

Godly Father's Day

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Date: 16 June 2024

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- [0 : 0 0] today too, Ricky. Good. Take your Bibles, go to 1 Thessalonians chapter 2. 1 Thessalonians chapter 2. We're going to talk about fathers today, but we're going to try to keep it real simple because fathers are guys, and guys you have to kind of keep it simple for them.
- 1 Thessalonians chapter 2. Look with me beginning at verse 7. 1 Thessalonians 2 verse 7. And we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherished her children. So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail, for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable to any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holy and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe. As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you into his kingdom and glory. Let's stop there, and let's have a word of prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, I pray this morning that you would help us as we look at fathers, dads, and what we should be. Lord, we're going to look at what is a godly father. And I pray today that you would help us to understand the things that we need to do, the things we need to have in our life, that we may show to our families and those around us what a godly father looks like. Lord, I pray that you would just help each one to understand today, even though I'm preaching to dads, help the ladies to listen also. These are things that should be in a lady's life as well as a mom. So Lord, I pray that you would just touch hearts today with the things that we talk about from your word. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Yeah, I wasn't here for Mother's
- Day. I was sick that day. So consider this a Father's Day, Mother's Day message, okay? So we'll go with that. Real simple. I'm going to do an acrostic today. First of all, fathers need to be faithful.
- They need to be faithful. You know, look at verse 8 there again. It says, So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear to us. About 200 years ago was the beginning of the United States Marine Corps. Paul was in the Marines. Joshua was in the Marines.
- Anybody else in the Marines? Robert was in the Marines. And I always have to include my wife. She wasn't in the Marines, but her dad was for 21 years. And she will tell you, she was born at Quantico.
- [3 : 1 3] So she knows Marines inside and out. They, when they started about 200 years ago, were trying to come up with a motto, something that would be appropriate for them. They finally decided on the term semper fidelis. Semper fidelis means always faithful. You know, and then, oh, Christian, you were in the Marines too.

Okay. I forgot about Christian. He was there. Always faithful to doing what God called you to do. See, the Marines are faithful to serving their country. But as a Christian man, you need to be always faithful in serving the Lord God with everything that you have. The motto is, you know, not only appropriate for Marines, but it's appropriate for every godly man. They have to be faithful to what God has called them to do. And then it comes to our families. He has called us to be dads. He's called us to be fathers. He wants us to be faithful to the family that he has given to us. You know, it's, it's hard sometimes. Why is it being, why is it so hard to be a godly man, godly person? Because we have an enemy.

Just like the Marines go out to fight enemies, godly men have an enemy. The name is Satan, the devil. He is fighting all the time to get us off track. He is fighting all the time to get us in a position where we cannot be the testimony that we should be. Last week, a week before, I told you about the opera, you know, the Mephistopheles, where the devil's doing all of his things to try to get this guy unfocused on his prayer life. And he couldn't do it because the guy was so focused on what God wanted him to do, praying that God would lead him. God wants us to be that faithful to him and to our families that we will not leave. When the devil tries to distract, we will not leave what they're trying to do. You know, there's like four different things that devil tries to do to get us off track.

Spiritually, he'll try to get us off track. He'll distract you from praying for your family, praying for your wife and your kids. He'll try to distract you from doing the things that is probably the most important thing you will do for your family, praying for them. He's going to kind of get you away from reading the scripture. You ever sit down to pray and read your Bible and just everything starts to happen? The phone rings. Somebody else wants your attention for this or that or the other thing. And just always distractions and distractions. He'll try to get us so that we don't participate in church. There are other things more important to do. There are other things that we need to be doing that distract us from service of church. Not just the services like this, but doing things for church and helping out in different ways. He's always trying to get us distracted.

How are you doing? Are you always faithful? Or are you allowing him to distract you from so many different things? Emotionally. He wants to distract you emotionally as well. You know, you think about when you come home from work, guys. I mean, it's been a long day. It's been a hard day at work. It's been, oh, all I can think about. Sitting down in my recliner. Having a nice glass of Mountain Dew.

[6 : 52] Okay, maybe not you, but I do. And just relaxing and just, and all the kids are right there. And your wife is right there too. And she's got all these different things like, ah. And we just kind of turn it off. We just come home. We sit down. We turn on the TV. We look on our phones. We go away.

