



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

June 18, 2023

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Elders:

Kendall Bear
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Aaron Evans
Larry Hill
Steve McCreary

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Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7 pm

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Fathers, What is Your Legacy?

Inheritance is important. Good fathers desire to leave something behind for their children (**Prov. 13:22**). Old Testament law even regulated the passing down of a father's possessions (**Deut. 21:15-17; Num. 27:8-11**). As fathers, what sort of inheritance would we like to see our children get?

Material Possessions. There is nothing wrong with money, if possessed and used in godly ways. The Lord certainly wants us to provide for our families (**1 Tim. 5:8**). However, Paul also warned Timothy that the "*love of money is a root of all kinds of evil*" (**1 Tim. 6:10**), and Jesus tells us that we cannot serve two masters (**Matt. 6:24**). So while we certainly can be interested in providing a material inheritance for our children, we must also be aware that riches will grow wings (**Prov. 23:5**). Worldly possessions will rust, and are subject to the thievery of men (**Matt. 6:20**). A material inheritance can be good for our families, but isn't there something better?

Eternal Possessions. While fathers cannot literally pass down eternal life to their children, they can certainly influence their children towards it! We can store up treasures in heaven (**Matt. 6:20**), and in so doing set the right example for our children. Fathers are tasked with the responsibility of bringing up their children in the training and admonition of the Lord (**Eph. 6:4**). In so doing, we can pass down to our children a legacy of faith that could last them for eternity!

Fathers, it is good to provide for our family's physical wellbeing. But the greatest legacy you can leave your children is faith in God and a Christian example that will span the ages!

Matt Clifton
Judsonia, AR

The Instruction of a Father

Fathers are important to the development of children. We are thankful for those men who take seriously the command of **Ephesians 6:4** by lovingly bringing their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord rather than provoking them to anger. In their interactions with their children, fathers must avoid relating to them in such a way as would discourage them (**Col. 3:21**). Above all pursuits of making one's children happy, promoting their worldly success, protecting them, or having harmonious relationships with them is the primary responsibility to teach them to follow the Lord's word.

The first thing a man can do to teach his children to love the Lord in obedience is to set the example himself. In **Deuteronomy 6:7**, the command was given to teach the Lord's words diligently to one's children; however, before this is the greatest command of all: "*thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*" (**Deut. 6:5**). A man must first have God's words treasured in his own heart before he imparts them to others (**Deut. 6:6**). Children are perceptive enough to know what their parents value and whether or not those values mesh with what their parents say. If I ask another to do as I say but not as I do, then my teachings will fall flat. Instead, **Deuteronomy 6:7** shows how this instruction takes place along side all of the daily tasks; the Lord's words are to be repeated and applied whether one is sitting at home or walking along a pathway, whether one is preparing to go to bed or arising to meet the day's work.

Deuteronomy 6:8,9 continues the thought with, "*And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*" A Jewish tradition of phylacteris arose where these verses of the Torah (such as **Ex. 13:1-16; Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21**) were placed in a small box and worn on the forehead and the forearm (**Mt. 23:5**); however, this tradition seems to be an overly literal application of **Deuteronomy 6**. Just as God's words are not literally put on one's physical heart, but in a figurative way etched into the mind through memorization and reflection (**Deut. 6:6**), so these words were to be formative to the conscience by constantly thinking on them in everything one set out to accomplish. Phylacteries are usually worn only on special occasions of prayer, but God's word is to be with us always. It is not always practical to wear a box, but God's word has application to every facet of life. If fathers follow **Deuteronomy 6:5-9**, then God's word will be central to their lives. A father who undertakes painstaking efforts to engrave the words of God on the hearts of his children looks forward to this reward—that those words will be there to stay long after the father is gone.

Fathers, take time to be with your children. Love the Lord and cherish His words. Speak those words to your children throughout the various activities of life. Discipline your children. Instruct them in the Lord's ways. Love them enough to prepare them to live a wise and righteous life here on earth and an eternity in heaven.

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