

The Legacy of Dad

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- [0 : 0 0] It's good to be a man, isn't it guys? And you ladies are probably thinking, why in the world is that? Well, for one, phone conversations only last about 30 seconds for a guy.
- And a five-day vacation only requires one suitcase. And when clicking through the channels, you don't have to stall at every shot of someone crying.
- And guys in hockey masks don't attack you unless you're playing hockey. Michael Bolton doesn't live in your universe.
- And some of your guys are going, who in the world is Michael Bolton? Point made. Car mechanics tell you the truth. Gray hair and wrinkles just add character to men.
- And if another guy shows up at the party wearing the same outfit, you might just become lifelong buddies. And the occasional well-rendered belch is practically expected.
- [1 : 0 1] So, great, great to be a guy. That's why. Do you know how many, you know which day of the year when the most phone calls are made? Mother's Day.
- Do you know what happens on Father's Day? The most collect calls are made. But that's okay. Dads need to be needed, so it's all good.
- And I remember growing up, most of all of the Father's Day messages were full of all of what a father should be doing right, rather than what he was doing right.
- And it was more of a roast for dads rather than a day to honor dads. So, dads, this one is for you.
- Fathers hold a special place in society, a much higher place than they're given credit for even today. As a matter of fact, how many of you have seen commercials and some of the situational comedy shows where they actually make dads look intelligent?
- [2 : 1 5] Not many of them. Most of them, they make the dad, the family incompetent where he can't take care of the kids alone, can't clean the bathroom without mom's help or without specific instructions.
- And so dads don't get the recognition in society that they really, really should. And as American society, I believe, for the most part, looks upon dads as an expendable part of society.
- And almost to the point where many of the women's movements say, well, you know, we don't need a man. Don't need a man in the home to survive. Don't need a man to make it.
- I have a college degree, and I'm making a lot of money, and I don't need a man to support me. And therein lies, I believe, the problem that we see in America.
- Children are being raised in a fatherless home. As a matter of fact, I don't know how accurate this statistic is, but the latest statistic that I could find was as many as 39.6% of children are growing up today in a fatherless home.
- [3 : 3 3] Nearly 40% are going to bed every night without a dad in the home. And I believe fathers need to be reinstated to the level of importance that God intended for them.

As a matter of fact, I think I see strong evidence in America today that points to the reason why we have such a decline in morality and spiritual integrity, and that it's at such an all-time low is because of the declining value placed on the role of fathers in today's society.

And when dad is undervalued, I believe that we're going to see the relationship between us and our father in heaven is going to be undervalued as well.

And so today, my goal is not to remind dads everything that we're doing wrong, but rather encourage us to understand what the, excuse me, remind us of our responsibilities, but also to encourage and remind us of dad's importance and father's importance in the home.

And fathers play an extremely important and vital role in our families and in our nation today. And in Colossians chapter number 3, the Bible introduces a hierarchical model of authority in the family.

[5 : 02] If you want to turn there this morning to Colossians chapter 3, verses 18 through 20, the Bible says, So we see the hierarchy in the home.

The father is the head of the home, and children are to obey their parents. So in terms of authority, the father is deemed by God as the head of the home.

And in 1 Timothy chapter 3, verse 12, he's urged to manage his home and manage his children well. The father is the one that is supposed to take up the role as the leader.

And the spiritual guide and the authority within the home as he leads under the authority of his heavenly father in heaven.

So the father is charged with the responsibility of looking after the best interest of his family financially, spiritually, as well as socially.

[6 : 26] But the thing is, when a man becomes a father, he isn't given a guidebook. I mean, there's no guidebook that exists out there that says, Well, you need to do this, and you need to do that.

And when the kids say this, you need to do that. And when this happens, and when they become a teenager, you need to. The guidebook doesn't exist. And so the main ways that a dad sees how to manage his household is something that he picks up from a few very, very important sources.

And the first is the way his own father treated him, how he grew up as a child, how he interacted with his dad. And second, from what he learns with his relationship with God and from the Word of God.

Those are the two main sources that a dad sees and takes in the source of how in the world he's supposed to manage this relationship.

And since almost 40% of children are growing up in a home without a dad, we know that there has to be another source or example for developing dads.

