A Vision and Celebration of Father’s Day
Text: Eph.6:1-4; Prov.20:7
Big Idea:
God provided us with Father’s to lead and guide us towards maturity in Christ. We should respect and honor them.

Introduction

A word of Context for Father’s and those who have/ had them. Father’s Day is mix of Emotions: Good Fathers, Bad Father’s, Ok Fathers, Lost Father’s, New Fathers, Current Father’s, Grandfathers, longing to be Father’s, Spiritual Fathers. Recognize you!

The Importance of Fatherhood: Feb 2000, BBC reported a story about Orphaned Young Bull Elephants attacking and killing over 36 rhino’s in a game park in Eastern South Africa. Orphaned in the early 1990’s as the bulls grew up they became more aggressive. Another park in South Africa had a similar problem until they introduced 6 mature bull elephants at which point the killing’s stopped.

Leadership—Teaching boundaries and restraint, proper behavior
Guidance

Stats on Fatherhood:
The need for Father’s: 1960 only 10% were without that rate has climbed to 40% today.
Children with Father’s are less likely to be in Poverty (2012-U.S. Health Department-47.6% poverty rate of female head households)
Children with Father’s do better in School (2001 Department of Education—Involved Father’s in school were 43% more likely to receive A’s—without Father’s were twice as likely to repeat a grade)
Children without Father’s are more likely to be sexually active as teenagers (Without Father’s are twice as likely to engage in early sexual activity and 7 times to get pregnant as adolescents).

How do Father’s Affect Faith?
The Demographic Characteristics of National Minorities in Certain European States: 1994 Swiss Survey of their population. Asked the additional question: “The question was asked to determine whether a person’s religion carried through to the next generation, and if so, why, or if not, why not. The result is dynamite. There is one critical factor. It is overwhelming, and it is this: It is the religious practice of the father of the family that, above all, determines the future attendance at or absence from church of the children.”

If both father and mother attend regularly, 33 percent of their children will end up as regular churchgoers, and 41 percent will end up attending irregularly. Only a quarter of their children will end up not practicing at all. If the father is irregular and mother regular, only 3 percent of the children will subsequently become regulars themselves, while a further 59 percent will become irregulars. Thirty-eight percent will be lost.
If the father is non-practicing and mother regular, only 2 percent of children will become regular
worshippers, and 37 percent will attend irregularly. Over 60 percent of their children will be lost completely to the church.

Let us look at it the other way round. What happens if the father is regular but the mother irregular or non-practicing? Extraordinarily, the percentage of children becoming regular goes up from 33 percent to 38 percent with the irregular mother and to 44 percent with the non-practicing, as if loyalty to father’s commitment grows in proportion to mother’s laxity, indifference, or hostility.

Before mothers despair, there is some consolation for faithful moms. Where the mother is less regular than the father but attends occasionally, her presence ensures that only a quarter of her children will never attend at all.

Even when the father is an irregular attender there are some extraordinary effects. An irregular father and a non-practicing mother will yield 25 percent of their children as regular attenders in their future life and a further 23 percent as irregulars. This is twelve times the yield where the roles are reversed.

God designed Fatherhood to matter! To impact. To make a difference. It does.

Texts:

Ephesians 6:1-4- “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), 3 “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” 4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Proverbs 3:11-12- 11 My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, 12 for the Lord reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

Proverbs 20:7- The righteous who walks in his integrity—blessed are his children after him!

Proverbs 17:6- “Grandchildren are the crown of the aged, and the glory of children is their fathers.

Big Idea:

God provided us with Father’s to lead and guide us towards maturity in Christ. We should respect and honor them.

Outline:

Vision of Fatherhood & Celebration of Fatherhood

Vision of Fatherhood

Vs. 4” Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

What is a Father?

Looking to God as our Heavenly Father.

Creator and originator of us, but more than that! God’s Fatherhood is a special and unique thing that not everyone shares in.

Personal Knowledge—Never knew you (Shepherd knows his sheep)

Personal Love-
Personal Guidance and Responsibility of - Speaks to and guides each of us
We must RECEIVE God’s Fatherhood in our lives if we are to be the Father’s He calls us to be. God is the perfect Father, so no matter who you’re earthly Father was or has been turn to your heavenly Father.
How? Through Grace by Faith in Christ.
Jesus shares His Father with us! He invites us into His Family by trusting in Him.

Earthly Father’s - We must REFLECT God’s Fatherhood.
Father’s are intended to lead! God made men to be leader’s, models, examples to the family.
Lead by Conviction: (Convictions lead to Character) Thermostat vs. Thermometer (Reflecting vs. Setting).

God is worthy, beautiful, good.
Ordering and following Christ yourself-
“A righteous Man who walks in His integrity, blessed are His children after him”
"And so the most important question a father can ask is not what shall I teach my children, but rather who am I before the living God and before my children?"
John Piper

Vs. 4” Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Do not provoke to Anger
Something to Avoid - Anger is devastating to the soul. Abiding resentment, bitterness, scars on their soul.
NOT, never make them angry. Loving someone will at times lead to them being angry with you!
Not trying to please your children.
How do you respond when disrespected? How do you speak/treat your children?
In the Discipline and Instruction
A balance between training and instruction. Nurture and Admonition.
Training (Discipline)- Firmness, boundaries
Instruction (Counseling- Listening, coxing, loving, bringing them along).
Can create a lasting anger and scar by NO balance: The Balance of Truth vs. Love.
Over-Disciplining – Never talking and counseling and always disciplining.
Under-Disciplining – Only talking and never enforcing.

But bring them up- Bring is a process of helping them reach maturity.
Goal is to help them reach maturity, to be independent from you!
Shouldn’t be shoved out to be dependent before being able to be (They need the freedom and safety to fail).
Shouldn’t be held on so tightly - they need to get out and be independent. Not helping them!
Of the Lord - The goal is to point them to Christ in all you do as a parent (3 things). Who is God to you? Moral abdication is not an option!
Pray for them
Share your testimony with them
Live a life of integrity and consistency before them
Confess when you fail!
How do you do these?
The gospel-good news of Jesus: Loved but yet broken.
Over-Discipline- Need for perfection and children to be like you. Identity not found in Christ, in His love and acceptance of you and your imperfection.
Under-Discipline-Need for children’s affirmation for your worth. Identity not found in God’s declaration that you are worthy because of Christ’s death and resurrection for you!
Overly-Dependent-Using your children for something that only God can give you, sense of affirmation and meaning.
Pushing them out-Not allowing the gospel to set you free to die to selfishness and experience joy in humble sacrifice for the betterment of your children.
Gospel gives you a genuine testimony of God’s grace in your sinfulness!

Celebration of Fatherhood
Obedience and Respect
Forgiveness and Reconciliation
Encouragement and Affirmation

Application: Be A Father-Figure to someone! We live a culture that is desperately in need of male role models to pour into younger men and women! Open your home, invite the next generation in to see how to love and care for a wife and children.