

Sermon Title: **A Godly Father**

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Scripture Reference: **1 Timothy 3:1-4**

Thesis: **Paul's descriptive charge for Elders in 1 Timothy 3 is a good standard for a Godly Father to follow;**

Purpose: **We will learn how a father becomes a Godly father.**

Key Word: **"Father's Day"**

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I) Introduction:

Scripture Reading is: **1 Timothy 3:1-4**

A) The Setting:

- 1) **Today is Father's Day; it is the one day a year that we set aside to honor our fathers.**
  - (a) This is Biblical since it is one of the 10 commandments.
  - (b) It is also the only commandment that comes with a promise.
  - (c) Those who honor their mothers and fathers will in general have a longer life.
  - (d) Perhaps because their parents aren't so likely to end their life prematurely.
- 2) **A little over a week ago I became a Grandfather for the first time.**
  - (a) While that is really special to me; it also means that I am getting to be an old father.
  - (b) Some of you are Grandparents and maybe even great grandparents so you know how excited I am to tell you about my grandchild.
  - (c) For those who haven't heard yet, his name is Xavier Bruce Bickford, born to my daughter and son-in-law.
  - (d) Xavier was born more than 7 weeks early; but thanks to a great hospital team, both he and mother are doing fine.
  - (e) However, because he was premature he will have to remain in the hospital for several more weeks until he is strong enough to come home.
- 3) **The Apostle Paul became the Spiritual father of a young man by the name of Timothy.**
  - (a) Paul would later leave Timothy as the elder or some say bishop to the Church in Ephesus.
  - (b) This means Timothy was called to pastor the church at this location.
  - (c) Some time later in Paul's first letter to Timothy, Paul gives this young pastor a lot of advice on how to conduct worship and pick leadership in the church.
  - (d) Paul also gives personal advice to Timothy and warns of those who will try to corrupt the message of the Gospel.
- 4) **In the third chapter of this letter Paul is giving advice on character of an Elder or Bishop leader.**
  - (a) While realizing that no one is perfect, these are the qualities that should characterize one seeking to lead a Christian congregation.
  - (b) They also make a good goal for those who wish to become a Godly father.
- 5) **So, let's see what Paul has to say to this young pastor in our scripture reading for today in 1 Timothy 3:1-4.**

B) Sermon Prayer

C) (The Hook)

- 1) **ILLUSTRATION: One father had a three-year-old daughter who was having trouble sleeping through the night.<sup>1</sup>**
  - (a) She'd often wake up several times in the night because she was afraid.
  - (b) Each time as he re-tucked her into bed, he would remind her that Jesus was with her and he would keep her safe.
  - (c) Several nights in a row, she did this over and over again.

- (d) Finally, one night, the dad asked her if she had prayed to Jesus to take her fear away and help her fall asleep.
- (e) "Oh, yes," she assured him. "I prayed to Jesus... and He told me to come and get you!"
- 2) **Someone else noticed that the word "father" appears in the dictionary .....just before the words fathom and "fatigued" .....and just after the word "fathead."**
- (a) So to all us fatigued, fathead fathers who don't fathom what is going on, .....
- (b) Happy Father's Day! (Pause)
- 3) **I probably don't have to tell you how really scary it is to bring a child into the world today and having the responsibility of being a first time father.**
- (a) There are so many things trying to influence a child away from their heavenly Father.
- (b) Perhaps that is why Matthew said that we are not to call anyone on earth their father. (**Matthew 23:9**)
- (c) Jesus was saying that we should allow God to be our true father who can guide us more perfectly than any earthly father.
- 4) **I don't think Jesus was denying the use of the term as a form of respect for the head of the family who is a representative of God's relationship with us.**
- (a) But that we realize that being a father is a big responsibility.
- (b) A father is responsible to teach his children many things and to provide for ALL of their needs.
- (c) This is something no earthly father can do perfectly regardless of how hard he tries.
- 5) **I think it is all right for us to have affectionate terms for our fathers like, Papa, Pop, Dad and Daddy.**
- (a) Jesus had an affection term for his Father.
- (b) **He called Him "Abba Father"; this is an Aramaic word framed by the lips of infants which demonstrates unconditional trust; expressing both the love and intelligent confidence of the child.**
- (c) When we speak of our Heavenly Father we are using it as a more formal term that is perhaps best reserved in expressing our highest form of respect and regard for the one who is intelligent enough to guide us in life and big enough to supply our every need.
- 6) **There are a lot of references in the Bible to our heavenly Father for He is the only one big enough to handle the full responsibility.**
- (a) **One Godly Father acrostic characterizes him this way:**
- (i) Follower of God
- (ii) Acts with Love
- (iii) Teaches His Children
- (iv) Healer of hurts
- (v) Earns Your Respect
- (vi) Respectful of Others
- (b) Let's take a brief review using this acrostic as our guide.