It's my time. It's a break time. Now, I did hear one time a very good situation where a family, when dad came home from work, dad got 20 minutes of uninterrupted time. He could sit.

He could go take a shower. He could do whatever. 20 minutes, nothing. Then after that was fair game. You know, just go after him. But he got 20 minutes to kind of decompress. That's a good idea. But don't, don't neglect your kids. Don't neglect your wife. Don't, don't just push them off to the side.

Sexually, sometimes, we allow inappropriate images to fill our mind. And we go, you know what?

I'm a good red-blooded American male. It's okay. It's normal. It may be normal, but it's not godly. Be careful about your thought life. Be careful about what you do. Because you let that thought life go, and you let that thought life run, an opportunity is going to present itself to be unfaithful to your family. And you're going to take it. Be so very careful about where your thought life goes.

[8 : 29] And then physically, he's going to, you let that thought life go, and you do things you shouldn't have done, and then you're going to move out of the house. And what happens to your wife and your kids when that happens? We need to be so very careful. Satan is going to use those things to try to get us off track, to try to mess us, our lives up, and mess up the lives of our family. We need to be so very careful. We need to be faithful to God and to our families. Letter A, authentic. We need to be authentic. God's man is going to be true. Look at verse 10. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how wholly and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe. Paul says, when we were there with you, Thessalonians, we were holy. You couldn't find anything in our life that wasn't holy, that wasn't dedicated to God, where we were trying to show you the gospel. We're trying to tell you the gospel, but we're also trying to show you the gospel by the way that we live, by the things that we do. He says, look, we tried to teach you the truth. We tried not to teach you anything false. We tried to teach you God's word and what it said. He says, we were blameless. He said, you couldn't point to anything that we were saying or doing that was going to distract from God's word.

Everything we did was going to show that we love the Lord and show you how you should love him as well. They were holy. They were righteous. They were blameless. You know, every one of those is a spiritual attribute. Are you living for the Lord? Are you in God's word? Are you allowing yourself to be taught and led by him and what he has for you? You know, fathers, if you're really thinking about it and you've been in church any time at all, you know that God has a mission for you. And that mission is for you to be the spiritual leader of your home. You're the one to teach. You're the one to lead.

Problem is, especially here in America, we've turned a lot of that responsibility over to our wives. Well, the church thing and the Sunday school thing and all that, that's the lady's job.

I'm a man. Like Stan was saying, real men will stand up for what they believe about the Lord Jesus Christ. Real men will stand up and say, I am a Christian. I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I will defend him every way I can. See, that takes some real intestinal fortitude, as they say. You've got to be ready to say, I'm a Christian. You can mock, you can ridicule, you can do it, whatever.

[11 : 27] I'm a Christian. And I'm much stronger for my beliefs and what God has done for me. You know, to be the spiritual leaders of the home doesn't mean the wife can't help.

But dad, it comes back to you and what you teach your children. Third thing, T, tender. A spiritual father is going to be tender.

Look back at verse 8 again. What did he say there in verse 8? He says, So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have impart unto you, not the gospel only, but our own souls, because you were dear unto us.

A real man, God's man, is not afraid to be tender and loving. Oh, but you know, men, they have this persona.

Especially you guys who are Marines, right? You have this persona. Mmm, nothing bothers us. We can take anything you can throw at us. Fathers need to be tender and loving toward the kids.

[12 : 45] Those of you that are dads, and those of you who aren't, you have this to look forward to. Do you remember the first time you held your first child? I only have one, so yeah, I remember it.

I remember what it was like. Angela was supposed to be born toward the end of January. She was born December 9th. She was six weeks early. She was a preemie.

Bonnie had to have a C-section. I was in the room. I tell Bonnie I know her inside and out. Angela was born. They took her, they cleaned her up and everything and stuff, and then they put her in my arms.

And I will never forget this, how little she was. Her entire head fit in the palm of my hand. Didn't touch the fingers.

Just the palm of my hand. That was her entire head. Her legs did not reach my elbow. She was little. Four pounds, 11 ounces. But I will never forget that moment.

[13 : 55] Holding her in my arms. All those little scrunchy faces they make. I will never forget it. She's 32 now.

