

## 3rd Sunday after Pentecost - Father's Day (5 Qualities of a Great Dad)

The Rev. Scott D. Campbell

### • Father's Day Sermon 2009

#### • Introduction

##### • 5 Qualities of Great Dads (in short)

- 1 Knows his priorities
- 2 Is a Godly Man
- 3 Is a Godly Husband
- 4 Learns how to raise Courageous Sons
- 5 Learns how to raise Pure Daughters

#### • Body

##### • ONE (1): Know your priorities and schedules his time accordingly

###### • The priorities are:

- God
- Family
- Work

###### • If as a believer you don't know that this is the right order, you haven't been paying attention - those of greatest worth are of greatest priority.

- a Dad who puts work first leave a legacy of emptiness and disappointment for his children. You know, in all my years of ministry I have never heard a person say to me, "I wish my dad would have worked more"; and this is because children don't care about how much money you or they have (that is, unless we pollute them with a work-is-the-most worthy demonstration of our own values). Kids all over the world and all over the USA are just fine with 3 hots and a cot.
- A Dad who doesn't put God first leaves a legacy of hypocrisy. He SAYS he's a Christian but he doesn't do anything except go to church that looks or feels like Christ (more on this in a minute)

###### • Schedule your time accordingly

- The summer before Heather and I got married I spent my vacation building most of a garage. The walls, the roof, and the garage door all got done (with lots of thanks to the Torrances, Terry Newton, and some others). I park my car in it and use it regularly, but it is not done. That's because I haven't scheduled any time to work on it. I want it to be done, but it is not.
- Priorities not put on the calendar are fantasies; and we all know where the road of good intentions leads
- Time works just like money. About money Jesus says, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"; that is, what to know what is at the heart of a man...look where his money goes. So too, want to know what is at the heart of a man - look at where his time goes.
- A great dad both knows his priorities are God - Family - Work, but schedules them:
  - God first. A little secret here - making God the priority in your life and in your time doesn't take hours and hours and hours. God knows we have other things we need to do; in fact, he designed life that way. I have found that 20 minutes of prayer and devotional study of the Bible at the start of the day anchors my day around God. It orients me to Him and to His work in me and through me. Great Dads take the bull by the horns and put God first in their calendar.
  - Family Second. That's right, put family time on your calendar. Whether it is an agreement to always eat dinner together, to always spend Saturdays as a family, or to go out to eat together after church each Sunday, put dependable, purposeful time with your family on your calendar.
  - Third: Work. For most people, calendaring work seems like a silly idea - "I work when the office is open." But for us gathered here this morning, a large portion work jobs that aren't just 40 hours a week and/or that aren't the kind of jobs that one leaves at the office. So scheduling work is more about limiting the hours working rather than allotting time for work. So guys - you want to be great dads? Put a limit on the hours you dedicate to work. I've found that without a limit, I choose poorly where to put my work time. One of the best things I have done with this is to limit my nights out on St. Matthias-related activities to three a week. And the same goes for vacation - don't work on vacation! That's time for God and family!

###### • Great Dads know their priorities and put them in place

##### • TWO (2): Be a Godly Man

###### • You may ask why being a godly man is a characteristic of a great dad. Lots of reasons:

- Godly men learn how to raise great children (Heidi Gaiser, Leisl Schnakenberg, Evan and David-Mok-Lamme); their dads, whom I know, didn't grow up with great Dads, but they learned how to raise great kids because they learned about fathering from the Heavenly Father!
  - They learn what love looks like, live it, and speak it.
    - While it is true that God desires wives/mothers to be the "heart" of the home, love is not a feminine virtue - it is a God-virtue (just read 1 John 4). At times love is gentle and intimate, at other times it is bold and risk-taking. What fathers can learn from the

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Heavenly Father is how to be each of these things at the appropriate time. They model themselves and their love after what they see God in Christ doing.