TS: **So, let's start with the "F" of Father which means that a Godly Father is first a . . .**

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II) Body: (Key Points)

A) Key Point #1: **Follower of God**

- 1) **In order to be a Godly Father you must first know the supreme Father.**
- (a) You cannot be a Godly Father if you don't have a relationship with the ultimate Father.
- (b) A Godly Father is to "**Seek first the kingdom of God and all His righteousness . . .**" (**Matthew 6:33**)
- 2) **Jesus taught that we are to reserve our highest love for God.**

- (a) That nothing, even His family can get in the way of that love.
- (b) **Proverbs 3:6** says, "***In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success.***"

TS: **The second letter in our acrostic is an "A" which says that a Godly father . . .**

**B) Key Point #2: Acts with Love**

- 1) Jesus said that the two most important commandments are to first, "***Love God with all your heart, soul and mind, and the second is like it; love others as yourself.***" (**Matthew 22:37-39**)
- 2) Jesus also taught that if we earthly fathers with all our imperfections give good gifts to our children imagine what your Heavenly Father will give you . . . (**Matthew 7:9-11**)  
***"<sup>9</sup> Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup> Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? <sup>11</sup> If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!"***
- 3) **After all John tells us in his Gospel that God is love and if we are going to emulate our Heavenly Father we must share His love.**
  - (a) That is only possible if you have asked Jesus to come into your heart and be your Lord.
  - (b) Only then can the Holy Spirit begin the work of making you more like the master.

TS: **The "T" stands for . . .**

**C) Key Point #3: Teaches His Children**

- 1) Of course we have the great commission that Jesus gave to his disciples as recorded in the Gospel of **Matthew 28:18-20**  
***"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*** (Berean Study Bible)
- 2) **But a father is to teach his children.**
  - (a) **Deuteronomy 11:19** teaches parents to tell their children the Word of God, "***Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.***" (NLT)
  - (b) This is what **Psalm 44:1** in the Message Bible is talking about; Godly fathers teaching their children as it says, "***We've been hearing about this, God, all our lives. Our fathers told us the stories their fathers told them, . . .***"
  - (c) **This . . .** A Godly father teaches his children about God and the stories of God.
  - (d) How God Loves and cares for us; how God is always present and in control of the chaos of life.

TS: **The next letter is "H" which stands for the . . .**

**D) Key Point #4: Healer of Hurts**

- 1) **I know that when my kids were really hurting; they would seek me out.**
  - (a) That's because like our Heavenly Father; a Godly Father will comfort the hurting.
  - (b) Find hope for a better time and knows this too will pass.
- 2) **One of my favorite phrases in the Bible is "and it came to pass."**
  - (a) One place on the internet says that this phrase is mentioned 2,761 times in the Old and New Testaments.<sup>2</sup>

- (b) The Martins have a song that says it didn't come to stay, it came to pass.
- 3) **Godly fathers help us to learn that life is a journey.**
- (a) Life has many twists and turns;
- (b) And when we are facing difficult times we can know that this too shall pass.
- 4) **They also help us to know that God is the great physician who can heal all our hurts and diseases.**
- (a) **Psalm 103:2-4** says, "**Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget none of His benefits; Who pardons all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases; Who redeems your life from the pit, Who crowns you with loving-kindness and compassion;**" (NASB)
- (b) **While this doesn't happen all the time for many reasons often only known to God.**
- (c) God may be using it to teach us something or to teach someone else something.
- (d) But God's Word promises that God is doing what is best for us even when it doesn't seem like it.