[7 : 42] And that's the example we have in Jesus Christ. When we look at Jesus and what he did for us and in the metaphors that are used and in the analogies that are used about Jesus Christ, he is a perfect example for dads and for fathers in the home.

The best dads take their example from Jesus Christ and pass that legacy on to their children. And then, in turn, their children can take their example not only from their fathers but from Jesus Christ.

And on and on and on, the families are blessed because of that. And the legacy of Christ's love, I believe, is the greatest gift that a father can give.

And to be like Jesus in the way that we manage our households and to be like Jesus in the way that we provide for our families and to be like Jesus in the expression of love that a father gives to his family, I believe, is the greatest gift and the greatest legacy that a father can leave.

Now, there are certain privileges that come along with being a father. And the first thing that I believe that we see is dads have the privilege of providing for their family.

[9 : 03] And the way men are wired, it really is a privilege because we look at providing for our families well and being able to put food on the table and be able to provide a nice home and a place to be safe when we come out from the world and come in and then go back out into the world and come in.

There has to be that safe place. And so it's dads that have that privilege to do that. When Peter asked the Lord how they were going to pay for their taxes, Jesus told them, Go and find a fish, go fishing, and you'll find a fish.

There'll be a coin in his mouth, and you take that and you use that to pay their taxes. Now, what was that? That was a perfect example of a father's provision for his children. They said, How are we going to do this?

Well, don't worry. I'll provide for you. And he provided for his disciples. And Jesus was teaching the disciples how the father provides for his own.

He fed the multitude with just a few loaves of bread and a couple of fish. He provided the example of how a father provides for all the needs of his family.

[10 : 21] And then he commands dads to do the same. Let's take a look at 1 Timothy. 1 Timothy chapter 5 and verse number 8.

He says, But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for what? For those of his own household, he says he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

He's worse than an infidel. And we ought to be providing for our families. And in the same way, dads have the awesome responsibility of providing for their family.

And our egos are wrapped up in our employment. Is it not? I mean, think about it. What happens? We're ashamed if we're unemployed. We're ashamed if we can't take care of our families.

That is just simply the way God wired us. Because if we can't provide for our families, we feel less than a man. And we feel that we've let our family down.

[11 : 23] And so our egos are wrapped up in our employment and our ability to provide. And the brunt of the responsibility to provide the welfare of a family unit, I believe, lies squarely on the shoulders of men.

And dads are always striving to maintain that balance of providing for their needs of their family and providing abundantly for the needs of their family, but also providing quality time with their family and with their children.

And it's that tightrope that you constantly are walking. You know, need to work overtime to take care of these extra bills. But yet if I work overtime, I can't be with the kids.

I can't be the dad in the home. I can't be there for my wife, can't be there for our children and be there in their formative years. And so there's that tightrope that you walk, providing for your family, but providing that quality time with the little ones.

And I believe Scripture teaches us that we are to have that balance in our lives. Provide for their livelihood, provide for their needs, but also provide that spiritual guidance.

[12 : 35] And that being there. And because dads, because men are hardwired with the desire to provide for their family and to make a good home for their children, I believe there's that constant struggle.

And there are many who fall prey to being a workaholic. And their reasoning, their rationale is, well, I'm providing for my family. I'm providing for their education.

That's the only way they can be in Christian school. That's the only way they can be in sports. That's the only way they can have what I believe they should have, but yet totally gives up that time of being the dad for their children.

And there are some who go the opposite way and spend all the time they can to the detriment of their ability to provide. So I believe there has to be that balance between giving of our time and then giving of things as well.

So a man, I believe, has to constantly look to God for direction and the example of how to manage his household. And God's example is that he's always provided for his children, but God has never replaced the value of spending quality time with his children.

[13 : 54] We know the Bible teaches us and shows us that God always provides for us. But what does God also want from us? He wants us to spend time with him. He wants us to spend quality time with him, not being torn both ways, but being spending quality time with him while he provides for us.

So while there's provision in abundance, our Father always places greater emphasis on the time that we spend together with him. Do you remember what you read, what we read in Matthew?

That where are we to put our time, effort, and energy in? Putting his kingdom first, putting him first, and then he will take care of all of the rest.

He'll take care of the food. He'll take care of the clothing. He'll take care of the shelter. And I believe in the same way, a father's duty is to provide for his family.

