

THE COUNSELOR

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Father's Day

We officially celebrate our fathers on Sunday, June 21st this year. It's a time for paying special tribute to the man we call "dad". We honor all the men who have acted as father figures in children's lives over the years. This group includes stepfathers, uncles, grandfathers, or "big brothers." President Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the 3rd Sunday of June as Father's Day in 1966. President Calvin Coolidge supported the idea of a national Father's Day in 1924. The idea came from Mrs. John B. Dodd in 1909, who proposed a "father's day." People in towns and cities across America were beginning to celebrate "father's day." The first Father's Day was observed on June 19th, 1910 in Spokane Washington. Mrs. Dodd's father, William Smart, a Civil War veteran, was a single parent who raised her and her five siblings. She wanted to set aside a special day to honor her father for his strength and selflessness in doing this. (<http://www.holidays.net/father/story.htm>). William Smart is just one example of a father's influence on his kids. His daughter was so impacted that she came up with a way to honor him, one that evolved into a national holiday.

A Father's Importance



The power of a father's influence on his children can be immense. This fact has been known a long time but not studied and acknowledged until recent times. Most fathers don't realize the depth of their influence on their children. Fathers literally shape their children's lives. Wade Horn noted that fathers make "unique and irreplaceable contributions to their children's lives." (1994). Father-child relationships and fathering styles shape their children's self-esteem, and affect their motivation, academic and vocational success, sexuality, adult relationships, and overall personal effectiveness. Also, the father's availability, interactions, discipline, morality, spirituality, emotionality, words and actions interact with other variables in the child's genetic and physical environment to shape his personality.

The Men's movement in the late 1970's and 1980's helped men begin to do some serious soul searching. Promise Keepers emerged in 1990 and focused their efforts on revival and discipleship in Christian men across the U.S. These Christian men are constantly looking into their roles as men, brothers, and fathers today. They are looking for ways to heal their emotional wounds and connect with their fathers. They also want to connect with



their wives and children. Promise Keepers are driven and empowered by Christ to resist the world's ways/agenda, make changes, live Godly lives, and bless their family and friends.

We all remember things our fathers' spoke to us as we were growing up. I have the fondest memories of my father in the things that he said that blessed me. Things like, "Steve you are a fine son." "God Bless you son." "I know you will do well." "I am proud of you." His words were words of life to me. They inspired and encouraged me throughout my life. My father's affirming, life-giving words blessed me! The father-child relationship



(FCR) has peaks and valleys, good times and bad times, but it always returns to healing when the foundation is based on God's love and forgiveness. Stress points emerge throughout the life cycle of a father and his children. Career pressures, job changes, marital, financial, physical problems, aging, and children asserting their independence often rock the FCR through the years. God uses these challenges and crises in the FCR to draw them closer to HIM and make the FCR stronger. That is one reason God created the FCR as one of the most powerful bonds of all time. We have God the Father and Jesus as the most powerful FCR ever! A father's relationship with his children can also greatly influence his

children's response to God. Loving, Godly fathers reflect the Heavenly Father as they relate to their children. They promote and instill God's love, discipline, forgiveness, and healing in their children. These children tend to grow up with an image of the Heavenly Father somewhat like their earthly fathers until they mature in their own relationship with Christ.

Memories

We all have memories of our fathers and father figures. Some are good and others are not. I remember the good and fortunately don't have many negative memories growing up. I remember my father's kind words, reassuring smile, and love. I have a multitude of good memories which I can pull up any moment in reflecting the great gift God gave to me in my earthly father, Pops. I remember laughing with him; working with him a couple of summers as his carpenter's helper; trips to Rehoboth Beach with the family in his old Ford pick-up truck; his guitar playing; rides alone with him; and so forth. These positive, personal, precious moments are embedded in my mind. The greatest memories of all were my father's Christian witness in word and deed as he told me his testimony and brought me to the church I was saved at thirteen. He always nurtured my faith. He is not a perfect man, but Christ still shines through despite his turbulent journey in this life. He blesses me today at 85. And I pass that blessing onto my sons. What are your memories of your father? Think about those things he said and the times you had growing up that blessed you from your father. Pull up those good memories, let yourself dwell there a little while and thank Jesus Christ that He gave you your father and these memories as a testimony to Him.

Remember your dad this Father's Day and glorify Christ and the Heavenly Father! Thank the Heavenly Father for your earthly father and pass the blessing onto your children. Let God heal you from the bad memories and the longing for a father you never had. He can do this. Allow him to come into your mind and heal you backward and forward. Let him heal and restore the years the locusts have eaten. He does this! He can soften the impact and erase the curse of those memories which have haunted you all your life. Those terrible words and actions your father put on you. Christ can free you from the past and help you recall without the overwhelming pain the father you had growing up, the father who hurt you. God the Father and Jesus Christ do not have plans to harm you, but to give you hope and a future, one that you can pass onto your children as you are healed and restored!