TS: **The next letter is an "E" because a Godly father . . .**

E) Key Point #5: **Earns Your Respect**

- 1) **When a Godly Father gives his life to Jesus; he becomes a man of integrity.**
- (a) This means that to the best of his ability; he keeps his word and promises.
- (b) He is wise in the Lord and guides his children.
- 2) **Although age seems to have an effect on wisdom.**
- According to Mark Twain, he is quoted as saying, "**When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years.**"<sup>3</sup>
- 3) **There seems to be some truth to this; I know this from my own experience with my children.**
- (a) Before they were teenagers I thought I knew everything.
- (b) From about 13 to 16 they thought I knew nothing.
- (c) Now in their thirties, I have gained enough wisdom that they will ask my advice.
- 4) So, I guess if we can live long enough we can earn their respect.

TS: **The final letter is an "R" because a Godly Father not only earns respect but also is . . .**

F) Key Point #6: **Respectful of Others**

- 1) **You cannot earn respect if you cannot show respect for others.**
- 2) Peter wrote in his letter, "**Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.**" (1 Peter 2:17)
- 3) The Godly father lives out **Matthew 7:12** "**So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you...**"
- 4) He treats others the way he wants to be treated.
- 5) This is the golden rule.

TS: **So what have we learn here?**

III) Conclusion (Life Application)

- A) **First, except for the Heavenly Father; no father can live up to the standards we have covered here this morning;**
- 1) However, that doesn't mean we shouldn't make that our goal.
- 2) We need a goal to strive for or we definitely won't get there.
- 3) And yet with some effort on our part and help from God we can come a lot closer.

- B) Don't you think it would make sense for us earthly fathers to look, pray, rely, and trust in our Heavenly Father to help us be good fathers?**
- 1) I know from my own experience that while I always wanted to be a good father to my children; there were times that I was not.
  - 2) There were times that I let them down or disappointed them.
  - 3) There were times when I spoke in anger or frustration and said things that I had to apologize for later.
  - 4) The good news is that God understands that; when we are sincere in admitting our faults and mistakes that we make as earthly fathers our children can forgive us.
- C) You too probably have some regrets for some of the things you may have done.**
- 1) We can probably all remember times when our earthly fathers were not so nice.
  - 2) But if they were Godly, then they should have at least tried to make amends for that.
- D) Admittedly, I realize that some people had fathers who were absent for whatever be the reason; be it death, drugs, alcohol or mental illness or some other reason.**
- 1) That is why we as Christians can always find comfort in the arms of our Heavenly Father.
  - 2) He promises to work all things for our good for those who love Him and are called to his purpose. (**Romans 8:28**)
  - 3) He is ever present; He promises to keep watch over you day and night and is never sleeping.
  - 4) God also promises to send his Holy Spirit to live in us when we put our faith in His Son Jesus.
  - 5) **So, no matter what kind of an earthly father you had; we can all have a heavenly Father.**
    - (a) I hope you have good memories of your earthly father on this Father's Day; but even if you don't . . .
    - (b) Remember you have a heavenly Father who cares so much for you He was willing to sacrifice His Son to make a way for you to be right with Him.
    - (c) God loves you that much!
- E) Let us remember that your Heavenly Father is after all the one who created you.**
- 1) He is the one who promised to be there to help you through the trials of life.
  - 2) He is the one who has His Son preparing a place for you to come and live in His house for all eternity if you have placed your trust in Jesus.
  - 3) So be thankful for your father no matter what he was like for God used him to shape you.
  - 4) And be especially thankful for your heavenly Father who is in control of the insane world who loves you deeper than even our earthly dads can.

IV) Invitation: **Let us Pray!**

V) **Bibliography**

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<sup>1</sup> Jeff Strite, The Boy Prophet, sermoncentral.com June 2009

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.answers.com/Q/How\\_many\\_times\\_is\\_the\\_phrase\\_it\\_came\\_to\\_pass\\_found\\_in\\_the\\_bible](http://www.answers.com/Q/How_many_times_is_the_phrase_it_came_to_pass_found_in_the_bible)

<sup>3</sup> <https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index;>