His duty to provide for his family shouldn't overshadow the importance of spending quality time with them either. So dads have the privilege of being able to provide for their family.

[15 : 06] And secondly, a father expresses his love through discipline. Now that's a bad word for a lot of people because we don't like discipline.

We don't like being disciplined. And the reality is there are not many people who are even in their own lives disciplined. They can't even discipline themselves.

And I believe those who have difficulty disciplining themselves did not receive the discipline that was necessary when they were growing up. Their parents were so permissive, they let them do anything and everything and talk to them however they wanted to talk to them and didn't take care of responsibility.

Well, then they've learned that somebody else will pick up my slack when I grow up so I don't have to be disciplined because somebody else will take care of it. And so dads have not only the responsibility but also the privilege of providing that discipline in the home.

Do you remember when Jesus told Peter and you're thinking, well, that wasn't nice, Jesus. He said to Peter, get thee behind me who? Get thee behind me, Satan. I can't believe you talked to Peter like that, Jesus.

[16 : 15] Well, what Jesus was doing was, I believe Jesus was portraying the power of love through the act of discipline, not wanting Peter to be lost in the old way of thinking.

He said, that's the wrong way to think, Peter. So he said, you need to learn that that's not the right way to be. So he says, get thee behind me, Satan. He says, don't act like that.

Don't do that, Peter. Now, discipline is difficult, and it's often received by our children as a bad thing. But in reality, isn't it the fruit of fatherly love?

We discipline because we love. If we don't discipline, I believe it shows that we do not love. And I always go back to one of our times years ago, probably, I don't know, probably close to 30 years ago, we were having some outing, something we were doing for our youth, and we had one of the young men who tripped and fell and got hurt, and we brought him to the emergency room, and we were sitting there waiting, and we asked, do you need to call your parents?

And he said, no, they won't care. Well, what do you mean they won't care? He goes, oh, they never ask where I go, and he said, they don't love me.

[17 : 56] I said, well, what makes you think that? He said, because they don't ever ask where I'm going, and they don't ever, I forget exactly how we put it, but his whole point was, because he wasn't disciplined, he, as a teenager, figured it out that they really didn't love him because they didn't discipline him.

That has always stuck with me. So, children, when mom and dad has to discipline you, it's because they love you. It's because they want you to grow up to be someone who is disciplined enough to take care of yourself.

Notice in Proverbs 3. We look there together this morning. In Proverbs 3, verses 11 and 12, the Bible says, My son do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor detest his correction.

Now, get this. For whom the Lord loves, he corrects. Now, you think, wait a minute.

Discipline doesn't go with delight. It's never delightful to receive discipline. And let me share a secret with you, little ones. It's never a delight to give the discipline either, because everything within us really doesn't want to do it.

[19 : 37] And sometimes we go, oh, let me put it off. No, I better not put it off. I better do it now. So just as God the Father said, God the Father says, Just like a father disciplines his child in whom he delights.

A dad has to discipline because he wants the best for his children. And the discipline of a father sets the whole course of a family's future.

Children raised in the discipline of a strong and loving father, I believe, have greater discipline as adults. And disciplined adults make greater contributors to society, because they'll take responsibility for their own action and very often take responsibility for others as well and care for them and be who they need to be in society.

And discipline is the act of a father urging his kids, urging his children to live the right way, because he knows how difficult it's going to be for them if they can't discipline themselves when they get older.

Somebody else will have to discipline them. And the discipline of a father when you're young is not bad compared to the discipline of society when you go astray as an adult.

[21 : 06] And there are so many today that will say, I wish I would have learned the discipline when I was little because I don't like being stuck in jail.

I don't like being stuck in prison. I don't like having to because I didn't listen when I was little or I wasn't disciplined when I was younger.

Do any of you ever remember watching the movie Remember the Titans? And that movie The Coach pushed those players just to the very edge. And he pushed them harder than they would have ever pushed themselves.

And some accused him of even trying to break their spirits. But by pushing them, he made them stronger. And by pushing them, he prepared them for a difficult season of football.

In the end, they went undefeated and they won the championship. Why? Because of their discipline. Because he pushed them. He knew their potential. And on their own, they would have never done that.