I don't hold her in my arm anymore. Do you remember that moment? That tenderness. That this is just the greatest feeling in the world.

I will never ever experience anything else like this. Holding that first child in your arm. There's a story about a pastor who went to visit a little boy in the hospital.

When he arrives, the parents were there. And the boy was sleeping. And he got a chance to talk with the parents. They had, the boy had just had a tumor removed two days before from his brain.

And the boy was sleeping and they were talking and crying and talking some more. And they had received some news that wasn't very encouraging. The tumor was malignant. He was going to have to go through treatments.

[15 : 02] And as he was going to go through this treatment, these treatments, nobody could guarantee anything about what was going to happen. He said it was a very difficult time for that family.

And he said, once in a while, while they were talking, the little boy would open his eyes, kind of whimper a little bit. And he said, and the dad would reach over. And the dad would just kind of rub his arm, his hand a little bit.

kind of talk softly to him, tell him everything was going to be okay and stuff. And the little boy would go back to sleep. He said, I've never seen anything like it, a dad doing things like that.

Not mom, dad was doing it. And he said, as he got ready to leave, the dad said, you know the hardest thing about all this? He says, we have three other kids at home.

He said, I went home the other night, take a shower, change clothes, and come back to the hospital. And he said, the other three kids were crying, asking me not to leave, to stay there with them.

[16 : 09] And he said, I had to take time for each one of them. I took each one of them individually and talked to them and explained to them what was going on and said, I will be back.

We will be a family once again with everybody here. But for right now, he said, I need to be at the hospital with your brother. He said, that dad was just so caring, so loving.

That dad understood the importance of all of his kids. You know, Paul says, look, you need to be tender and loving toward your family.

Care about them. And caring doesn't just mean providing. It means, that's part of it. You provide for your family. You take care of things for your family. But just to show them that you love them individually.

Letter H, hard working. Dad needs to be hard working. Look at verse 9. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail.

[17 : 22] For laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preach unto you the gospel of God.

Hard working. He says, our labor and travail, laboring night and day. That's one of the things I remember about my dad. My dad was a worker.

My dad had an 8th grade education. After 8th grade, he went to work in the tannery there in Hartland. There used to be a tannery here in Ellsworth. I don't know how many of you remember it or were associated with it, but there used to be one here in Ellsworth.

Matter of fact, we came this close to moving here. I wanted my dad to come down and help with the tannery down here. But we wound up staying in Hartland. And my dad was a foreman there and worked a lot of hours and stuff.

Then my dad would come home and he had taught himself plumbing, so he did stuff at the house there. He would help friends and neighbors with their plumbing and different things like that. Made sure the lawn was mowed.

[18 : 31] Took care of things at the house. Then, he was a deacon at church. He worked every work day in things that they had at church. Then, he was on the board for Central Maine CEF.

And again, a man with an eighth grade education was on the board for the Sebastica Valley Credit Union. He was one of the two representatives from the tannery on it. He was always going, always doing things.

And part of my greatest remembrance of my dad is those times that he was working because I would be with him at times. Now, he never taught me the plumbing stuff and things like that that I wish he had, but I said he was on the board for CEF.

We would go to Presque Isle. CEF had a chapel on wheels, they called it. And it would go to the different fairs. We would go to Presque Isle, pick that thing up, bring it down to Bangor.

Then, we'd go from Bangor a week later and take it over to Skowhegan. And then, a week later, we'd take it from Skowhegan down to either Windsor or Union, one of the two, I can't remember which one, we'd take it down there.

[19 : 37] And I went with my dad on those rides and doing those things. Time for us just to talk and to be together. And dad taught me the importance of doing the Lord's work. Taught me the importance of being involved in what God is doing.

My dad was so good. There's so many dads today who don't take time for their kids, don't take time to teach their kids, don't take time to spend just time with them.

Do you know how important it is to just spend time with your kids? We had a unique situation. I was a school teacher and school principal. Angela went with me to school every day. Well, she's a class and I'm doing my thing so that's not all that great.

But, Bonnie had a job that went until five or six o'clock at night and so Angela was with me all that time after school. And so we rode around and we did things and we talked and we taught different things to her.

sometimes she'd go with me over to Pittsfield. I'd get my hair cut over in Pittsfield and where I got it cut was not far from MCI and a lot of kids would be walking back and forth.

