

Father's Day Thoughts

A Study of the Role of the Fathers in the Home in Light of Jesus being

- Prophet
- Priest
- King

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First, let's begin by considering some of the Offices that Jesus has.

Jesus Came to us to show God to us and as such He is our Prophet.

Jesus Seated at the right hand of the Father, He intercedes as our Priest

Jesus King of kings and Lord of lords - as head of the Church, He is certainly our King.

These three great offices were delegated to Him by God the Father. To the Church, Jesus is Prophet, Priest and King.

Since this is Father's Day and fathers and families certainly are related items, then how can we apply this truth to the family and specifically to the role of the father in the family? In the family, as well as in all of life, Jesus serves not only as our power to do "the right thing," but also as our pattern of "what to do."

We are familiar with the passage from Ephesians 5:25 where Paul admonishes husbands to *love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her*. In this we see a parallel relation with Christ for the role of the husband. Is there a parallel relationship for the role of the father? My conviction is "Yes!" The Christian father, in the home, stands in a parallel relationship to his home and family as Jesus does to the Church: Prophet, Priest, and King.

Prophet: What is the role of a prophet?

The standard answer that we typically hear is that a prophet is a "fore-teller" and a "forth-teller." The implication is that a prophet will tell two things: what is going to happen and he will declare "what is" – or he will be a declarer of truth.

Let first look at this role of "fore-telling." Should fathers be in the fore-telling business? Can you prognosticate and tell me what is going to happen? Yes, you can!



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I am NOT talking about seeing the unknown and knowing the unknowable. Some times fore-telling is simply stating the obvious. What I am talking about is simply the ability to see what will happen because you have “been there - done that” or you know what has happened to others. It is the ability to apply mature judgment and predict the outcome before it happens and in doing so can save your children and yourself from a world of grief.

I'll give you an example: The father says to the teenager: If you get drunk or high on drugs and drive your car under such a condition, you can kill yourself or someone else and you will cause unimaginable grief to yourself, to us and to the family of the person you run into. Parents may say: If you run around with the wrong crowd you will eventually regret it - it may even ruin your life. It is a father's responsibility to warn his children by way of predicting what will happen if certain practices are followed. Much of the book of Proverbs is predicting probable outcomes from certain behaviors. Reading Proverbs to your children is a way to fulfill your role as a fore-telling prophet. If you have ever learned a lesson the hard way, then you are in a good position to prophesy to your children. However, you don't have to experience everything in order to know what is right and what is wrong based on the probable outcomes. If you don't pass on what you have learned and teach your children to think through the likely outcomes then you ensure that they will have to relearn what you and your parents have already learned.

Besides **fore-telling**, there is **forth-telling**. In the church the prophet declares God's message to the church. In doing this, the prophet is a **representative** of God. How does such a role impact what the father does in the family?

Representative of God:

The use of the term “Father” as applied to the Creator of all things creates a word-association relationship between God and earthly

fathers, at least in the minds of young children. People involved in counseling with children tell us that many children form their initial basic impression of God from ideas related to their earthly father or a father figure in their lives. This impression can be either positive or negative. In a real sense, we are all representatives of God.

2Co 5:20 Now then we **are** ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

Therefore, an expected outcome of the role of “representative of God” for the father is that those in his family would come to a saving knowledge of God through Jesus Christ. If we want to be successful in accomplishing what is expected, then we need to be involved in whatever it takes to achieve the end result. One way to be involved in the process by which members of our family will be reconciled to God is in the role of “forth-teller” or proclaimer of God message. This would be a role of not REPRESENTING but one of PRESENTING God's ways and God's character to our families.

Presenter of God: Let's focus our attention to Deut 6:1-12

In this passage we see that we have certain **Resources**, we can identify **Reasons** for taking action, we have a **Recipe** for putting it all together, there are some needed **Responses** that lead to a desired **Result**.

Resources are found in verse 1 (NIV). These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess,

Commandments stress official exercise of authority (President)
Laws (Statutes) imply the imposition of a requirement by a sovereign authority and the obligation of obedience. (Congress)
Decrees (Judgments) - a judicial decision (Supreme Court)



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The LORD our God operates in the role of all three branches of government. He is sufficient. He is all we need. That which God has commanded, decreed and enacted must be taught to His people so they will know the heart of God and do His will. You cannot present God to someone - especially to your family - apart from His commands, statutes and judgments (His word).

