

Father's Day

June 19, 2005 a.m.

Mark 2:1-5 (NKJV)

And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. [2] Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. [3] Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. [4] And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. [5] When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "**Son, your sins are forgiven you.**"

Father's Day was conceived by a lady named **Sonora Dodd** of Spokane, Washington while she listened to a Mother's Day sermon at her church in 1909. She wanted a special day to honor her father, a man named William Smart. His wife had died while giving birth to their sixth child. Despite all of the obvious hardships, Mr. Smart raised the baby along with his five other children by himself.

It wasn't until **Sonora Dodd** became an adult that she realized the strength and selflessness her father had shown in raising his six children as a single parent. So she went to the mayor of her city and proposed that a day be set aside to honor fathers.

The mayor of Spokane thought it was a good idea and proclaimed June 19, 1910 as the first Father's Day because June was the month of William Smart's birth.

The first presidential proclamation honoring fathers was issued in 1966 when President **Lyndon Johnson** designated the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. Father's Day has been celebrated annually since 1972 when President **Richard Nixon** signed the public law that made it permanent.

William Smart was obviously a good father and deserved to be honored. There are still many men who deserve to be honored for being good fathers.

There are many in this church today who are wonderful fathers and I congratulate you. If you have a good father, today is the day to tell him that you love him and appreciate him. However, you should do that more than one day a year. Time goes by so quickly. You need to let those you love know that they are special every chance you get.

Father's are extremely important in the lives of their children. Children need their fathers! There is a crisis in America today because so many fathers have abandoned their children.

A survey was made by the National Center For Fathering that found that 72.2 percent of the people in America believe that the most significant family or social problem facing America today is children without a father in the home.

Currently in America, 57.7 percent of all black children, 31.8 percent of all Hispanic children, and 20.9 percent of all white children are living in a single-parent home.

This is a gigantic problem.

According to various surveys.....

Fatherless children are at a dramatically greater risk of drug and alcohol abuse than those who have a father in the home.

Children who live apart from their fathers are two to three times as likely to have emotional and behavioral problems.

Three out of four teenage suicides occur in households where a parent has been absent.

Fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school.

Fatherless children are more likely to be in trouble with the law than their peers who grow up with two parents.

The list goes on and on.

The problem is perpetuated because those who do not have the benefits of growing up in a good Christian environment with a loving father and mother don't have that pattern to follow when they have children of their own.

So boys who grow up without a father tend to abandon their kids too. And the cycle continues from generation to generation.

God's word tells us of the importance of a father's blessing in the home.

It tells us that it is a father's responsibility to teach his children to serve the Lord.

Fathers in the Bible put their hands on their sons and spoke God's word over them. When Jacob was on his deathbed, Joseph came to him with his two sons so that he could bless them. He told them who they were and what they could accomplish in their lives.

The people of Israel understood who they were largely because individual men learned who they were from their fathers and grandfathers.

There are multiplied thousands of young men in America today who do not know who they are. They never had fathers who told them who they were, either in their human family, or in God's family.

Boys who don't have a father figure to pattern their lives by, will run the streets looking someone to give them a sense of identity and a name.

Eventually they'll find someonemost likely in a gang. they'll take on their name and become a Cryp or a Blood or a Latin King or a Los Zetas or a Skinhead or an Untouchable. They'll take on the identity of their "older brothers" in the gang. They will fill the role of a father to him, telling him who he is and what he's destined to be and do.

They'll tell them how tough they are and teach them to do drugs and to steal and to rape and hurt other people. That is what has happened to many young boys in America. Their fathers have abandoned them and they have no sense of God's love for them and His plan for their lives.

Every boy needs a name. He needs an identity.

Jacob refused to die until he could lay his hands on his sons and grandsons and tell them who they were and what they were destined to do.

You and I need to tell our sons who they are in God. We need to tell them that God loves them and that we love them. We need to quote Scripture to them and tell them ... “You are more than a conqueror; You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you; You are a son of the most high God; You have been purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross;

You are a joint-heir with Christ, a prince of the King of Kings. There’s greatness in you. You’re not a slave but a son and an heir of God through Christ.”

Many young men grow up never hearing those words.

They hear things like....Who do you think you are anyway? You’re a nobody; You’re a loser; You’re a doper; You’re a thief; You’re worthless; You’re lazy; You’re too fat; You’re too skinny.