[20 : 46] And this was a time of, you know, pants being down around your behind and, you know, all this stuff. And I taught Angela and I said, Angela, I don't know where she got this because I never said this.

Just so you know, I never said this. I said, what would I do if you brought that guy home as a boyfriend and a date? You'd kill me. We'd go into Walmart and we'd see different things happen.

There was one night I remember there was a little boy he was just throwing a fit like you would not believe. And the mother's trying to drag him out of thing. I said, Angela, what would happen if you did that?

You'd kill me. But we had a lot of time together. She learned a lot. She married Jared. I didn't kill her.

So, you know, it was okay. How, take the time to teach your kids. Take the time to spend time with them. They will learn a whole lot from you just by spending time with them.

[21 : 51] Letter E, encouragement. Encouragement. See, the man of God should be a positive influence in his home.

Look at verse 11 and 12. For ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you as a father doth his children that ye would walk worthy of God who hath called you into his kingdom and glory.

Did you notice the words he used there? We exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you. Those are all positive words. Those are all words that uplift.

Those are all words that are trying to help get someone to go in their direction. They're not negative words. They're positive words. Encouraged, exhorted, comfort, all of those things.

things. You know, you can have a lot more influence with your kids when you can encourage them and uplift them.

[22 : 56] Now, I know there are times you have to say no. Absolutely. There are times you say, nope, that's not going to happen. But let me give you one idea of what we did with her.

whenever I said no, I tried to follow it up with, and here's the reason why. No, you can't do that because I said so.

Okay, sometimes you have to go that route. But even when it's because I said so, give them the reason. I said no because how is that going to affect your testimony for the Lord amongst your friends?

I said no because I'm afraid of the dangers that might be behind that decision and the way you're going and I don't want anything to happen. You're precious to me. Giving them a reason why they should go the direction you want them to go.

Paul is saying here, to these men, you need to be a positive influence. You need to be uplifting. You know, let me ask you a question.

[24 : 10] What do you call your father? You call him father? Whenever I hear somebody calling father, I think it's very formal.

But it's okay. That means you have respect for them. That means that you love them and you're honoring them by calling them father.

But what if you call him dad? Dad is cool. When I think of dad, I think of someone who was there to comfort me. Someone who was there when I was crying as a little kid, he was there to help me.

I think of a dad as someone who was there to give advice. And you know the Bible talks about we're supposed to call Jesus, call God, Abba, father, daddy, father.

He is there. He needs to be respected. He needs to be uplifted. He needs to know that we have an honor and respect for him. But we also call him daddy because he's there when we're going through things, when we're facing things.

[25 : 17] He is there to comfort. He is there to help. He is there to lead and guide and give the advice that we need to go in the right direction. And he will give us a reason.

You need to be in his word because in his word he will give you reasons for why he says this and why he says that when you're asking in prayer. Why he's going the direction that he is. We need to know that God loves us and we need to know, your family needs to know that you love them as much as God does.

Now you never will love them as much as God does because you're not going to give your life on the cross for them. Jesus Christ came, gave his life on the cross, died for us that our sin might be taken care of, that we might be forgiven of our sin.

He paid the penalty and then he rose again. Let's show us that yes, we can die, but we can be risen again in Christ.

We have a home in heaven with Christ. We've been joint heirs in heaven with Christ. the importance of knowing Jesus Christ as your savior is the most important thing you will ever decide.

[26 : 29] We need to know him. We need to ask him to come into our life. We need to ask him to come and save us. If there's anyone here today that doesn't know him, come talk to me, talk to Jared, talk to Bonnie, talk to Will.

Be glad to show you how you can know for sure that you're on your way to heaven. See, God is like a father to us. He is always ready to help.

He's like dad to us. He's ready to encourage and uplift. You know, it's time for fathers to become real men of God, and that includes being an encouragement to your family about the things of God and what he has for them.

1992. Jared and Angela won in 1992. But I'm old enough to remember this. The Olympics took place in Barcelona, Spain.

And during those Olympics, there was a man from Britain by the name of Derek Redmond. Derek Redmond had dreamed all of his life about winning an Olympic gold medal.