[22 : 12] But he got them to the point where they were prepared and they were ready for life. They were ready for the challenge of that football season. And life is the same way. We need to be prepared for the challenge of life.

And part of that comes through discipline, through putting the trash out, through cleaning your room, through washing your own clothes or doing this or doing that.

And it's preparing us to be a contributor to society. If he hadn't pushed them, they would have never pushed themselves.

If we don't push our children, our grandchildren, very often they won't push themselves. And they need to understand what is important in life. And so just like a coach that pushes his or her athletes, a father disciplines their children and in turn makes them stronger by doing so.

Then next, a father expresses his love through protection. A dad will place himself in the way of trouble to protect their family.

[23 : 19] There are so many stories of dads doing such physically, spiritually, place himself in harm's way just to protect their family.

Now, who gave us the extreme picture of that? Lord Jesus Christ. He laid down his life for us so we could have a relationship with our heavenly Father.

In the same way, a father is charged with the duty of laying down his life for his family, sometimes physically, sometimes metaphorically. We will very often lay down our desires for the good and the best of our family and for the interest of our family.

Dads are the first line of defense for their family and often the first one that Satan attacks in the home because he knows that from in God's hierarchy, the dad is the one who has the responsibility.

The dad is the head of the home. And Satan knows if he can take the leader out of the home, then the home will suffer for it. And so that's why I believe the role of father is under such attack today because Satan knows that if he can take fathers out of the picture, then the family very often will struggle and have a difficult time being what God designed them to be.

[24 : 40] So if he can take the leader out, his subjects are soon to follow. But the primary gift, and we'll end with this this morning, I believe the primary responsibility and the primary gift that dads give to their family is the expression of love through the legacy of salvation.

The expression of love in sharing with their family the importance of trusting Jesus Christ as their Savior. The greatest legacy a dad leaves behind is salvation through Jesus Christ and teaching and training and showing them what Jesus Christ has done for them.

And it's true when a parent dies, what do their children expect? Their children expect an inheritance. Sometimes it's money, sometimes it's not. But, you know, they expect an inheritance.

Sometimes that inheritance is riches, sometimes not. But there's no greater inheritance that a child can receive from their parents than the legacy of a father concerning eternal salvation.

The gift that a father can give when they teach their children about Jesus Christ. Ephesians chapter 6 verse 4 tells us, And you fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but rather do what?

[26 : 06] Bring them up, teach them, train them, discipline them in the training and the admonition of the Lord. That's a dad's responsibility.

Let's look at 1 Thessalonians 2, 11 through 13. As you know how we exhorted, Paul says, and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children.

This is the Apostle Paul saying, this is the analogy of a father doing this for his children. Sometimes he has to have that difficult conversation. That you walk worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory for this reason.

We also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you welcomed it, not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

So as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting, and urging you, Paul is saying, to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and his glory.

[27 : 23] And in closing, Mark 8, 36, For what shall it profit a man? Now we go back to the provision that men and dads provide for their families.

There's that balance. What if you work yourself to death, trying to provide, without spending quality time with family?

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul or loses his own family? Dads are extremely important people in our lives.

We're charged with the duties of protecting, of providing, and interceding for our family's sake. And we have the power to shape our families and our societies by the way we live and by the things that we do every single day.

We're the first line of defense for our families, not only physically, but also spiritually. And we're commissioned by God to deliver the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ to our children so they will come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior.

[28 : 35] And we know that when they do, they are going to be in a right place with God and are going to be having their future, their eternal, their eternity secure.

Not just in, not just in words that we share the gospel, but also in the way that we live every day. Not just in the way that we worship on Sundays, but by the way we worship and praise God every day of our lives.

So dads, this is our day to be honored because I believe dad has given a special responsibility and a special privilege to fathers.

Ladies, we thank you for being there with us. Praise God for our children, our grandchildren, and what they mean to us.

We pray that we can be the man that we need to be. Let's pray. Father, this morning as we come together, we are so, so very thankful for your words that you have taught us, that you let us know that it is not only an awesome responsibility, but also an awesome privilege to carry out the responsibility you've given us.

[29 : 56] We thank you, Father, we praise you for each father here this morning, for those that are not able to be here. Bless them, we pray, for it's in Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.