

Father's Day 2016



Dear Covenant Brother (and Sister) in the Lord;

What are the prerequisites, biblically or socially, for being a father? We are not talking about being a good or a godly father, just what does it take to be a father. Look around, everyone has a father. Unfortunately, too many don't know who their father is, but, they have a father, a biological father. It doesn't take training, responsibility, good judgment, financial security, wisdom, or godly knowledge; it just takes being a mature male. As you know, many nations consider a 13 year old male (boy) fit, old enough, to be called a 'man' and thereby able to take a wife and be a father. Typically, the traditions, responsibilities, and importance of Fatherhood, to the shame of the world, is not stressed, taught, talked about, nor passed on from generation to generation. Just the opposite, boys are taught to 'go for it' and live life only for yourself. For the most part, the husband is just expected to work hard, bring home enough money to support the family, provide protection for the family, and be there to repair this or that. It is sad to say that Father's Day doesn't draw much attention in the world, except for maybe a few advertisements for the latest tool or gadget. I mean, it not like 'we' carried the baby for nine long months, or risk our lives to bring the bundle of joy into this world.

In my humble opinion, deep down inside the heart of every male is the desire to be a good father, when the time comes. It is located in the same hidden spot that houses the God given instincts to be kind, honest, hardworking, and law abiding. It can be, and most often is, over ridden by our environment, family, society, training (or lack thereof), and the selfishness for fulfillment of physical desires. All of which, seemly, void the responsibility for our actions (or heat of the moment).

While looking at the topic of 'fatherhood,' which may or maynot, get addressed from the pulpit at least one a year, my thoughts went to a much higher title, position, than 'fatherhood.' It is title or category of a male's 'headship' that can only come from God, and a relationship, respect, and understanding of the calling granted to a man. It shapes and molds a young life into a life of fulfillment of being all that they can be. It ties a cord of love and trust that 'bonds' a family tightly together. It really leads to an intimate relation between the 'father' and his child. We only see this *'term of endearment'* used three times in the Bible, and it is first used in the closest relationship possible in the world, between the Heavenly Father Jehovah, and His Son Jesus Christ. ***"And [Jesus] went forward [in the Garden of Gethsemane] a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And Jesus said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me: nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou wilt,"*** Mark 14:35-36. Every one of us knows that 'Abba' literally translated means 'Daddy'. Strong's Concordance takes the endearment term a step further by saying that *"the word 'Papa' used by a beloved child."*

When Christine and I decided to start a family, I really didn't give it a whole lot of thought of what it would require of me to be a father. It just seemed the natural course of things to do in our young married life. At the time, my job had me on the road five to six days a week, every week. Sometimes, they would keep me out of town for two to three weeks at a time. Looking back at it, if my memory serves me correctly, and just for the record, it was her idea to start our family. Stepping out on a limb here, it usually is the wife's idea to start having a family for women are made 'nester's'. It is a God calling. Had I been given the 'are you ready to be a father test' first, I might have delayed the vote a few years. In fact, it was because of our first child, Amanda, that I resigned my position as a traveling engineer to stay at home and be with the new family.

The memories that I have of my father are different than those of my brothers, as I was the youngest and missed a lot of the hard times. Before I was born, Dad worked on the West Coast. Traveling back to the Midwest was a big deal, so my brothers saw less of Dad when they were young. When I was a very young boy, Dad worked in town and in the print shop behind our house. We saw him but most of the time he worked to provide food for us and tracts for the ministry. A few years later, Dad worked out of town again, but was able to come home during the weekends, and work in the ministry. In my early school days, Dad worked in town during the day and in the ministry at night. My memories are of a loving, gentle man that loved his family, and his Lord. *[In going back and proof reading the above paragraph, it hit me that the term 'Dad' was used subconsciously.]* He is not just a "FATHER" to me, he is my 'Dad!' Without thinking about it while writing, the Spirit led me to express my feelings concerning that my relationship with my Dad, that is what we are talking about. It is the connection [the love, the bond, the trust] between a loving father and a beloved child.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, ABBA, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the Children of God," Romans 8:14-16. The Apostle Paul knew and understood this relationship. His life went from one extreme of hatred for the Christians to the other extreme of forgiveness and love of his Heavenly Father, and loving everyone.

You will not find 'Abba, Father' in the Tanakh [the Old Testament] because the Father could not have that close intimate relationship with His children because there was sin in their lives. Oh, their sins were covered by the blood of the sacrifice, but sin was still there. Only Mark recorded that Jesus used the endearing term "Abba," and He was the only one that could, because He was sinless! He had that intimate [beloved] relationship with His Father. So, now we see that Paul writes in Romans and in Galatians 4:6, ***"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father,"*** telling us that we can cry "ABBA, FATHER" because our sins have been remitted, paid for, gone, removed, casted into the sea, by the blood of Jesus on the cross of Calvary. We can have that Love relationship, we can walk into the room (throne room) and cry *"Daddy, Dad, Papa, hear my words, hear my praise, hear my rejoicing, hear my cries, and prayers for help."* And know, KNOW, that our Heavenly Father LOVES US as much as He loves Jesus!!! It is that kind of relationship, love, which every earthly 'father'

needs and can have in his heart, life, and spirit.

When our children were young, my sweet wife purchased and gave me a signed/numbered print titled ***"Spiritual Warfare"*** by Ron Dicianni, that is on the first page, which now hangs on my home office wall. While it is a beautiful, and an expense print, with very deep spiritual message (yet subtle), I asked her why she gave it to me. Her tender eyes looked at me as she said, *"Because, that is where I have seen you so many times at night with the children."* Wow!

"Dear Lord, thank you for teaching me to love and care for the family that you have given me. Thank you for teaching me from my Father, my Dad, to stand in the spiritual gap for the victory when my family was under attack and for their needs. Thank you for every dad that puts You first in their lives, and teaches Your truths to his children. Father, Abba, bless and keep every man that falls on his knees before you in honor, respect, and love. Call the men of this nation unto You. Teach them Your truths, Your wisdom, Your love, and Your commitment to the family. Teach them to raise the family in your love, your Word. Teach them that their Christian wives are Your Daughter, and they are accountable to You for loving Your daughter the way that You Love her. Teach your sons that their marriage covenant is between them, their wife, and YOU. Father, give them the strength to pray, "Lord, give my wife the very best husband in the world!" And lead them into a deeper relationship with You, their wife, and family. Dear Heavenly Father, draw my nation unto You by Your Holy Spirit. Protect and keep those that put themselves in harm's way for our safety and wellbeing. Give Your strength and wisdom to every Christian to take a stand for You, Your Word, and Your Son Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Father, minister Your truths to us. Reveal Your strength to those that are feeling weak and tired. Minister Your health and healing to those that are sick and fitting disease. Minister Your prosperity to those in finical crises. Minister Your Love to those that are feeling lonely. Wrap Your strong loving arms around those that feel unloved or unwanted. Cause Your peace to flow over those with troubled minds. Abba, minister to each and every need of Your children, in the Name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus, Amen."

Phillip Buttram