[27 : 42] He's in the semifinals for the 400-meter. The 400-meter is that one that's one lap all the way around the track. 400 meters. He's in the semifinals.

He is running the race of his life. He goes out and he just takes off and he's just doing this incredible job. And he goes down and he's coming around the corner and all of a sudden he's flat on his face on the track.

He had torn his right hamstring. He struggled to get back up and as he did he started hopping to try to get to the finish line.

He gets around the corner hopping and a man comes out of the stands. And he comes out and the security guard tries to stop him. He picks that security up and just throws him to the side straight to Redmond.

it's his dad. Every time I've gone out with the story I've done the same thing.

[28 : 53] His dad goes out to him and he says you don't have to finish this. You don't have to do this. Derek Redmond said yes I do and kept hopping. And his dad said okay and we'll do it together.

And he took him by the arm to steady him while he hopped the rest of the way to the end of the race. He finished the race that day.

Obviously he did not win a gold medal. But he did know that he had a dad who cared about him more than anything else in the world.

He had a dad who would be there for him no matter what was taking place in his life. Now I know not everybody has that. You may not have had that.

But it doesn't mean you can't be that dad. You can whatever your dad did or might have done you can be the dad that God wants you to be because of who Jesus Christ is.

[30 : 02] Letter R righteous. Righteous. Look at verse 8 one more time. So being affectionately desirous of you we were willing to have imparted unto you not the gospel only but also our own selves because you were dear unto us.

We have a responsibility to communicate God's love to our children. You know in early stages of life what do children understand about God?

Not a lot but they do understand who their dad is. and dad you represent God to them. They're looking at you and you're representing God to them.

You're teaching them about who God is. You know it's one thing to tell our kids that we love them. It's one thing to tell our kids about God and everything. It's a whole other thing to show them who God is.

Think about it. in your home. Who are you in your home? See we can go out. We come to church and we put on our Sunday best and we look good and we smile at everybody and everybody thinks oh what a good guy.

[31 : 19] We go to work and people think we're one thing there and sometimes we're different at work than we are at church. They think we're one thing. Then we go out to the grocery stores and the post office and we're kind of me.

But when we go home we take our shoes off, sit down in our recliners and everything, then we see who we really are. Our family sees who we really are.

Are you transparent enough that your kids see this at home which is the same thing they see at church? Same thing they see at work? Same thing they see at the store?

What kind of dad are you? We need to be righteous dads. About a month or so ago I did the funeral for Lyman Buckland.

He has four kids. Before the funeral Bonnie and I met with three of them to talk about the funeral. The fourth one was still on their way.

[32 : 27] they loved their dad. Their dad showed them who Jesus was. Met with all four of them after the funeral.

We went out to eat together and we talked. And all four of them talked about their dad and how much they loved him and how great a dad he was.

And how he showed Christ by the things that he said and the things that he did. Do you know how special that is? When kids get to see that and have that as part of their life.

They can see someone who loves God with everything they have. You know, just have the opportunity to have parents who love the Lord.

Again, some of you aren't married. But take this and put it away. Store it back there in your mind. I want to be that type of a dad, that type of a mom. I want to be a person that my kids see Jesus Christ in everything that I do.

[33 : 39] You know, your kids not only see the good things, hopefully, on you. Hopefully, they don't see bad things, they see the good things, but there are times there are going to come struggles in your life.

I always believe in husbands and wives talking about things away from the kids. Don't let kids see all the different things and struggles. But, you know, on the other hand, maybe they do need to see some of that.

Because someday they're going to be older. Someday they're going to need to know, how do I handle the anxieties and things? How do I handle the financial situations that are going to come up?

How do I handle, you name it, whatever comes into a life, they need to see how you as a godly parent handles it.

So they will learn from that. Show them righteousness in everything that you do. You know, a real man, God's man, God's man, there's going to be one who is righteous, one who's transparent, one who's going to show them exactly who they are.

[35 : 00] This has not been a rah-rah message today. This has not been a try to get you to do all kinds of things. Today was a message to get you to think. As parents, are we showing our kids Jesus Christ?

As a parent, are you showing them that you are always faithful? As a parent, you've got that marine attitude, and I don't mean you're running your kids through boot camp, making them stand at attention, but are you showing them that you're always faithful what God has for you.

Take your hymn book this morning, turn to 513.