

God chose a Dad for his Son

Prayer

There seems an almost historical tradition that on Mothers day we honor our mothers and on Fathers day we admonish our Fathers. How many here have noticed this trend?

How many of us have heard the scripture in Proverbs 22:6 NKJV that reads:

“Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it”

This is great and I believe that it means that we should teach our children in the ways of the Lord. Now, I am convinced that at least a portion of the problem is that we as parents don't know the way our child should go...

Because... bible illiteracy is rampant in our churches...

Of even more significance is that even when we know the way of the Lord, we can sometimes fail to live it.

Simply put, when we don't practice what we preach, it provokes our kids; it makes them angry, distant and distrustful of us and of God.

The Word of God says in Ephesians 6:4:

“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

And in Colossians 3:21 we read:

“Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”

So as Dad's what do we do?

- We must actually live Godly lives and be role models to our children.
- We must show them the truth of our relationship with God
- We must demonstrate commitment to our relationship to God
- We must keep our promises to our families
- We must be truthful in our relationships with other people
- We must strive to learn and be mature in the faith
- We must be the spiritual head of our households as God has called us to be

- We must commit ourselves to building strong marriages based on biblical principles
- We must support the mission of Christ with our time, talent, resources and prayer
- We must consistently demonstrate the love of Christ in our community
- We must learn to communicate: (For example)
 - Ladies when your husband says to you: “I heard you...” what he really means is: “I haven’t the foggiest clue what you just said, but I am hoping with all my heart that you will buy this so I don’t have to listen to you telling me that “I never Listen to you for the next three days”
 - When your husband says: “It would take to long to explain, what he really means is: “I don’t know how it works, but I don’t want your confidence in my ability to handle this to disappear”
 - When a guy says: “I can’t find it...” what he means is... I have reached out my hand and looked around the room and I didn’t see it.”
 - Finally, ladies... Has your husband ever said to you that loving phrase: “Take a break honey, you are working too hard...” What he is really saying is: “I can’t hear the hockey game over the vacuum cleaner.
 - Any of you ladies with me on this?

Okay that is the obligatory Dad’s Day sermon admonishment. After all we do need to keep up tradition don’t we?

Now to what God has placed so dearly on my heart regarding Fathers Day this year.

When I say the name: “Mary” what comes to mind? “The mother of Jesus?”, “The blessed virgin?” Perhaps depending on your background even: “Holy Mary, mother of God.”

Today, I want to talk about Jesus Dad... Not his Father, his Dad. I want to look at Joseph.

Open your bibles with me this morning to Matthew 1:18-25 NKJV

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

Now Matthew 2:13-15

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."

Now down to verses 19-23

Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Folks, God chose Mary to be the mother of his Son, but often overlooked is that God chose Joseph to be Jesus' Dad.

Let's take a look at this from a perspective we have all seen... How many of us have seen a TV program where a woman is pregnant with child, but she is alone in this world. Into the picture steps a man who loves and is willing to take on the responsibility of being a dad. She falls in love with him and they live happily ever after?

To take it a step farther, let's say that the father of the child has not abandoned her but was dying of a terminal disease and knew he could not be with his child. Would he want his child cared for and raised in a loving environment?

Okay let's say that mom is terminal and Dad has passed away and she is pregnant, would she not dedicate all of her efforts to finding a loving home for her child before she had to leave this life?

Is it such a stretch then to imagine our Heavenly Father, the God of Love, investing himself in choosing the parents for his only begotten Son?

Luke 1:28-31

And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.

Now let's take a peek a few verses back at Matthew 1:18-21

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

Now God himself told Joseph not to fear to take Mary as his wife.

Note also that in Mark 10:8 the Word tells us:

...and the two shall become one flesh'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh.

Did you notice that God also went looking for a Dad for his Son?

What can we get from this?

God clearly demonstrates that the role of a Dad is a very important one. After the conception of a child is the spiritual act of raising a child. Man was not required for the creation of the child, but he was needed to be Jesus Dad.

One more point... What if your kids have no dad, no mom, or you have adopted? Here me when I say this... if you or your children have been abandoned by their father... Psalms 27:10 YLT is a word for you.

David said: "When my father and my mother have forsaken me, then doth Jehovah gather me." God will never leave you alone he will gather you to himself. Isaiah 40:11 tells us he tenses his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

Now back to my main thought...

What was God looking for? How can we tell?

Obviously, by the characteristics of the man he chose...

A loving man toward his wife and son

Turn with me to Matthew 1:19

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

Remember here that Joseph hasn't been approached by God or an agent of God. He is in the dark, he has no divine revelation. He is a man like you or I, who is in love with a young woman. He has hopes, dreams, aspirations. He wants to build a life with her, have children and grow old with her.

Place yourself in Joseph's sandals... Without any warning you find out that the love of you life is pregnant and not by you. How would you feel? Would you feel betrayed? Would you feel stabbed in the back? Would you be angry?

Now Joseph, having discovered this about his betrothed was obligated to divorce her. And yes a divorce was required to break a betrothal... His obligated action would through Mary into a situation of grace consequence, she would be publicly shamed and humiliated.

Now... my fellow men, even before God spoke with Joseph, he did not have any vengeful feelings or bitterness towards Mary. He heart and his love for her was pure. Remember what we read in Matthew 1:19 – he was minded to put her away secretly. He was not concerned with payback. He loved her.

Now does this remind you of somebody? Christ perhaps?

Ephesians 5:25

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her"

My friends, I was not what my father in law expected for a son in law. It has been 21 years since we have talked. I have tried to mend the breaches. More painful though is that he would not accept my daughters and only recognizes Rayya. I would love to have a relationship with the father of my wife, but alas right now he chooses this not to be so. What hurt most of all was the rejection of Ariana and Athena. One of the issues has been blood. "They are not of my blood" How desperately sad... Yet he has provided for us in his way, I take that as a miracle of the Holy Spirit.

Yet I turn back to Joseph, who showed no resentment towards Jesus, he did not distance himself from him, he adopted him as his own and taught his the family trade of Carpentry. He even protected and defended him from the wiles of Herod the king who sought to kill him.

One pastor once said this: "He adopted the one that the rest of the world would reject."

So let's contrast this with those men who reject their responsibilities towards their children...

1 Timothy 5:8

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Faithful and Obedient to God

Not only was he a loving man; but, he was a man of faith and he was obedient to Gods will.

We can see this clearly illustrated in Matthew 2:13-14 where we read:

"Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, " Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt"

And again in Matthew 2:19-22

"Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, " Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel."

Faithful in his Spiritual Life

Joseph attended the temple; participated in the temple feasts and raised his family as faithful Jews in the temple. In short, he exemplified a man who loved God and believed in what Gods scriptures had to relate to his life.

Jesus, and his ½ brothers James and Jude grew up following their Dads example. He taught them well and loved them. He was a wise man and used all of his time with his family profitably.

Here is a bit of a revelation... Joseph isn't mentioned after Jesus' childhood and at the crucifixion Jesus charged John with looking after his mother.

As Dads we need to treasure every moment with our kids, we need to lead them with a Godly example. Joseph, despite his shortened life, raised a child that continues to rock the world to this day and his other two sons wrote books of the bible that continue to inspire us today.

Dad's love your wives and your children with everything inside you. Be the message to your children. Use every day to your advantage and leave behind a lasting legacy just like Joseph.

Your life is like a fragrant perfume... pffft... and it's gone... What legacy will you leave behind? Will it bring fond memories and love to the hearts of those you have touched?

God chose Joseph because he was loving, kind, humble, gentle, obedient and faithful.

Today we can learn from his example...

prayer