

THE MODEL FATHER

EZEKIEL 17:22-24

INTRODUCTION

I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM A SINGLE MOTHER WHO HAD RAISED A SON WHO WAS ABOUT TO BECOME A FATHER

SINCE HE HAD NO RECOLLECTION OF HIS OWN FATHER, HER QUESTION TO ME WAS "WHAT DO I TELL HIM A FATHER DOES?"

WHAT DO FATHERS DO? A SUPERFICIAL OBSERVATION MIGHT NET A LIST LIKE THIS:

- **HE BRINGS THE CAR AROUND WHEN IT RAINS, SO EVERYBODY ELSE STAYS DRY.**
- **HE ALWAYS TAKES THE FAMILY PICTURES, WHICH IS WHY HE IS NEVER IN ANY OF THEM.**
- **HE CARVES THE TURKEY ON THANKSGIVING.**
- **HE TINKERS WITH THE CAR AND KEEPS IT GASSED UP.**
- **HE MOWS THE LAWN AND TRIMS THE HEDGES.**
- **HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS HOW TO WORK THE VCR AND THE DVD PLAYER, SO HE GET'S TO CONTROL THE REMOTE.**

BUT SERIOUSLY....WHAT DOES A FATHER DO? WHAT DOES A FATHER CONTRIBUTE TO A CHILD'S LIFE TO DESERVE RESPECT AND HONOR?

1. **HE RARELY FEEDS THEM OR CHANGES THEIR DIAPERS;**
2. **HE SELDOM PLAYS WITH THEM OR TAKES THEM FISHING;**

**3. HE SELDOM WIPES THEIR RUNNY NOSES, OR
BANDAGES THEIR BOO BOOS.**

**SO I SPENT SOME TIME THINKING ABOUT WHAT MY FATHER
DID THAT CAUSED ME TO LOVE HIM SO MUCH. WHAT DID
HE DO?**

- **HE THREW ME HIGHER THAN HIS HEAD UNTIL I WAS
WEAK FROM LAUGHTER.**
- **HE CAST THE DECIDING VOTE ON THE PUPPY DEBATE.**
- **HE LISTENED MORE THAN HE TALKED.**
- **HE LET ME MAKE MY OWN MISTAKES, AND WAS
THERE TO PICK ME UP WHEN I MESSED UP.**
- **HE ALLOWED ME TO GET INJURED ON THE
BASKETBALL COURT WITHOUT HAVING A HEART
ATTACK.**
- **HE ALLOWED ME TO WASH THE FAMILY CAR,
KNOWING THAT ALL I WANTED TO REALLY DO WAS
TO DRIVE IT EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T HAVE LICENSE.**

**IF I HAD TO TELL SOMEONE'S SON WHAT A FATHER REALLY
DOES THAT'S IMPORTANT, I WOULD TELL HIM THAT HE IS
THE STEADY HAND IN SHAKY SITUATIONS AND YOUR
SHELTER IN GOOD TIMES AND BAD.**

**A FATHER IS A MAN WHO IS CONSTANTLY BEING OBSERVED
BY HIS CHILDREN.**

**THEY LEARN FROM HIM HOW TO HANDLE ADVERSITY,
ANGER, DISAPPOINTMENT AND SUCCESS.**

**HE WON'T LAUGH AT YOUR DREAMS NO MATTER HOW
IMPOSSIBLE THEY MIGHT SEEM.**

**HE WILL DIG OUT OF A SNOWSTORM AT 1 A.M. WHEN ONE
OF HIS CHILDREN RUNS OUT OF GAS.**

HE WILL MAKE UNPOPULAR DECISIONS AND STAND BY THEM.

WHEN HE IS WRONG AND MAKES A MISTAKE, HE WILL ADMIT IT.

HE SETS THE TONE FOR HOW FAMILY MEMBERS TREAT ONE ANOTHER, MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX AND PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT THAN THEY ARE.

BY EXAMPLE, HE INSTILLS IN HIS CHILDREN A DESIRE TO GIVE SOMETHING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY.

BUT MOSTLY, A GOOD FATHER INVOLVES HIMSELF IN HIS KIDS' LIVES.

HE GOES TO ALL THE GAMES, WATCHES ALL YOUR PERFORMANCES, WITNESSES ALL YOUR AWARDS, AND CELEBRATES ALL YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS.

