

## Fathers Need a Role Model

Every father needs a role model! Fathers can only project to their children what they have experienced in life. If they have had poor role models growing up, more than likely they will be a poor role model to their children. But if a father would just stop and reflect what we read in God's word about God's attitude toward His children then they might get a total different picture of what a father should really be like.

What we want to do today is to look at God as our heavenly Father. As we look at the way in which our heavenly Father, operates within the lives of His children it is my hope that it might stir the hearts of fathers in general to emulate God as Role Model in dealing with our children. Sometimes, it is hard for some children to relate to God as their heavenly Father because they have had such lousy fathers as their role model. So it is very hard for them to relate to God who loves His children.

It would be good if all the fathers here this morning would look to our heavenly Father as our role model so that we can be better fathers to our children. Now, the question is: Who are "God's Children"? The answer can only be found in God's word. Rom. 8:15; "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." So who are His children? They are those who have accepted Jesus Christ - as their Lord and Savior and have been adopted into the family of God. He is their heavenly Father and we are His children. God has no grandchildren or great-grandchildren, but He has a host of children. And He seeks to be their role model. Isn't it great to have a role model like that.

What about unsaved fathers, who do they have to refer to as their role model? Certainly not God. Jesus told the Pharisees of His day that "you are of your father the Devil and his will they will obey. In other words he is their role model. Eph. 2:2,3; "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Aren't you glad that you don't have the devil as your role model any more? He goes on to say in verse 4; "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:"

You see, now that we are the children of God and no longer a child of the devil, then how does He react toward us who are His children? Is he totally oblivious to our needs - or does He take an interest in what goes on in our lives? Is He like many fathers today who just kind of brushes their kids off and say, "go on outside and play, I go more important things to do"; Does he focus on his children only when it is convenient. Does He have an active role in our lives? Is God really interested in what goes on in our daily lives?

Look at Matt. 7:11 and see what Jesus Himself says about the Father's interaction with His children. Our heavenly father provides our needs.

Matt. 7:11; "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Notice that Jesus said that Father gives "good things" to them that ask" – what good things is He talking about? Paul tells us in Rom. 8:28; "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." It means that God is so involved in our lives that He knows exactly what we need to bring about those thing that He deems to be for our God and His glory.

A lot of times, we ask for things that we want to consume it upon our own lust. James 4:3; "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." You see, God loves His children so much that He will not give us things that He knows would be harmful to us or cause us to turn away from Him.

The Family image of father-hood should reflect the pattern we see in our heavenly Father in that we are desire to give our children things that they ask for if we know that they are going to be good for them. And they are truly in need of it. We seek to provide for them just like our Heavenly Father provides for all of His children's needs. That should be the main desire of every father here this morning, as we focus in on our Heavenly roll model.

As we focus in on Him this morning, we see several things that our heavenly father does for us, His children, that we as earthly fathers need to do for our children as well. So let's look at some other things that our heavenly Father does for us?

First of all Our heavenly Father shows His love for His children. This love and affection of our heavenly Father is both articulated and demonstrated by Him.

through the scriptures. 1 John 3:1 "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." John 3:16; "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." 1 John 4:9,10; "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

As earthly fathers, we should get into the habit of following our heavenly role model by telling our children that God loves them and we love them. And there is nothing that they can do that will quench that love. Even when they disobey you, and you have to discipline them, let them know that you still love them very much, even thou they disobeyed you.

How often do we disobey our heavenly Father, but He still assures us that His love for us has not changed. In fact He so loved us even before we become His children. His correction is based on love. Heb. 12:6; "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he

receiveth.”

Now, why does God discipline his children. Why doesn't He just forget it and let go. After all the unsaved seem to do what ever they want and get away with it. Even our earthly fathers lets us get away with things at times and doesn't discipline us for every little things. So, why doesn't God let us get away with it? Hebrews gives us a little insight to that question: Heb. 12:8-10; “But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.”

Another thing God does for His children is that His is able to cleanse us from all our sins. This is something that earthly fathers cannot do. Now, I know that our Catholic friends think that there priests have the authority to forgive sin. But folks that is not what the Bible says. Only God has the power to forgive sins. And He is able to do this because of Jesus Christ, His Son, died on the cross to pay for our sins. John 16:7-9; “ Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, (notice that word is singular not plural). Of sin - (what sin? Sin of lying, sin of stealing, yes, God can forgive all sins. But that is not the sin that he is talking about here. The one sin that will bind you soul to hell, the one and only sin that you cannot be forgiven for,) — of sin, because they believe not on me;” In other words, Jesus said that I can forgive every sin under the sun except this one sin - if you continue to reject me, if you continue to have nothing to do with me. Then you are lost..... That folks is the unpardonable sin. The sin of not believing on His Son Jesus Christ. That is the whole issue.

Now, after we become one of God's children, there still the problem of “SINS” plural. And this is where 1 John 1:9 comes in at. Because you see sins can not cancel out our son-ship with God. We are still God's child and no amount of sins can annual that relationship. But it does effect our fellowship with God. 1 John 1:9; “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Now here is the neat thing about this; when we confess our known sins, that we know that we have done, the blood of Jesus not only cleanses us from our known sins, but He cleanses us from “ALL OUR SINS” even those that we were not even aware of. Isn't that fantastic. What a wonderful Heavenly Father we have.