

“FATHER SHOWS BEST”

Matthew 1:18-25

So what do you think?

Touching, wasn't it? In the skit the CALL, the gratitude the son had for his father.

Not all of us fathers will get that kind of call today...

Some fathers don't deserve that kind of call, \

They've abused their wives and their children

Not all children whether they've had good fathers or not,
are willing or able to make that kind of call...

By the way, the greatest number of phone calls is made on Mother's Day

And the greatest number of collect calls is made on Father's Day.

Father's Day can be a bittersweet day, especially in the church.

There are all kinds of experiences fathers and children have.

Some are good and some are not so good.

I'll bet your lives probably represent a cross-section of that.

So some of you come to celebrate today and others come to be comforted.

Sonora Smart Dodd's would celebrate.

Her father was a courageous, selfless and loving man.

After listening to a Mother's Day sermon she thought of starting Father's Day.

To honor him she chose his birthday, June 19, 1910 for the first Father's Day.

In 1924 President Calvin Coolidge made it official.

He proclaimed the 3rd Sunday in June as Father's Day.

My friend is going to church today to heal.

She had an abusive father that was very active in the church.

She chose not to remain a victim.

She cared for him until his death a few years ago.

She feels God is moving her on. Today she is joining another church.

You know, Father's Day always seems like open season for fathers.

Father's Day is a good day to tease fathers for all the teasing they dish out.

I tell my daughter that is one reason God gave me to her... to tease her.

So let's tease father's a bit.

A little boy got scared as the thunder boomed and lightning crackled.
He asked his mother if she could sleep with him.
She said she had to sleep with daddy.
After some silence the little boy said, "That big sissy."

One dad said, "Father's day is the only time anyone ever listens to me.
I tell them not to spend too much on the gift and they don't."

Hey, someone has even charted the top ten things dads say.

10- "I'm not sleeping, I'm just watching the show."

9- "I'll be home in a few minutes."

8- "Can't you see I'm busy?"

7- "When I was your age..."

6- When driving and irritated, dads threaten, "Don't make me stop this car!"

5- When driving and frustrated, dads repeat, "No, we're not there yet!"

4- When driving and confused, dads affirm, "No, we are not lost!"

3- "Hey, I'm not talking just to hear myself talk."

2- "Do you think money grows on trees?"

1- And the number one thing that dads say is..."Go ask your mother."

Actor Robert Young was asked by his daughter why everything always went better in the show *Father Knows Best*, than it did at home.

He said, "I have a great scriptwriter."

We as the people of faith have a great scriptwriter; the Bible is that script for us.

Let's see what the Bible says about Father Joseph, and how A Father Shows Best.

1. A FATHER SHOWS BEST WHEN HE LOVES HIS WIFE

Matthew 1:18-19... *This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about:*

His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, (engaged to Joseph) but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. (Joseph didn't know)

Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man (noble, godly, good man) and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

Joseph was a good and godly man, a man who really cared about his wife.

He was caught between a rock and a hard place, torn between the Law and love.

The Law demanded he break off the engagement.

His love determined to do so without embarrassing her.

Can you feel his tension?

He has to do what he knows is right in his head,

yet he wants to do what he feels is right in his heart.

God helps him out with this dilemma, verse 20, *But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,*

"Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife..."

Buffalo Bills linebacker Chris Spielman was a Father Showed Best when he loved his wife. This guy loved the game of football. He was totally committed to the game of football. He was and aggressive, leave-it-on-the-field kind of player. In 1995 he even played the whole season hurt.

But in 1998, when his wife Stefanie became sick with cancer, he made a decision to stay at home, cook, clean and care for her and the kids.

When asked about coming back to play, he asked,
“What kind of a man would I be if I backed out on my word to her?”

First and foremost, a Father Shows Best when he loves his wife.
In a crisis a father might not be in a position to quit his job,
but how he treats his wife is what is important;
how he talks to her, listens to her, how he respects what she says and does.

If a dad’s comments and care for mom are kind and compassionate,
your children will pick up on that.
If dad’s comments or attitudes are abusive and antagonistic,
demeaning or degrading, then know that your children will pick up on that;
they will see that modeled.
When children become fathers and mothers, they usually act on what they best know.

A FATHER SHOWS BEST WHEN HE SHOWS THE COURAGE TO LOVE HIS WIFE

2. A FATHER SHOWS BEST WHEN HE TRUSTS AND OBEY GOD

Verse 24-25, When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord Had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

So Joseph simply does what God has instructed him to do,
whether that seemed to be practical or impractical,
logical or illogical, or even the manly thing to do.
Actually it is a very manly thing to do to go against the grain and go with God.

Joseph simply trusts God and obeys, for he marries Mary and names Jesus.
The Bible shows us many times that Joseph is a good and godly man.
Let’s track some of those times.

Luke 2:22 demonstrates that Joseph is good and godly.

When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.. And to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

And Luke 2:41 reminds us that, ***Every year his*** (meaning Jesus) ***parents*** (meaning Mary and Joseph) ***went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.***

These two incidents tell us Joseph was a father with a faith.
He observed ritual and was obedient to the Law.

Matthew speaks of Joseph's obedience to God after visits from an angel.
In 2:13 the angel says, ***“Get up and take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt.”*** Joseph does. And in 2:20 he says, ***“Get up and go the land of Israel...”***

And Joseph does. When instructed to leave, he does.
With the clothes on his back, his family beside, the love for God in his heart,
and maybe a mule following behind, he leaves; he packs up and leaves.
He trusts God with his life and the life of his children.

We know Joseph left a legacy of faith.
He influenced two other sons besides Jesus that we used by God in mighty ways.
Jude and James wrote books of the Bible and James was the Bishop of Jerusalem.

