

Viral Messages #11
Father's Day Legacy
June 20, 2020

A GOOD FATHER IN ONE OF THE MOST UNSUNG, UNPRAISED, UNNOTICED,
AND UNAPPRECIATED HEROES IN ALL HUMANITY

The definition of a father can be easily defined if you look in a dictionary. Webster's dictionary states that a father is: "*a person regarded as a male parent; protector; a man who has engendered a child*". On the other hand, a father in real life is a little harder to define.

Dads are the guys that say things like:

Because I am your father, that's why.

When I was a boy...I used to walk eight miles to school every morning...after finishing my chores.

You want an allowance, you know where the mower is.

You call that a hair cut...I remember when.

Talk to your mother.

Is that any way to talk to your mother?

You want something to cry about? I'll give you something to cry about!

You're grounded...until you're thirty

Have you lost your mind?

Hey Zach...pull my finger.

Being a father is nothing like being a mother.

Fathers go through childbirth without anesthetic! We're tough and soft at the same time! We get nervous when we get to take the kids out on a solo adventure for the first time!

(Tell story of fishing with Zachary and Justin...what if there are alligators...what if I fall in that dark water...would you come and find me?)

For each of us the term "father" has different meanings and shades of variation. This is because our definition is based not on a dictionary, but what is seen through the eyes of a child. I believe that the role of a father is one of the most significant factors that shape the course of our lives.

You see, fathers have tremendous power over the lives of their children. I'm not talking here about physical power but about the emotional and psychological, and spiritual power that comes from the position of father. Like it or not, we are shaped by our fathers more than we think. I am far more like my father than I thought I would ever be.

I love bragging on my dad. He's a learned man. He's an artist. His singing inspired me to sing. He's confident. Strong in character, right and wrong are words to live by. He taught me to make my mark in life and to take my stand.

My father has made an incredible impact upon my life. Yours probably did as well.

There is something within us that makes us want to please our fathers. And we have a need to feel his approval on our lives. Fathers provide certain needed characteristics in the home without which children do not receive the balance and emotional strength for future years. Fatherhood is a unique calling that cannot be replaced.

And although being a father is a unique and irreplaceable calling it is a calling that is quite humbling. May I show you the heart of every dad that ever loved his children?

This portrait of a father's heart is found in [Luke 9:37-48](#).

Turn with me there.

Previously in Luke 9, Jesus, Peter and James and John, went on a short hiking trip up to the top of a mountain. Jesus journeyed to the mountain to pray. While Jesus was praying to the Father, His glory was revealed, His face had changed, and his clothes had become as bright as a flash of lightning. Radiance poured from Him. Moses and Elijah came to encourage Him. In this next shot of exposed film, Luke portrays what happened the day that Jesus, Peter, James and John returned from atop the mountain. Up on the heights the air was cool, and God was so close. The valleys are not so. The realities of life in the valleys were soon upon them. Look at the chaos that greeted Jesus as he returned.

Jesus finds the disciples and the religious leaders arguing. (Mk. 9:14) A large crowd of bystanders stand looking on. A boy who had suffered all of his life, is on public display. And a father, who had come seeking help is hopeless, wondering why on one can help.

(Read Lk. 9:37-40)

Luke compassionately captures the emotions in this scene: Look at the picture again. What do you see?

- ❖ Do you see the distress of the unsuccessful disciples?
- ❖ Do you see the disciples and the religious leaders arguing? ([Mk. 9:14](#))
- ❖ Do you see the pain of a desperate father, and the hopeless condition of a sick and bound child?
- ❖ Do you see a son whose life has been picked clean of anything of value?

When the father hears that Jesus has shown up, he turns to Him in hopes that the Redeemer can somehow bring his son back from the clutches of Satan's grasp. He falls on his knees and clasps his hands in a desperate plea. He begs as only a father in pain can. Pride is gone. He will do anything so that his son might be free. Please note this...because it's easy to miss:

The father's love for his son, gave that father his voice...

(Flip over with me to [Mark 9:20](#)) (Read vs. 20)

Jesus sees the father's desperation and asks, "How long has he been like this?" (vs. 21-22)

In verse 22 this broken desperate man stretches out a faith that is but a smoldering candle, he admits that the demon was trying to destroy and kill his son. And then he says this, "But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

And then Jesus makes a declaration and gives recognition.

He declares that all things are possible...and then recognizes the belief, the faith of the son's father... **"All things are possible to him who believes."**

The father responds in [verse 24](#). "Immediately the boy's father cried out," so much emotion here... so much emotion.

Remember, while this is going on, his son is rolling around, foaming at the mouth and he screams over the din of whatever else is happening and says this, "I do believe, help my unbelief."

Remember; it's out of the father's love for his son that his voice arises, and his heart speaks...

There's an honest man. I believe, I believe in You, I believe in Your power, but I have a lot of doubt and I admit it. Is that enough? Is it enough for my son?

I do believe, help me...the son's father uses the verb, ***boetheo...***

It means to run to the aid of someone who needs help. Or to run to the aid of someone who calls for help, cries for help, beautiful word.

Run to my unbelief. Run to my unbelief. Run to my aid, present tense, and help me keep believing. Come and dispel my doubts.

I had a question as I looked at this unseen faith, this feeble faith. When we cry out in this manner, is that faith enough?

And with tears streaking down his face, that father prays a prayer that moves the heart of God.

What prayer you might ask moved the hand of God?

It's an honest prayer of a hurting father. Look at verse 22b. "But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us!"

This isn't one of those majestic prayers. It's not very churchy, and to tell you the truth, he's a bit shaky in his faith. He said "if" you can do anything. The Greek is even more emphatic. The tense implies doubt. It's as if the man was saying: "this one's probably out of your league, but if you can..."

Fathers, if this prayer sounds like yours, then don't be discouraged, for I am learning that this is where prayer, true prayer begins. True prayer begins as a yearning. A passion to see something or someone touched by the living God. No pretenses and no boasting. It was love that gave this father his voice...it is love that will give you yours...and mine.

One last thought as we watch the father and son walking away toward home. I want you to know that that father's driven love gave his son a gift...he gave him a legacy.

Legacy:

: a gift by will especially of money or other personal property; something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor

Because of what his father did, the son has a legacy...a life, a future...and a story to tell his children, of the time that his dad brought him to the feet of Jesus...and was set free...

Another great definition of Legacy is this: A life's lengthened shadow...

The crowd was amazed. I can only dream of what Jesus was thinking...such faith...such love...I wonder if it reminded Him of His Father...

(Read [vv. 25 -27](#))

Luke ends his account this way: "Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father; and they were all amazed at the greatness of God. Because this father prayed an honest prayer, a passionate prayer, the Redeemer returned the stolen goods to their rightful owners. To a tearful father he gave back his son. And to the son, he gave him back his childhood...and a legacy

selah.