There were some boys in the Bible who were given names that no one should have had to grow up with. Jacob was one of those boys. His name meant “trickster,” “Schemer,” “Deceiver,”.

When I was growing up, my daddy would say, “Ronny, do this and Ronny do that.”

When Jacob was growing up his daddy would say, “Schemer, take out the trash;” Schemer, where are you going?” Schemer, where have you been?”

Every time someone called Jacob’s name they were telling him that he was no good. That he was a schemer, a plotter, a manipulator, a con man. And Jacob believed what they said and became what they said he was.

He tricked his father into giving him the blessing that belonged to his brother. He tricked his uncle into giving him herds of sheep and he was scheming to trick his brother when he had an encounter with God. He wrestled with God all night until he finally cried out to God, “Bless me!”

And God said, **“What’s your name?” I am Jacob,** (the trickster, the con man, the schemer.)”

And God said, **“No you’re not. You are Israel.** You are a prince, the child of God, and you have power with God.” “You may have done what people say you did, but you are not who people say you are.”

O, how the children and teenagers in America need to here those words! “You are made in the image of God! He has a wonderful plan and a purpose for your life. You are destined for greatness!” Rather than, “You’re no good”, and “You’ll never amount to anything!”

There is another story in the Bible that I want to tell you about. It’s about a man who was sick with palsy.

In many of the stories in the Bible we are given not only the man’s name but also his father’s name. For example, we are told that the blind man who Jesus healed in Jericho was Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus.

When a man’s name and his father’s name are given in the Bible, the implication is that the man was important. When a man’s name is not given it often indicates that he was not well known.

We are not told the name of the man with palsy. We don’t know his name and we don’t know his father’s name. For that matter, he may not have known his own father.

As I said before, in the Bible fathers gave their sons status. They gave them their identity. If a boy didn’t have a father, he didn’t have full identity.

Fatherless boys were often called by their problem, not their names. They were labeled just like this man was labeled. He was known as the man who was sick of palsy. He was identified by his condition.

You may be one of those guys who is known by your condition or known by your past actions. Maybe your father deserted you and you never knew him. Maybe your father abused you and you grew up known as the boy who was abused by his father.

This nameless man did have one advantage however, he had some friends who cared enough about him to bring him to Jesus.

You know the story. The house where Jesus was preaching was so crowded that they couldn't get in through the door so they got their friend up on the roof and made a hole in it and lowered him down through the hole to Jesus.

The thing I want you to notice is what Jesus called this man who everyone else called, "the man who was sick of the palsy." **Jesus called him "son".**

He looked beyond the man's problem and looked into his person. He spoke to him and gave him a name that gave him a relationship. Jesus gave this man an identity, even before He forgave his sins and healed his body.

The man may not have known his earthly father but Jesus became more to him than his earthly father could have ever been.

He said, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

Jesus wants to do the same for every boy and every man in this room.

He wants to be your father. It doesn't matter what kind of childhood you may have had. It doesn't matter what others may have called you. It doesn't matter what kind of earthly father you may have had. You're true identity comes from what God says about you.

When you receive Jesus Christ as your Savior, you become a child of God; A member of His family; He becomes your father. The number one problem in our society is children without fathers. The cure for that problem for them to realize that even though their earthly father may have deserted them, they have a heavenly father who loves them and will never leave them or forsake them.

We must reach the children of this generation with the gospel (the good news that God loves them). The cycle of fatherless homes and Christ-less homes can be broken and a new cycle can begin..... Fathers who love the Lord and pass their faith on to their children who pass it on to their children who pass it on to their children! That's God plan!

Romans 8:15-17 (NKJV)

For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." [16] The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, [17] and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.....

Galatians 4:4-7 (NKJV)

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, [5] to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. [6] And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" [7] Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

1 Peter 2:9-10 (NKJV)

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; [10] who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Father's, tell your children that you love them. Tell them that God loves them and that He wants them to prosper and accomplish great things.

The greatest gift you could ever give to your children is to pass on to them your faith in Christ.

Maybe you have not been the kind of godly father you should be to your children. It's not too late to start. Commit your life to Jesus and let him help you to become the kind of father you ought to be.

Maybe you had a good father but you haven't been the kind of son or daughter you should be to him. Why don't you do something that will make him proud? Why don't you commit your life to Jesus Christ and start living your life the way He wants you to live?

When the man was brought to Jesus, Jesus said to him, "Son, your sins are forgiven." He will say the same to you if you will come to Him today.

Give invitation!