I. A FATHER HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE A POWERFUL FORCE IN THE LIFE OF A CHILD.

KING SOLOMON PASSED GOD'S WISDOM ON TO HIS SON WHEN HE TOLD HIM TO; "*TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO, AND WHEN HE IS OLD HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT.*" [PROVERBS 22:6].

BUT HOW DO YOU TRAIN A CHILD?

I CAN ONLY TELL YOU WHAT I KNOW FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE.

A. DAD TEACHES YOU WHAT GOD TEACHES HIM!

- 1. HE'S YOUR LINK WITH GOD, UNTIL YOU ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP OF YOUR OWN.**
- 2. HE'S YOUR SHELTER UNTIL YOU BUILD A SHELTER OF YOUR OWN.**

3. HE'S YOUR EXAMPLE OF LOVE, UNTIL YOU LEARN TO LOVE ON YOUR OWN.

THE TEXT

EZEKIEL NOW TELLS ANOTHER STORY, A PARABLE ABOUT A SPECIAL BRANCH THAT GOD HIMSELF WILL PLANT.

NEITHER THE EAGLE OF BABYLON NOR THE EAGLE OF EGYPT COULD DELIVER THE ISRAELITE FROM THE OPPRESSION AND SUFFERING OF THIS WORLD.

LASTING PEACE AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY WERE BEYOND THE REACHES OF ANY OF THE WORLD'S NATIONS.

PEACE AND PROSPERITY WAS NOT TO BE FOUND IN THEIR MILITARY POWER OR ECONOMICS BUT THE DAY WAS COMING WHEN GOD HIMSELF WOULD MEET THE NEEDS OF HIS PEOPLE AND OF THE WORLD.

GOD HIMSELF WOULD PLUCK A TENDER BRANCH FROM THE VERY TOP OF THE CEDAR, WHICH REPRESENTED ISRAEL AND THE ROYAL DESCENDANTS OF DAVID, FROM WHOM THE MESSIAH WAS TO COME. [V 22-23]

NOTE WHAT THE LORD SAID: HE WOULD PLANT THE TENDER BRANCH ON THE MOUNTAIN HEIGHTS OF ISRAEL WHICH IS A REFERENCE TO MT. ZION OR JERUSALEM. (MT CALVARY)

THE REFERENCE TO THE TENDER BRANCH, POINTS TO THE FACT THAT THE MESSIAH WOULD COME FROM THE LINE OF DAVID.

GOD THEN PROMISES THAT IT WILL BE A "NOBLE CEDAR, BRINGING FORTH BRANCHES AND BEARING SEED".

CHRIST IS THAT TENDER SPROUT, AND CHRISTIAN FATHERS ARE HIS SEED!

II. WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT THE SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OF OUR FATHERS?

- A. SOME FIND JESUS WITHOUT DAD'S HELP, BUT MOST ARE LED BY A FATHER WHO LONG AGO ACCEPTED CHRIST AS HIS PERSONAL SAVIOR.**
- 1. HE SETS THE EXAMPLE WHILE WE ARE YOUNG.**
 - 2. HE TAKES US TO CHURCH AND INTRODUCES US TO HIS BEST FRIEND, JESUS.**
 - 3. HE TELLS US STORIES OF CHRIST'S LOVE, AND HE NURTURES OUR FAITH UNTIL WE COME TO KNOW JESUS FOR OURSELVES. THAT'S A GREAT FATHER!**

MOST FATHERS WORK VERY HARD TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR FAMILIES, BUT THEY MUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO SACRIFICE THEIR CHILDREN TO THEIR WORK.

ILLUSTRATION

THE STORY IS TOLD OF A YOUNG MAN WHO GOT INTO SOME TROUBLE.

AS HE STOOD BEFORE THE JUDGE IN COURT, THE JUDGE SAID TO HIM, "I KNOW YOUR FATHER. HE'S A FAMOUS AUTHOR."

THE YOUNG MAN NODDED HIS HEAD.

THE JUDGE CONTINUED, "AS I PREPARE TO SENTENCE YOU FOR YOUR CRIME, I WANT YOU TO THINK OF YOUR WONDERFUL FATHER, AND TELL ME...WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER MOST CLEARLY ABOUT HIM?"

THE YOUNG MAN THOUGHT FOR A MOMENT AND SAID, “I REMEMBER ASKING HIM FOR ADVICE, AND HE SAID ‘RUN ALONG SON, I’M BUSY WRITING.’”

