANINGFUL, APPROPRIATE TOUCH in the lives of our children.

    By meaningful, appropriate touch, I mean the kind of touch that builds a sense of security and confidence in our children. The kind of touch that builds the child’s sense of self-worth…….acceptance…..and approval.

3. Tragically we are living in a day and time here in America where many fathers, including a number who claim to be Christians, INAPPROPRIATELY touch their children in a way that reduces them to an object of PHYSICAL ABUSE or DEMENTED SEXUAL PERVERSION, like we have seen recently in that religious compound in TEXAS.

    May God have mercy upon the soul of any father who touches his children in such a manner.

4. But the meaningful, appropriate touch of a father is important to a child,

    …..Like a PAT ON THE BACK when they have achieved success.

    …..Or a BIG HUG to let them know how much they are loved.

    …..Or a GENTLE PAT on the top of the head to let them know its OK they made a mistake and encourage them to try again.

    ….. Or HOLDING THEIR HAND AND PRAYING for them when they are sick.

    …..And yes, GIVING THEM LOVING DISCIPLINE when they’ve done wrong and need correction.
5. I’m not sure I fully understand THE IMPORTANCE OF A FATHER’S TOUCH until my dad passed away in 1992.

As I looked at my dad’s lifeless body lying there in his casket, I found myself staring at his hands.

Those hands that had shown me how to throw a curve ball and how to shoot a basketball. Those hands that had shown me how to grip a golf club and how to cast a rod and reel. Those hands that had shown me how to drive a nail……how to measure a board…..and how to change the oil on my vehicle.

As I reached out and traced my dad’s hands with my finger, my mind wandered back to that hot August day in 1964 when dad held me in his hands to baptize me into Jesus Christ.

And I thought about that Sunday in January of 1978 when my dad placed his hand on top of my head along with the elders of the New Brunswick Church of Christ in Lebanon, Indiana to ORDAIN ME AS A PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL.

And a smile came to my face as I thought about the times dad had popped me on the BEE-HIND with that big right hand of his when I got out of line.

6. Oh father’s, may we never forget THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR MEANINGFUL, APPROPRIATE TOUCH in the lives of our children. The kind of loving touch that blesses our sons and daughters and gives them a sense of worth, approval and acceptance.

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Secondly, let’s consider………….

II. The Importance of A Father’s Time

1. Remember those familiar words in ECCLESIASTES 3:1

“To everything there is a season. A time for every purpose under heaven.”

2. Dad, do you know one of the greatest gifts you can give your children is THE GIFT OF YOUR TIME? Your PRESENCE in their lives is far more important than ANY PRESENT you could ever buy them in a store.

MATERIAL THINGS can never substitute for our personal involvement as fathers in the life of our children.

3. Do you know studies have shown that school children whose fathers are actively involved in their lives excel academically, athletically and socially compared to students whose dads spend little or no time at all with them?

4. After the birth of Jesus the scriptures don’t give us much information on the life of Joseph, Jesus’ earthly father.

But is believed that during those “silent years” in Jesus’ life, he spent a lot of time with his father in his father’s carpenter’s shop. And as the scriptures say, “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.”

No doubt that TIME Jesus spent with his earthly father, who was a man of great faith, played a huge role in Jesus’ early development.
ILLUSTRATION

Several years ago, country singer JAMEY JOHNSON, recorded a song entitled, “The Dollar.”

The song tells the story of a young boy that learns the reason his dad spends so much time away from home is because “they pay him for his time” as the boy’s mother explains it.

So the boy gathers some change and asks his mother whether or not it will be enough TO BUY SOME OF HIS DAD’S TIME.

“Is is enough to take me fishing or throw a football in the street? Is it enough to take me camping in a tent down by the creek? If I’m a little short then how much more does daddy need TO SPEND SOME TIME WITH ME?”

(BOY DADS, IF THAT DOESN’T TUG AT YOUR HEART-STRINGS, YOU NEED TO CHECK YOUR PULSE)

5. Fathers, may we never forget that one of the most precious gifts we can give our children, no matter what age they may be, is the gift of our time.

Well we’ve looked at The Importance of A Father’s Touch and The Importance of A Father’s Time, finally let’s consider……..