It is so important for a father to model faith.
We know some children of godly parents will turn away from the Lord.
But if parents love the Lord, children have a greater chance of knowing
and loving the Lord, too.

I encourage you dads to take a risk, show your love for the Lord.
Those who are doing that now-GREAT! You don't have to use a lot of God talk.
Just use language that says you thank God for your wife, your children,
the things you can do, and the things you have.

When you go hunting or fishing thank God for the great cathedral of CREATION!
Buy books to read and videos to watch with your children.
It's important to be with them in church.
And it's important to pray with them at mealtime and bedtime.

A father shows best when he has a faith. Listen to what it can do for your children.

A father had a daughter that got very sick.

She went through countless tests. The findings-the illness was terminal.

The dad agonized over how to tell his daughter. One day they had a little talk.

The father finally told her she had only a few days to live,

and then asked, "Honey, are you afraid to meet Jesus?"

Blinking away a few tears the brave little girl said, "No daddy, not if Jesus is like you."

A FATHER SHOWS BEST WHEN HE TRUSTS AND OBEYS GOD

A FATHER SHOWS BEST WHEN HE LOVES HIS WIFE

AND 3-**A FATHER SHOWS BEST WHEN HE PROVIDES**

AND PROTECTS HIS CHILDREN

Again we see and hear father Joseph making a decision in the interests of his family, a decision to protect Jesus. Verses 21-22,

"So he took his child and mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in the place of his father, Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream he withdrew to the District of Galilee."

Make no mistake about it, even though this was a time of Pax Romana or "Peace", there was for some no peace. Certain people were persecuted and terrorized.

The future was just as uncertain to them as it is today for some of us.

When I was a youngster, maybe the 5th or 6th grade, way, wayyyyyyyyyyy back when, sometime in the sixties, Adolph Eichmann, a Nazi officer had been captured and was being tried for war crimes against the Jewish people. He was responsible for many deaths.

Some of you might remember the gruesome pictures of bodies stacked in piles.

There were piles upon piles of bodies.

I was literally sick to my stomach and scared out of my wits.

I finally took my fear and concern to my dad.

He got out the globe and we sat down to talk.

I remember him showing me where Germany and Europe were.

Then he spun the globe and showed me where we lived.

He said that Americans would never let something like that happen to their country.

My dad told me that to protect me.

The explanation at that time was good enough.
I was relieved and with a happy heart went out to play.

Today it's different though, isn't it?
That explanation probably wouldn't be enough. We live in different and difficult times.
Things in our world are sooo, sooo complex and confusing.

And we've discovered that our battle as people of faith isn't just against flesh and blood.
Those battles are difficult enough but we discovered there is a real spiritual war going on.
It's a war waging and raging for the minds, hearts, and souls of our children.

“ARE YOU READY FOR A WAR?” William Wallace asked his men.
Pastor Don told us a while back that some of the weapons used in this war are
not necessarily evil in and of themselves.
They are computers and cell-phones, music and movies, and TVs and I-pods.
He calls the enemies that use these weapons, techno-terrorist.

That is why the truth we learn and the support we get from one another
in Bible Studies is so important. I encourage you to join the Monday night group of men.

Dads, we're not to provoke our children to anger but we're to teach and discipline.
We need the courage to enter this war, the courage to check what are kids are listening to
and watching, and the courage to learn how to talk to our children about godly values.

**When our children, your children see a spiritual and moral strength in you, there is a
greater chance they will follow you and have healthier lives.**

The book *Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters* tells us this and more. The book says that
daughters take their cues on every thing from drug use, delinquency, smoking, sex, and
stress from their fathers. It says daughters with doting, affection fathers are more assertive,
more confident, more competent, more successful. It says they have better self-esteem,
seek less inappropriate attention, and are better at problem solving.

I would image if fathers spend time with their sons most of that would be true for them.

Dads, we can speak with more authority, and we will have way more influence with our
children when we spend more time with them and give them more attention.
Time and attention are investments-they tell our children we love them are they are worthy.

A little boy asked dad, "Daddy, how much do you make?"
Dad glared and responded harshly, "None of your business. Don't bother me."
The little guy didn't give up, "But daddy, how much do you make in an hour?"
Dad answered in frustration, "\$20 an hour."
The little boy, "could you loan me \$10?"
Dad, "No, just go to bed, I'm busy."

The father thought about this conversation, was convicted.
He knew he'd been too harsh.
He went to his son's room, sat down on the bed and whispered, "Are you asleep?"
"No." answered his son.
"I'm sorry I yelled at you. Here is \$10 you asked for." said dad.

The son pulled some money from under the pillow, put the \$10 with it and said,
"Thanks dad. Now I have enough. I have \$20. Can I buy an hour of your time?"

My dad like many of your dads had to work.
He had to make a living, he had to put food on the table and cloths on our backs.
He himself didn't get to spend too much time with us but he showed his love in other ways.

I've come to appreciate those as a father and as I grow older.
One of those fond memories is when dad wanted to sod the yard.

I didn't know how that was going to work. We played baseball in our backyard from sunup
to sundown and had worn a diamond path in the grass.

Dad put the sod in, but let us play anyway. It wasn't long before we had another diamond path.

He still wanted to try for a nice lawn so the next year he put sod in again.
The field was a little lumpy but again it didn't take long-another diamond path.

I'm not sure what he was thinking but the next year.
So we got a new infield and broke in a new path.

He finally gave up and a few years later. We moved to bigger fields and dad got a dog.
Then he built a garage in the backyard and cemented the other half of the yard.

A FATHER SHOWS BEST WHEN HE PROVIDES + PROTECTS HIS CHILDREN
A FATHER SHOWS BEST WHEN HE LOVES HIS WIFE
And A FATHER SHOWS BEST WHEN HE TRUSTS AND OBEYS GOD