



FATHER'S DAY 5th **September 2021.**

Scripture: John 4:46-54

The law given to Moses and the people of Israel some 4000yrs commanded God's people to "honour your father and your mother" not just once a year, but at all times.

Honouring parents is, in fact, honouring God who provides parents and families as a way of protecting children and preserving life and order among people.

Sadly, many parents fail in their duty and obligation to their children.

So today, we are celebrating God, our Heavenly Father, who lives and cares for each one of us.

The Christian faith acknowledges Jesus Christ as the one and only Son of God. Yet Jesus taught His disciples and us to address God as "Our Father in Heaven."

Since Jesus is the Only Son of God – why did He invite us all to call God Father?

Jesus holds a unique position as God Incarnate, the 2nd person of the Holy Trinity. Consistent with Jesus' teachings believers have always used the word Father when referring to God.

Father = Source

Our earthly fathers are an important source of our genetic make-up but God is the ultimate source of our lives. He knows us before we were conceived and formed in the womb.

Verses 13-16 of Psalm 139 reads:

“For you created my inmost being, you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made, Your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, Your eyes saw my unformed body.

All the days ordained for me were written in Your book, before one of them came to be.”

Father = Provision

Fathers find joy in giving to their children. That’s because a chief role of fatherhood is to provide.

Matthew 7:11 reads:

“If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will Your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask Him.”

Father = Correction

Children don’t like discipline, but it fosters security knowing their parents love them enough to correct wayward behaviour.

Good parents mirror the fatherhood of God when they administer the short term pain of discipline to shape a child’s long term character.

Hebrews 12:5-6 reads:

My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline and do not lose heart when He rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those He loves and He punishes everyone He accepts as a son or daughter.”

Father = Love

For those who are parents, you probably received a small taste of how God feels as “Our Father in Heaven.” When parents look into the face of their newborn baby, they know they will love the child no matter what. That’s exactly how God feels about us.

1 John 3:1, 9-10 reads:

“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God. And that is what we are.

No-one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them, they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God.

This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother or sister.”

Let’s take a look at the story in John 4:46-54.

Here is a dad, **stressed** by work and with worries at home.

He **can’t concentrate on his job** anymore because he has a son who is sick and could die, while he has to work far from home.

He **feels guilty** for he loves his son but perhaps has never told him so and now he may never see him alive again

Here is Jesus, returned from Jerusalem, **sad** that most people just want miracles not faith.

Jesus is **worried** that even the people in His home area just want signs and wonders and not words from God.

Jesus is back at the place where He turned water into wine but He is **disappointed** because it seems no-one has understood the difference He can make to the inside of people's lives.

Suddenly the dad **remembers** that wedding and what he had seen happen and he knows he has to **share his faith out loud** for the sake of his son.

Jesus responds – is it miracles you want or me? Yet Jesus is **moved** by the father's faith.

This father **believes** that only Jesus has the power over life and death. His faith is public now.

Jesus declares – Your son will live – and he heals him there and then, from a distance, in a moment and for ever.

What an expression of faith.

Without seeing it happen **the father believes**

Without a sign or a wonder, this father **obeys**

Without doubt or reservation, this father **sets off home.**

And as this father goes **he meets with a miracle.**

This father is **reordering his life:** faith in God first, love for family second and then doing his job can take its proper place.

This is a sign of life for us all.

The letters of Father can be spelt like this:

F = Faith. You cannot be the best father possible unless you have a saving faith. Regardless of how much you love your children, if you have never trusted Christ, you fall short of God's expectation for you as a father.

A = Adversity. How you handle adversity influences how your children will handle it. They remember how you took them through the trials of life. A simple saying is: Did he cuss and fuss, did he whine or shine?

T = Teacher. Although we have the public education system, private schools, Christian schools and home-schooling fathers are ultimately accountable for the teaching of their children. This means you must be available you must invest your time in teaching them.

H = Helper. A father needs to help with the homework, school projects, games, someone a child can lean on. Of course, the father is also to help his wife.

E = Encouragement. One of the best ways to encourage is to let your children know you care – when they fall down and get hurt, when they have had a bad day, when friends have hurt their feelings, when their plans don't turn out like they wanted. You need to be their best friend.

R = Reputation. Proverbs 22:1 says “A good name is more desirable than riches to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.”

Your reputation is important to your children, to God and ought to be important to yourself.

We live in a fallen world and often, it takes courage to be different – it takes courage to service the Lord; it takes courage to live for God today.

Fathers, and for that matter all of us – men, women and children, who follow Christ, need to stand for:

Right and righteousness; Faith and faithfulness; Persistence and perseverance and Stewardship and servitude.