III. The Importance of A Father’s Training

1. Let’s go back to our original text in EPHESIANS chapter 6.

READ VERSE 4
2. When it comes to the spiritual training of sons and daughters in a Christian home, GOD has placed that primary responsibility squarely upon the shoulders of us Christian fathers.

3. Sadly, this is one of the most neglected and least practiced teachings in the Christian home today.

   We have tried to pass the responsibility of spiritual training off on the Christian mothers.......or a youth minister.......or our children’s Sunday School teachers.

   But fathers, this does not absolve you and me of our God-given responsibility.

4. If you don’t think the father’s role in the spiritual training of his children is important, consider these statistics:

   Studies have shown that when children grow up in a christian home where the MOTHER is the primary spiritual influence upon their lives, only 15% of them remain faithful to the Lord and the Church when they became adults.

   But that number increased to 75% in homes where the FATHER was the primary spiritual influence on the Children’s lives.

   DADS ARE YOU TRAINING YOUR CHILDREN IN THE FEAR AND ADMONITION OF THE LORD?

5. To “train” means to “teach by example.”

   The most important training we will ever give our children and our grandchildren is to “MODEL” for them what it means to live for JESUS CHRIST.

6. Dad’s take advantage of those “TEACHING MOMENTS” in your child’s life.
ILLUSTRATION----I will never forget a very godly black man I worked with at National Spinning Company many years ago named, Bryant Coward.

Bryant told me about the day one of his sons had gotten into some trouble at school. When he got home Bryant took his son to the bedroom to exercise his normal discipline of two lashes with a belt.

Bryant said to his son, “Shawn, what you did at school today was very wrong and the Bible tells me if I truly love you as my son, I must discipline you.”

“But Shawn, I want to teach you a valuable lesson about God’s grace.” With that, Bryant took off his shirt…hand Shawn the belt……and Bryant knelt beside Shawn’s bed and said, “I’m going to take your two lashes for you.”

(PAUSE)

Bryant said, Shawn broke down and cried and said, “Daddy, I can’t whip you. I’m the one who did wrong.” Bryant said, “I know you did wrong, but I love you so much I’m willing to take your punishment for you.”

Bryant said, “Since that day I’ve never had a lick of trouble out of Shawn.”

FATHER’S, THAT’S A TEACHING MOMENT!

7. Dads, simply take advantage of “every day situations” to teach your children about GOD.

BY YOUR OWN EXAMPLE, train your children how to make wise choices..........how to pray about tough decisions........

BY YOUR OWN EXAMPLE, train your children how to treat others with dignity and respect.......and to be caring and compassionate toward those who are hurting or in need.

BY YOUR OWN EXAMPLE, train your children to value spiritual things more than material things.

BY YOUR OWN EXAMPLE, train your children to tell the truth and to be honest in business dealings.
8. Dads, may we never forget THE IMPORTANCE OF A FATHER’S TRAINING!

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Conclusion

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, a 19th century POLITICAN and DIPLOMAT, kept a daily diary. One day ADAMS wrote in his diary………..

“Went fishing with my son today-----a day wasted.”

His son, BROOK ADAMS, also kept a diary, which is still in existence today. Ironically on that same day, Brook Adams wrote in his diary………..

“Went fishing with my dad today-----the most wonderful day of my life.”

Oh fathers, may we never underestimate the POWER OF OUR INFLUENCE upon our Children. Something as simple as “a day of fishing” may make a lasting impression upon our children or grandchildren.

TODAY WE HAVE BEEN REMINDED OF THE IMPORTANCE OF A GODLY FATHER.

May we never forget THE IMPORTANCE OF A FATHER’S TOUCH. Those meaningful, appropriate touches that BLESS our children and grandchildren and instills within them a sense of self-worth……acceptance……and approval.

May we never forget THE IMPORTANCE OF A FATHER’S TIME. Long after you and I are gone, the things our kids will remember most about us is not the PRESENTS we bought them in a store, but the TIMES we spent with them making memories.
And may we never forget THE IMPORTANCE OF A FATHER’S TRAINING. Fathers, by our own example, may we always model for our children and grandchildren what it truly means to live for JESUS CHRIST. And may we always take advantage of those special “TEACHING MOMENTS” in their lives.

Men, as Christian fathers and Christian grandfathers we have a high and noble calling from God! May we live up to our calling! May we always champion the cause of Jesus Christ in the lives of our children and grandchildren!

THANK GOD FOR GODLY FATHERS!