AND WHEN I WANTED COMPANIONSHIP, HIS ANSWER WAS ALWAYS, “I’M TOO BUSY!”

THE YOUNG MAN ADDED, “HE FINISHED HIS BOOK, BUT HE LOST HIS SON!”

GREAT FATHERS STRIKE A CAREFUL BALANCE BETWEEN WORK AND PARENTING. OTHERWISE THE “TENDER SPROUTS” THAT SPRING FROM THEIR BRANCHES WILL SOON WITHER.

FATHERS ARE CHALLENGED TO GARNER THEIR STRENGTH FROM OUR SAVIOR, AND LEARN FROM THE MASTER’S WISE COUNSEL.

[PSALM 127:3-4] REMINDS US THAT OUR CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM GOD; THEY ARE {GOD’S} REWARD. IF A FATHER NURTURES HIS CHILDREN, THEY WILL BE LIKE SHARP ARROWS TO DEFEND HIM.

³ *“CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM THE LORD;
THEY ARE A REWARD FROM HIM.*

⁴ *CHILDREN BORN TO A YOUNG MAN
ARE LIKE ARROWS IN A WARRIOR’S HANDS.” {NLT}*

**III. FATHERS, YOU ARE THE SEED OF CHRIST.
PLANT YOURSELF IN FERTILE SOIL AND GROW.
THEN SPREAD YOUR BRANCHES AND NURTURE
THOSE TENDER SHOUTS THAT ARE GOD’S
REWARD TO YOU.**

- A. TELL YOUR CHILDREN...”FOLLOW ME, AS I FOLLOW CHRIST!” YOU WILL REJOICE IF YOU DO! FOR YOUR CHILDREN WILL ONE DAY WALK IN YOUR SPIRITUAL SHOES.

1. **THEY WILL ONE DAY REFLECT THE CHRIST YOU SERVE.**
2. **CHRIST WILL ONE DAY BE THEIR FOUNTAIN OF JOY.**
3. **CHRIST WILL ONE DAY BE THE DELIGHT OF THEIR SOUL.**
4. **CHRIST WILL ONE DAY BE THE AUTHOR OF THEIR SALVATION.**
5. **CHRIST WILL ONE DAY BE THE BUILDER OF THEIR FAITH.**
6. **CHRIST WILL ONE DAY BE THE MEANS OF THEIR ASSURANCE.**
7. **CHRIST WILL ONE DAY BE THEIR SHELTER IN A TIME OF STORM.**
8. **CHRIST WILL ONE DAY BE THEIR SONG IN THE NIGHT.**
9. **THEIR CAPTAIN IN WARFARE.**
10. **THEIR SHEPHERD IN GREEN PASTURES,**
11. **THEIR OBJECT OF WORSHIP,**
12. **THEIR DOCTOR IN A SICKROOM,**
13. **THEIR LAWYER IN A COURTROOM,**
14. **THEIR WAY IN THE WILDERNESS,**
15. **AND THEIR SOURCE OF ALL HOPE.**

CONCLUSION

FATHERS, AS YOUR CHILDREN WALK IN YOUR SPIRITUAL SHOES, TEACH THEM TO SING YOUR SONGS:

HOPE:

**“MY HOPE IS BUILT ON NOTHING LESS,
 THAN JESUS’ BLOOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS,
 I DARE NOT TRUST THE SWEETEST FRAME,
 BUT WHOLLY LEAN ON JESUS’ NAME.**

**ON CHRIST THE SOLID ROCK I STAND,
 WHEN ALL OTHER GROUND IS SINKING SAND.”**

ASSURANCE:

**“BLESSED ASSURANCE, JESUS IS MIND,
 OH WHAT A FORETASTE OF GLORY DEVINE,
 HEIR OF SALVATION, PURCHASED OF GOD,
 BORN OF HIS SPIRIT, WASH IN HIS BLOOD.”**

**BUT THAT MIGHT LEAD THEM TO ASK YOU, “FATHER, WHO
 IS THIS JESUS THAT YOU ARE SINGING ABOUT?”**

THERE IS JUST NOBODY LIKE.....JESUS !!!!

JESUS CHRIST IS THE....

