

# Showing the Love of God and Giving Hope to Homeless Women and Men

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## Study Bibles for People in Need

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### Fathers and Sons

Another Father's Day is upon us, and, honestly, I am not sure what else can be said on the subject. Many books have been written and sermons preached. Having grown up in the church, I have literally heard them all my life. With multiple teaching times just ahead, I had no intention of adding more to that. My journal is full of other thoughts and verses written down believing one day they will encourage and equip men in our walks with the Lord. But today my focus was turned to this timely subject—fathers and sons.

I have been a son since the day I was born and a father more than thirty years. I recently became a “grand”-father. Being a father is a great honor and privilege, yet our high office is not without trials and tribulations. The

responsibilities can be intimidating—sometimes overwhelming. Most of us men do not want to let cracks in the armor of our manhood become exposed. But at some point in our lives as fathers, they are.

The Bible contains many examples of fathers and sons. My mind was taken to three that give us much to read, chew on, and digest as we consider them in the context of our own experiences as fathers and sons.

### **Abraham and Isaac. The faith of a father—the love and trust of a son.**

The story of Abraham spans Genesis 12 – 25. Much of that covers the twenty-five years from God's promise he would have an heir and descendants "as numerous as the stars". Abram was 75 when he received the promise—100 when he received his son, Isaac.

While his age is a great conversation among biblical apologists, Isaac was young man when God gave his father the most incredible order in biblical history. God commanded Abraham to "take his son, his only son whom you love (and had waited on for 25 years) and sacrifice him" (Genesis 22:2) – a burnt offering at that!

In the next verse we read the most amazing act of obedience in all of Scripture apart from Jesus Himself. Abraham packed up what he needed, got Isaac, and headed for Mount Moriah to sacrifice his son. The most incredible thing that is easy to miss (because it is not there) is this—no argument from Abraham. As fathers, we would have been screaming, crying, and begging God to relent on such a ridiculous command.

It is probably safe to say no father ever loved his son more than Abraham loved Isaac. Yet in complete and swift obedience, he prepared to kill him. But do not forget about Isaac. We know he questioned his father about where the

sacrifice was. Abraham simply told him God would provide (Jehovah Jireh). The love and trust of Isaac for his father is obvious in his obedience. He was old enough to have resisted being placed on a pile of wood to be the sacrifice. Abraham was old. Isaac probably could have taken away the knife. But he did not.

We know how the story turned out. God stayed the hand of Abraham, sparing the life of Isaac and immeasurable grief for his father. What did we learn?

- *As fathers, we must also be men of faith, believing God, taking Him at His word, communicating (ongoing process) that to our sons in words and actions.*

## **David and Solomon. A Portrait of Contradiction and Consistency**

That is an odd way to position this part of our lesson. But the Bible clearly teaches that David was indeed both. He was an amazing young man who began writing worship songs watching sheep and continued throughout his life. He believed God completely and stepped in to kill a giant who defied Him as the 'real' Israeli soldiers cowered in fear. He loved His Lord God with all his heart. He is the only man in the Bible that God Himself called, "*a man after My own Heart*". (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22)

But 0 did David have issues!!! Lust surrendered to that led to adultery and murder. That followed by the death of his child. Too many wives and too many dysfunctional sons. One who raped his sister. Another killed him for that. Later he led a rebellion against his father.

Much of what befell David were consequences of his sin. Yet we know from the most powerful Psalm of all (Psalm 51), David was broken and repentant before the Lord in all of this. When confronted by the prophet of God attending him, he was accountable for his sins.

And who grew up in all of this? Solomon. Solomon was not in line to be David's heir, but God selected him, and David honored that despite major ramifications from the "rightful heir" son.

David wanted most of all to build God a house – temple – worthy of His magnificence and made all the plans and preparations to do so. But God halted that; instead giving that honor to Solomon. Once again, as with Abraham, we do not read that David complained. Instead he wrote a psalm of praise to God.

When David was about to go Home to be with His Lord, he called Solomon to him and spoke these words.

*"So be strong, act like a man, and observe what the Lord your God requires: Walk in obedience to Him, and keep His decrees and commands, His laws and regulations, as written in the Law of Moses. Do this so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go..."* 1 Kings 2: 2-3

What do we learn from such a relationship filled with contradiction on one hand and consistency on the other?

- As fathers, our lives mirror David's more than we readily admit—as least in public. **We all fail miserably and often.** The question is what do you do when confronted with your sin? Get defensive and deny it? Or get humble and confess it, accepting responsibilities for your sins against your Creator and our Lord Jesus Christ?
- Despite his failures as a father, David's lasting impression on Solomon was he chose the latter. And for that he is hailed by His Father God as "a man after My own heart". **As fathers, let us strive to be known, like David, as "forgiven failures"** who model

the same humble and contrite hearts to our sons. That is a legacy worth leaving!

## **The Father and the Son**

God the Father and Jesus the Son. This might seem the more challenging and unusual of the three parts of this lesson. It turned out to be the easiest to write, but perhaps the most difficult for us fathers to apply. In the three examples that follow, it is not His Son that benefits. It is you and me! Consider,

– **Sacrificial love.** Most of the time when we think of this concept, the sacrificial love of Christ, the Son, for us comes to mind. That is supported by many scriptures. But in the best-known verse in the Bible, John 3: 16, Jesus speaks of the sacrificial love of God. He gave His Son to die as a sacrifice.

– **Tough love.** This concept was introduced to me through a book on parenting by James Dobson, PhD. It has since been applied to other areas of life including marriage. Reduced to a sentence,

*Tough love means holding firm to (biblical) truths and convictions in relationships even when the impact on others may be painful and not seem “loving” in the cultural sense.*

It was “tough love” of God that stayed His hand from bringing His Son down from that cross because it should have been you and me there. What He should have done was brought on mankind the judgement due after thousands of years of second chances and failed covenant relationships (on man’s part).