- Godly men demonstrate how to put first things first
- Godly know personal obedience; and so they are able to model this to their children that they might be obedient to teachers, to the laws of the land, to their mothers, and most importantly, to God
- Godly men follow the first and often repeated command of God to raise children to honor and love Him (Deuteronomy 6.7)
- *So what is a Godly man?*
  - This is, of course, a sermon or two in itself, but at the core, a godly man is one who is learning from God about how to be a "man after God's own heart" - an attribution given to King David and what God is searching for in each of us.
  - And this "man after God's own heart", as the God Himself says, "will do everything that I ask him to" and "will lead with knowledge and understanding" (Acts 13.22, Jeremiah 3.15, 1 Samuel 13.14)
  - A godly man trusts and obeys God.
  - A godly man prays for his children
- *As a Godly man, you will be a great father because your children will see your faith.*
  - Bishop Frye, the former Bishop here in Colorado was a pilot. He said, "If being a Christian was merely a matter of baptism, he would just fly over all of CO dumping water on people. Faith," he said, "is caught, not taught." We have to see faith in action in order to come to become faithful ourselves.
    - it is critical to teach our children - and to be taught ourselves, but it is equally critical that they - and we, see others walk in faith.
    - In fact, I'd venture to guess that most of us live at or about at the "level" of faith of those we know best. Going to church was modeled, you'll come to understand that going to church is what Christianity is about.
  - So the point of all this is that a great dad is a godly dad and his children will see in him what a true personal relationship with Jesus looks like; they will model faith to their children.
    - I'm guessing that some of your fathers are saying things like, "I haven't been a godly man" or "I don't know how to model faith to my children" or "I don't even know how to start being a man after God's own heart."
    - Yup, I understand. As Heather will tell you, I don't lack for confidence in most things, including my sense of parenting. However, I'm aware that I am probably Caden's best picture of God right now and for the foreseeable future. And I'm shaking in my boots and I'm sure I'm going to completely mess him up. I mean, I don't want him to go the way of so many "PKs" - preacher's kids: rebellious, kniving, and rejecting of God. I want him to be humble, to trust God personally and to love Him with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to know the ministry to which God has called him an to do it faithfully. I want him to love others well. This is one of my most desperate prayers!
    - We are, in truth, all going to mess up in our parenting and especially in our raising of our kids in faith, but we need not loose hope. God knew what He was doing by putting them with us; He wasn't mistaking in giving you your children to raise into godly young men and young women. God has a plan! We need to hold onto His promises:
      - "With God, all things are possible" from Matthew 19.26
      - "If anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives liberally and without reproach." James 1.5
      - We need to be like David, who slew Goliath with a stone and a slingshot not out of luck, but in the power of God: "You come to me with sword and spear and javelin; bit I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts...This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hands." (1 Samuel 17.45).
      - Goliath was not too big for David, not because of David's size, but because of God's work in David. And while raising children of faith is a gigantic task, God would not have given you your children if he didn't think he could help YOU raise them to love HIM!
      - So - claim the promise, ask for help, watch godly fathers with their children, and read a few books including the Bible! As St. Paul says, "now is the acceptable time!" and just as Paul put nothing in the way of anyone coming to or maturing in faith, so God puts nothing in the way of you being the godly dad He has purposed for you to be!
  - So here are some things to do to model your faith:
    - memorize a scripture together
    - read a book of the Bible together
    - go to a men's retreat or a daddy-and-daughter retreat with your children
    - Pray with your children
      - for them
      - for yourself
      - for others
      - about something significant, and do it over time

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- Do an act of compassion together and then talk about it with them.
- Go to church with your family;
  - in fact - be the one to initiate; this IS YOUR ROLE, and it is so defeating to women to have to ask repeatedly, to have to bargain with their husbands, and even more disappointing to have to go by themselves week after week. Men, this is your job and not your wife's or mothers or pastors or anyone else's. It is your job to become spiritually alive and to keep holy the Sabbath! (buck up!)
- quit consuming Xny like you do television and instead invest in a life of Christian faith!
  - do the Discovering series
  - come to Bible study
  - go to the men's group
  - and come see me when these aren't enough for you; I've got a plan!
  - quit talking about this stuff and do it; come on, be a man!
- *THREE (3) Be a Great and Godly Husband*
  - *One of the documented realities of being a father is that you are the model for your children of how to treat "others" and how to engage in the "outside world"; whereas mothers are the model of what home-life is to look.*
    - The first "other" you model treatment of is your children's mother.
    - If you honor and praise her, so will your children honor and praise other women; if you dishonor and dismiss her, so your children will with other women
    - And so being a great and godly husband is part and parcel of being a great dad!
  - *So honor and praise your wife; here are some ways:*
    - Support her role as mother; don't always be correcting and questioning her ability to mother; God has given her some pretty good instincts - so pay attention to them and encourage her
    - Praise her for her service to the family
      - Moms most frequently do much of the household work, prepare meals, get kids off to school, do the laundry and dishes and all sorts of service to you and your family - publicly praise her for what she does
    - Honor her as an individual who is more than just a mom and wife
      - encourage her to pursue her passions
      - encourage her in her faith
      - encourage her in her godly friendships and relationships with her family
    - Honor her as *your wife*
      - take her on dates without the children
      - but her a pretty dress - one that flatters her, guys, not one that arouses you! Remember, she may be dressing to look better than other women as much as to look good for you.
  - *And there is so much MORE!*
- *(intro Question to the next 2): I have a question for you: are you the man you want your son to be? Are you the man your daughter should marry? These 2 questions should orient your parenting of sons and daughters.*
  - *Raise Courageous Sons and Pure Daughters*
- *FOUR (4): Raise Courageous Sons*
  - *Again and again the Bible speaks to men with these words: "Be strong and courageous"*
    - Of course it was not speaking of physical strength, but strength of heart and mind and will - of knowing what is right and having the courage to do it.
    - Danger is all around for today's boys (and girls) - and the most dangerous thing for your son is to grow up without the ability to see what is right and to be able to do it.
    - Courage to do what is right is what boys need
  - *How to raise courageous sons:*