- **FOUNTAIN OF OUR JOY.....**
- **BREAD OF OUR TABLE.....**
- **SONG OF OUR NIGHT.....**
- **FOUNDATION OF OUR BUILDING.....**
- **SOURCE OF OUR COMFORT.....**
- **ROCK OF OUR SHELTER.....**
- **CAPTAIN OF OUR WARFARE.....**

- **SHEPHERD OF OUR PASTURE.....**
- **PILOT OF OUR SHIP.....**
- **STRENGTH OF OUR DAYS.....**
- **MEANS OF OUR ASSURANCE....**
- **ANSWER OF UR QUESTIONS.....**
- **SOLUTION TO OUR PROBLEMS.....**
- **DELIGHT OF OUR SOUL.....**
- **OBJECT OF OUR WORSHIP.....**
- **GIVER OF OUR BLESSINGS....**
- **LAWYER OF OUR CASE.....**
- **OASIS OF OUR DESERT.....**
- **AUTHOR OF OUR SALVATION.....**
- **DOOR OF OUR PRISON.....**
- **WAY OF OUR WILDERNESS.....**
- **WISDOM OF OUR DECISION....**
- **BUILDER OF OUR FAITH.....**
- **HEALER OF OUR BODY....**
- **BACKBONE OF OUR BOLDNESS.....**
- **ENERGY OF OUR STRENGTH....**
- **SACRIFICE OF OUR ALTAR....**
- **COMPOSITION OF OUR CREED...**

- CAUSE OF OUR HOPE....
- HEAD OF OUR CHURCH.....

NO, THERE JUST ISN'T ANYBODY ELSE LIKE HIM!!!

GO AHEAD AND TELL THEM THAT:

1. HE WAS BORN IN BETHLEHEM;
2. HE WAS REARED IN NAZARETH;
3. HE WAS BAPTIZED IN THE JORDON;
4. HE WAS TEMPTED IN THE WILDERNESS;
5. HE PERFORMED MIRACLES IN A DESERT PLACE
6. HE RODE INTO JERUSALEM ON A BORROWED ASS;
7. HE ATE WITH HIS DISCIPLES IN THE UPPER ROOM;
8. HE PRAYED IN GETHSEMANE;
9. HE WAS TRIED IN PILATE'S HALL;
10. EARLY ONE FRIDAY MORNING, THEY LED HIM UP GOLGOTHA'S RUGGED BROW;
11. THEY STRETCHED HIM WIDE, AND THEY HUNG HIM HIGH;
12. HE DIED,.....
13. THEY BURIED HIM IN A BORROWED TOMB;
14. HE STAYED THERE ALL DAY FRIDAY, ALL NIGHT FRIDAY NIGHT, ALL DAY SATURDAY, AND ALL NIGHT SATURDAY NIGHT, BUT EARLY SUNDAY

MORNING, HE GOT UP WITH ALL POWER IN HIS HANDS.

THERE IS JUST NOBODY LIKE.....JESUS !!!!

JESUS CHRIST IS THE....

- **FOUNTAIN OF OUR JOY.....**
- **BREAD OF OUR TABLE.....**
- **SONG OF OUR NIGHT.....**
- **FOUNDATION OF OUR BUILDING.....**
- **SOURCE OF OUR COMFORT.....**
- **ROCK OF OUR SHELTER.....**
- **CAPTAIN OF OUR WARFARE.....**
- **SHEPHERD OF OUR PASTURE.....**
- **PILOT OF OUR SHIP.....**
- **STRENGTH OF OUR DAYS.....**
- **MEANS OF OUR ASSURANCE....**
- **ANSWER OF UR QUESTIONS.....**
- **SOLUTION TO OUR PROBLEMS.....**
- **DELIGHT OF OUR SOUL.....**
- **OBJECT OF OUR WORSHIP.....**
- **GIVER OF OUR BLESSINGS....**
- **LAWYER OF OUR CASE.....**

- **OASIS OF OUR DESERT.....**
- **AUTHOR OF OUR SALVATION.....**
- **DOOR OF OUR PRISON.....**
- **WAY OF OUR WILDERNESS.....**
- **WISDOM OF OUR DECISION....**
- **BUILDER OF OUR FAITH.....**
- **HEALER OF OUR BODY....**
- **BACKBONE OF OUR BOLDNESS.....**
- **ENERGY OF OUR STRENGTH....**
- **SACRIFICE OF OUR ALTAR....**
- **COMPOSITION OF OUR CREED...**
- **CAUSE OF OUR HOPE....**
- **HEAD OF OUR CHURCH.....**

NO, THERE JUST ISN'T ANYBODY ELSE LIKE HIM!!!