Not only do we have Resources we have Reasons for doing something.

Reasons are evident in verse 2 and 3

2 That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.

3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

We are taught to observe God's way so that future generations will reverence the Lord. We show our reverence (love) for God by keeping (obeying) His word. The result is to enjoy a long life, success and growth. Along with the Resources and the Reasons we have a Recipe.

The Recipe is found in Verse 4

4 ¶ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:

The formula for success is simply this: First, **Hear and heed** what God says. Second, **Know Who God is**. We'll look first at the "shaw-mah" (hearing) part of the formula. Turn back one chapter to Duet 5 and verse 1

Moses summoned all Israel and said: **Hear**, O Israel, the decrees and the laws I declare in your hearing today. **Learn** them and be sure to **follow** them. [To help us remember these points, let pick some alternate words.]

Moses summoned all Israel and said: **LISTEN**, O Israel, the decrees

and the laws I declare in your hearing today. **LEARN** them and be sure to **LIVE** them.

Listen, Learn, Live. A good prescription for health and wholeness in our walk.

LISTEN: The word "hear" carries with it the idea of "heeding" or listening with good intentions or simply paying attention. It does you no good to listen if you are not paying attention. If you are in a Bible Study class or in a training course or even in church and the teacher or professor is lecturing, or the preacher is preaching, then what would you be doing if you were paying attention? (Taking notes, underlining in your text book, or your Bible, etc.)

LEARN: What about learning? Just as there is a difference in hearing and paying attention, there is a difference in paying attention to something and learning something. Learning involves understanding "how" and "why."

If you learned something, then what should you do with it?

LIVE: Follow is the idea of doing or living out the principles or precepts of what you have learned.

In our nation, the proclamation of the word of God is readily available to everyone. Maybe half the people hear it. Maybe half those who hear it actually listen. Maybe half those who listen really learn it. Maybe half those who learn it actually live it. So far, I'm down to about 6 percent of the population. Do you think that Jesus was on to something when He said "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life and few there be who find it."

What most people really have "**learned and live**" is the *way of the world*. I talked with a career missionary to Nigeria. She worked with the Nigerian people for over 30 years. In commenting on the actions of many of the Nigerian converts, she had observed that



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some would profess Christ and be baptized and attend church regularly. However, when trouble came or someone got sick, they would go to the local witch doctor and apply Ju-Ju to the problem.

When I first heard that, I thought - "Ain't it awful, that these poor people who claim to be Christian put their trust in Voo-Doo when they get into a difficult situation." Then I started noticing how **we** react when things don't go our way. Someone steps on our toes or insults us or shows disrespect and we turn the other cheek - right? Do we, really? What is more likely is that we give them a dose of their own medicine. Is this any different from what that Missionary had noticed among the Nigerians? I don't think so! So hearing and heeding involves LISTENING, LEARNING AND LIVING.

Back to Chapter 6 and the second part of verse 4. If we are going to present God to our families, then we need to know Who He is. We see this rather unusual declaration:

The Lord is One. (Literally: Listen Israel Jehovah God Jehovah One - We could put it into reasonable grammatical form and render it thus: Listen Israel: Regarding Jehovah God, Jehovah is One.) One obvious conclusion from such a statement is "there is only one God and His name is Jehovah." What we would really like to know is what is the **character** of God?

Know Who God is -- His character is that He is One. He is at one with Himself. He is not divided or schizophrenic. He is consistent and is the perfect example of the meaning of "integrity."

What is the parallel application for us as fathers: We are to relate to Him **and** to our families in **oneness** in all of our being - body, soul, and spirit. We cannot be as He is if we divide ourselves so that our relationship to God affects only the spiritual aspects of life and not our intellect, emotions and will (our soul). Also, we

should **not** stop short of bringing the physical part of ourselves under the Lordship of Jesus.

We've looked at our Resources, the Reasons, the Recipe (Hearing, heeded and knowing Who God is). What does our Response need to be?

Response

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

If we really know who God is, then our natural response should be to love Him. The "heart" is the essence of our being -- it is who we are. If the commandments of the Lord are **upon our heart**, then they will be a **natural part** of us rather than something we have to think about almost as an afterthought.

If the **way of God** is the way we walk, then we will **imprint** our children with this way. It will be what we **talk** about, it will be the things to which we **relate and interpret** everything we encounter in **business** or in **pleasure** and in the **daily routine-ness of life**.