But He did not. Instead He listened as His Son cried out, “My God, My God why have you forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27: 46) That, my dear brothers, is the toughest love ever

applied which brings us to the third love that is the result of the first two.

– **Saving love.** Every Christian knows what this means. It is the saving love of God that the Apostle Paul talked about in Romans 5: 8.

*“...God demonstrates His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

It is the saving love of Jesus that Paul again described in Galatians 2: 20

*“...but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in **the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.**”*

As fathers, lovers of our children (and their mothers), let us strongly take to heart these examples.

- *Sacrificial Love – when it costs me something or I do not benefit from its expression.*
- *Tough Love – when it hurts me and the one on the other end of this biblical love.*
- *Saving love – we cannot offer, but one of the greatest demonstrations of our love for others is when we point them to the only One Who can save them – Christ our Risen Savior.*

Yours for Christ's sake,

*Walter*

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# **What Men Can Learn About ‘How to Pray’ from a Teenage Girl**

<https://desperatemen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Desperate-Men-Ministry-Monday-Dec.-17-Advent-Week-Three-Joy-pt-1-60....mp3>

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# **Only One Election Away – There Are No Political Solutions for Spiritual Problems**

<https://desperatemen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Desperate-Men-Ministry-Friday-July-20-Donor-Spot-Three-60-sec-final....mp3>

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# **The Issue Is Suicide – The Message Is Hope**

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# **Taking Our Turn In the Crucible of Wealth – Hard Lessons for ALL Men on a Sensitive Subject**

Jesus had a lot to say about wealth and rich people. Some of it is scary. Not all was meant for people with a lot of money.

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## **Dads date your daughters to build lasting relationships!**

After we saw the newest version of this movie on our most recent 'date', I could not wait to write a brief word of encouragement to dads – especially you young ones. Date your daughters! Ignoring the fact that the most recent half of this picture was taken by the poster in a dark section of the theater, this pic represents a twenty-five year span of dating my daughter.

Beauty and the Beast (Disney cartoon version) was released about twenty-five years ago. Gracie, my daughter, was three or four years old at the time. (She is a little older than that in the above pic as we recently moved and could not find one at that specific age.)

One of the first dates I remember was taking her to see this movie. Today, it remains one of our favorites. So a couple of months ago when I saw the advance notice it would be released in March, I



immediately texted her to get on her calendar for a repeat date – twenty-five years later.

We had a lot of dates in between. But dads, it does get harder as our daughters grow into their teen and college years. Two things are required to keep it going. You have to want to make it happen. Then you have to make time in your schedule to do so.

I remember times Gracie was reluctant to go out with me or attend father-daughter functions. I recall one particular time in high school when she reluctantly went with me to such an event, mostly because her friends were going with their dads. When the DJ played what I call an old ‘beach music’ song, I taught her to Shag – the most famous dance of the Carolinas – which I did very well back in the day and well enough still to impress her. We did the same dance at her wedding. Very special!

As a young dad, I was instructed by older ones that dating our daughters from an early age was the best way to build a longstanding relationship with them. Great advice! I am so proud of my daughter who is a godly, young woman and successful entrepreneur, married to a rising country star. Boy, did he marry well! (Notwithstanding the fact that he got me as a FIL.)

Dads, it is even harder today to raise a godly, young woman than it was when I began being her dad. Secular media is relentless in trying to “help” us raise our kids, especially girls. What they should believe. What they are supposed to look like and how to dress. The lies come at them from many sides and sources. Self-esteem issues flow out of those trash-filled streams and can begin very young. Dads play an important role in being Truth-bearers – **even when it is not popular to hear.**

I have to interject I have a great wife, and my kids have the best mom who was there to nurture them at every turn and serve as a wonderful role model, especially for my daughter.

But dads serve a different role. As her dad, you are the first *man in her life*. That privilege is a gift from the Lord and accompanied by

great responsibilities. You are the first man to love her and model, the best you can with all your flaws, what a man of God looks like and how she should be treated and respected. We have to love our daughters, hug them when they think it is cool to be hugged by their daddies, and when it becomes uncool as they get older – when butterfly kisses turn into looks that suggest you are the dumbest man on the planet. That is when you earn your ‘dad stripes’.

If you do not do that, you will learn the hard way there are many boys/young men eager to treat her in ways that are anything but respectful. She needs to learn from you (and her mom) what is unacceptable and be willing to let them know what she stands for and what she won’t.

I confess, there were (many) occasions I had to swallow my pride and the need to be right in order to apologize or ask forgiveness when I was wrong or she called me out and did not want anything to do with me. No one said being a dad is easy. It ranks just behind being a mom in difficulty!

Dads, our mandate is to raise our little girls to become godly, young women – the wives and mothers of the next generation who are strong and confident. Strong in the Lord and His power. Confident in Whose they are, NOT who they are. Princesses of the King, the Most High God.

Let me close with one of my favorite verses (excerpted) David wrote about our daughters.

*“Let our...daughters (be) as corner pillars fashioned as for a palace.”*  
(excerpt Psalm 144: 12 NASB)

Corner pillars are strong and vital. *“Fashioned as for a palace”* really fit Gracie because she began in the fashion world as a toddler, always dressing up and putting on shows. Interesting that she majored in that in college years later. But for us as dads, it means something different.

*Fashioned as for a palace* is part of our roles as dads. We play a

vital role in 'fashioning' or shaping our daughters to be godly, young women, able and willing to serve in the palace – around the throne of Christ our King. I did some dumb things as a dad. But I must have done a few things right because my daughter is a child of the King and still willing to go out with me on dates.

*Walter*