

“The Glory of Children Are Their Fathers”

“Children’s children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.” (Proverbs 17:6).

The verse cited above seems to suggest a lineage of righteousness in a family. The grandfather was faithful, his son was faithful and now his grandchildren are faithful to God. To this familial patriarch, the grandchildren are a crown and a source of joy for they are following him as he followed the Lord. To the children, the father is worthy of honor because he took the lessons he learned from his father and passed them on. The father did not let righteousness skip a generation.

It would do us dads well to consider whether or not we are glorious or beautiful to our children. Solomon is not talking about physical attractiveness. He is instead writing about spiritual beauty. Just as the children of the virtuous woman could “arise up and call her blessed” (Proverbs 31:28) due to her Godliness, so should they also be able to speak favorably of the father who led them in the way of the Lord.

What about it, Dad? Are you the glory of your children? You are if you are living a faithful Christian life. Far too often though it seems that men think it is the wife’s job to teach the children about spiritual matters. After all, we men are far too busy providing for our family’s physical needs and making sure we get plenty of time off for ourselves. Oh sure we spend time with the children. We coach them in sports, take them to movies, etc., but are we taking them to the one place where, if we really think about it, we want them to be more than anywhere else? Are we taking them to heaven? The mother can try to rear the children in the Lord by herself and many have had to do just that and in so doing have done a marvelous job, but Paul was not addressing mothers when he wrote, “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:4).

Dad, what are you doing in your home to be the glory of your children? What kind of example are you setting before them? I vividly recall the television commercial from my youth in which the little boy watched his father and imitated everything he did. The commercial concluded by showing the father lighting up a cigarette while the young son stared intently, first at the father whose mouth was on fire and next at the pack of cancer sticks on the ground next to him. It’s obvious that the point was that the son would follow in his father’s footsteps, whether they led toward good or evil. Dad, what kind of language do your children hear from you? It’s enough that they have to listen to a host of vulgarities at school, in the neighborhood and from other sources. Do they hear that type of language from you as well? Dad, are you dropping the family off at the church building so they can get their spiritual shot in the arm while you spend your time elsewhere? Would it not be far better if you came with them to study the Bible and worship together as a family? Are you teaching them God’s Word at home? You say you don’t know enough Bible to be able to teach it? If that’s the case then it’s time to get on the ball because that spiritual infancy in which you find yourself is not only damaging to your children, but to you as well (Hebrews 5:12-14). Can you not read the Bible and pray with them each evening? Do you not realize that your children are watching your every move and that they will copy those moves whether you want them to or not?

Fathers, God gave us our children as gifts (Psalm 127:3). While we care for their physical needs, being sure they have the nutrition and recreation necessary to grow strong, healthy bodies, are we also making sure that we are overseeing their spiritual development? It is not a chore but a privilege to lead our children to the Lord. It is an opportunity given to both the mother and the father. Dad, can your children look at the life you’re living, the spiritual leadership you’re providing and the example you’re setting and honor you for the eternal impact you are having on their souls? Our families, the Lord’s church and our nation need Godly fathers. Who among us dads will step up and be the spiritual leaders in our homes that our children so desperately need?

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