Everything we see will be symbolic of the wisdom, grace and love of God. We will see Him in things we **do** (our hands), in what we **think** about (foreheads), and where we **abide** (door frames and gates). In everything we will relate the word of God to the situation -- we will bind them on our hand and write them on the door frames. In this way, we will know **only** God. When



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everything we do and **everything** we think and **everywhere** we go is directed and related to God, then we will truly **know** Him. After the Resources and the Reasons, the Recipe and the Response, then there should be some good Results.

Results are evident in verse 10 - 12

- 10 And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not,
- 11 And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;
- 12 Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

When we (and our children) are walking in and enjoying God's promises then (if we have done our homework as fathers) we will be careful to not forget the Source of the blessing and we will remember that all we have is a result of His grace and His love and that He is the Origin and the Destination of all we are or ever will be. If we want our children to remain faithful and not drift away then we will use the resources, we will know the reasons and apply God's recipe and we'll see our children and our own selves respond in such a way that we get the right results.

The parallel of Prophet, Priest and King goes on.

How is the father in the family like a priest?

As our High Priest, Jesus offered up a sacrifice of Himself and He intercedes for us.

As a priest, the father is called upon to sacrifice and intercede for his family. How does he do this? As a father there are certain things you may be required to sacrifice for your family. Fathers do **not** have the freedom to do just anything and everything they could do **before** they had the responsibility of a family. The other obvious way is by bringing family needs in prayer before God and claiming God's protection and blessing upon his family.

Obviously, he cannot do this without faith.

There are examples in Scripture of fathers **exercising faith** on behalf of their families. This principle is typified by the Passover observance. (Ex. 12:3,6,7)

It was the father's responsibility to kill the sacrificial lamb and to sprinkle its blood over the door of the home. By this act of faith and obedience he obtained the protection of God for his entire family. A father's faith and faithfulness will do wonders for his family.

A more dramatic example of this is seen in the New Testament in Mark Chapter 9 where the father of the demon-afflicted son said to Jesus "If You can do anything . . . help us." But Jesus turn it around and said to the boy's father (Why would you question My ability - you have seen the miracles - there is no need to doubt My ability. The real question is "can you believe.") "If you can believe, all things are possible." The child's deliverance hinged on the **father's** faith.

A father has both the right and the responsibility to believe for his children when it comes to area of their well being.

The father in the home exercises a role of Prophet and Priest and also has a role of **king** in that he is to govern his family on *behalf of Christ*. We know that this is **not** a pompous, oriental potentate position; but, we are talking about true, genuine leadership. This involves taking risks and living with the consequences and making hard decisions, taking initiative – everything that is involved in being a leader. In describing the qualifications of a leader in the church, Paul specified that he must be "one who rules his own house." You see, the home is the proving ground for the life and ministry of every man.

Let face it: If our religion does not work at home, it does

not work at all!

There has been a lot of emphasis in the last decade about how important mothers are in the rearing children. A lot of this was directed at moms who see their job as mother as full time job. We have rightly pointed out that **success** is measured in the **lives of her children**. My firm belief is that this same *criterion of success* needs to be applied to fathers as well.

Consider this:

We may have achieved success in business or popularity in the country club.

We may be president of the bank or of the service club.

We may be the world's greatest hunter or achieve an impressive score at golf.

But does it really matter? Is that what really counts?

Is that how God will measure our success when there's nothing left to count?

There is four stanza poem that is in one of James Dobson's books that say it so well. Let me share that with you.

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I may **never** be as clever as my neighbor down the street,
I may **never** be as wealthy as some other men that I meet.
I may **never** have the glory that some other men have had,
But you know one thing, I've just **got** to be successful as
these little fellas dad.

There are certain **dreams** that I cherish, that I'd like to see
come true.

And there are things that I'd **accomplish** before my working
time is through.

But the **task** my heart is set on is to guide these little lads
And make myself **successful** as those little fellas dad.

Oh, I may **never** come to glory and I may **never** gather gold,
And men may count me a **failure** when my business life is
told.

But if he who follows after shall be **Godly** then I'll be glad
'Cause I'll know I'm been **successful** as those little fellas dad.

It's the **one job** that I dream of, it's the task I think of most,
For if I **fail** these little fellas I have nothing else to boast.
For the wealth and fame I'd gather, all my fortune would be
sad

If I **failed** to be successful as those little fellas dad.