This is from Chapter 5 of David Jeremiah's *Hopeful Parenting* and based on the life of Daniel and other men of the Bible

    - 1 - teach your sons to never underestimate the importance of his choices
    - 2 - help your son to decide his convictions before he faces the choice

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- 3 - train your son to determine the risk factor in every situation
- 4 - show your son how to depend on God every day
- 5 - Encourage your son to develop friends who will stand with him
- *An important area in which to apply this: treating women with honor - and thus how you treat your wife and other women (as I mentioned earlier) is of great importance*
  - Covenant with your eyes to not look lustfully on other women
  - Speak to your sons about how great your wife is, about how beautiful she is to you, and about why you married her
  - Don't degrade any woman by your comments, including your mother
  - Watch how you treat your daughters and their friends
- *FIVE (5): Raise Pure Daughters*
  - *Are you the man your daughter should marry?*
  - *Daughters should marry gentlemen with integrity, who work hard and have a job, who honor their sexual purity, who themselves belong to a church, study the Bible and pray daily, who give to the Lord His tithe, who get along with their mothers (etc)...*
    - do you display integrity, not sinning when you think no one is watching (God is), confess your sins, and ask for the forgiveness of those you offend?
    - Do you work hard to provide for your family, not risking their well being for your personal gain;
    - Do you honor your daughters' sexual purity by
      - going on dates with her to show her what a good date looks like (A father's presence)
      - By paying attention to your daughter week in and week out (A father's attention)
      - (A father's closeness)
        - time doing with them what they want to do
        - telling them you love them
        - talking about sexual subject
        - telling them God's standards
          - affirmatively: in addition to "thou shall not commit adultery" tell them that God saw that it was not good for mankind to be alone; tell them God invented sex, not the devil; tell them sexual pleasure is pleasurable when not tainted by guilt, shame, and regret. Tell them the pain later is part of the joy today, and the joy later is part of the pain today (to quote Joy Gresham, CS Lewis' wife); or CS Lewis himself - the boy chooses safety, the man chooses suffering.
    - Modeling sexual purity yourself
      - no pornography, no gratuitous sex films, no Victoria's Secret, no People magazine (car magazines), whistling at women etc. Turn off that which has you thinking sexually about anyone but your wife!
      - Show affection to your wife
    - Tell them the benefits of purity
      - (and you have to trust God on this if you yourself didn't maintain purity before your marriage or in your marriage)
      - A unique trust between you and your wife (whereas impurity breeds suspicion, insecurity, sorrow, emptiness, and many other destructive emotions)
      - protection from sexual insecurity
      - surest path to pleasure and fulfillment (whereas sexual sin results in feelings of shame, confusion, disappointment, and insecurity.)
  - If you are not the first influence on your daughter's life, then peer pressure and media images will be the first and second most influential factors in your daughter's sense of sexual self and what it means to be a woman sexually. And we all know - each and everyone of us - that peers, from the dawn of time but especially from the 60s on, pressured one another to be sexually promiscuous and active very early on; and we equally know that the media images of which our daughters see thousands of daily, are ruinous to true female self esteem, portraying a cost-free image of overt thinness, sexual encounters, and even pregnancy.
- *Summary*
  - *A great dad gets his priorities right and invests TIME in them - in his Lord, his wife, his sons, and his daughters*
- *Note: some think that "it is too late for me to be this kind of dad because my children are grown,*
  - *but this is not true. I'm 43 and I still watch my dad to see what he does, still hoping that HE will be the one to show me how to be a man.*

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- *And, as Christians, when we have sinned by omission we confess our sins to God and the one against whom we have sinned and amend our lives - and that means change and do what is right - and that means take your daughter on a date. Do you think in not doing so that you won't be judged by God? You are mistaken; she is His daughter and is not in the business of forgiving unrepentant fathers. This is the real thing, brothers!*
- *I have great confidence that you can be the father God has destined you to become, and through His holy Spirit will empower you to become, that one day your son will say to you, "Dad, I'm gonna be just like you" and your daughter will say, "Daddy, you are the best!"*
- *Happy Father's Day*