Tips for Honoring Fathers

There are many things you can do to honor your dad on Father's Day. The following are good to do on that special day, but *consider doing these things as often as possible*. Make the time. You won't regret the time you spend honoring your father.

1. Take him out to dinner.
2. Go fishing with him.
3. Take him to a movie.
4. Visit the museum with him.
5. Take a long ride to nowhere certain. A ride in the country.
6. Throw a surprise party for him.
7. Take him to the ball park.
8. Go out for ice cream with him.
9. Have a Bible Study with him alone. The topic: Biblical Fathers.
10. Play cards with him.
11. Buy him something special. Something he likes. Surprise him.
12. Give him a picture collage of you and him through the years.
13. Give him a poem or letter sharing your memories of him, appreciating him.
14. Tell him you love him. Do this more often.

15. Give him a hug.
16. Invite him to share your favorite stories about himself growing up; that he has told you before.
17. Ask him to share his most precious moments with his father to you.
18. Ask him to share his treasured times of you growing up.
19. Tell him what he has done for you and the impact he has made on your life.
20. Share the things you learned from him in this life, things you will never forget.

Do these things honoring your father. He needs to hear from you that he has done well by you in this life. Fathers need validation too. They need to know their life as a father, the most meaningful aspect of their lives, made a difference in their children. They also need to hear that you forgive them for their shortcomings. Keep the slate clean with you and your father. Don't let there be any lingering issues or bad blood between the two of you. Reconcile your relationship when necessary. Always keep a short account of wrongs committed to one another. Forgive one another. Also, let your dad know that you are sorry for the grief you caused him. Spend as much time with him as you can as an adult. Life is short. You don't want to go to his funeral regretting the moments that slipped into eternity which should have been spent enjoying him. Honor your father in prayer with him. God honors you as you honor your dad. He loves great father-child relationships. He knows all about them!

The Heavenly Father - Our Ultimate Father



Our Heavenly Father, Yahuveh, is the Ultimate Father! No one comes close to Him in being a Perfect, Loving, Righteous, Merciful, and Forgiving Father. He created us and knows how to father us. He loves us more than anyone will. He is our Father God, our Abba YAH. He should be our greatest role model as a father and His relationship with Jesus, our ultimate model for a father-son relationship. He validated, confirmed, and commissioned His Son with His Love, Words, and Power. "And suddenly a voice came from heaven saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17). "This is my Son, with him I am well pleased. Listen to Him." (Matt. 17:1-5). The Heavenly Father said things that blessed and empowered Jesus. They were intimately connected. Their relationship was deep and loving while Christ was on earth carrying out His mission. He came to do His Father's Will. They were One. The Father spoke Words of Life to His Son. He said things that helped Jesus persevere. Yahuveh's Words of Life inspired Jesus to do the Will of the Father: to live; encourage His disciples; confront the Pharisees and Sadducees; stand before Caiaphas and Pilot; endure the crucifixion; rise from the dead; and ascend into Heaven. The Father's Words of Life to Jesus helped bring salvation to us. We see the power and fruit of this relationship. The Father's Words and Action

supported everything Christ needed to do His Work. We fathers are to do the same with our children. We are to love them with our words and actions, and build strong loving relationships that bless and empower them to do the will of our Heavenly Father. We are supposed to help our children, not hinder them from having a strong productive relationship with God which inspires them to fulfill His Purpose for them.

Fathers and Children

Fathers, rejoice that you have been given the awesome privilege and responsibility to raise and bless your children! I honor you this Father's Day and all the days thereafter. I pray that God will direct your steps in loving your children with your words and actions. I pray that your relationship with your children is strong and productive in the Lord. Train them up and pass on a generation of blessings. God will not disappoint you, through all the troubles and frustrations you face as a father. You will bear fruit as a Godly Father. Your children will honor you with their lives and God will be well pleased with you!

Children, honor your fathers this day and all the days that follow. Heal old wounds with your dads. Let God help you forgive the hurts your father caused you over the years. Forgive him as you have been forgiven. Love him with the perfect love your Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love you with today. Show him this Father's Day that he is special and you love him and admire him for all he has done for you, even with his shortcomings. We always have God's hope in healing father wounds and troubled father-child relationships. I would not say this if I did not believe it and see God's healing and restoration time and time again in people's lives.



F.Y.I.

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