

## **WHAT A FATHER IS (Genesis 18:17-19)**

### **I. A father is a man of faith.**

- A. Fathers are the heads of the households and, as such, must be men who have a deep faith in God.
- B. Abraham was such a man.
  - 1. God knew that Abraham would teach his children correctly.
  - 2. He knew this because He knew of the faith that Abraham possessed.
- C. We are examples of faithfulness to our children.
  - 1. They see how we act as they grow up and follow our footsteps.
  - 2. The spiritual footsteps of the father are often followed more closely than that of the mother.
  - 3. One study showed that if the father was an irregular attender of services only 3% of their children grew up to be a regular attender and 38% of their children would grow up to not attend at all.
- D. We need Abraham's, Joseph's and Zacharias's today in the Lord's church.
- E. Our children need to know that our faith in God drives us in all that we do.

### **II. A father is a man who is attentive to his family's needs.**

- A. God knows all that we need - the very hairs of our heads are numbered we are told.
- B. Fathers need to know what is going on in the household.
  - 1. Sometimes they know because mom has found out something and she tells him.
  - 2. It also needs to be the case that he is talking with his children and his wife to find out what is going on and what is needed.
- C. I have heard that the average father spends 15 minutes a day talking to his children.
  - 1. There is no way that a father is attentive to his children by spending 15 minutes a day talking to them.
  - 2. Our children need to hear our voices and know they have our attention.
- D. A father needs to know if something is wrong in the life of one his children so that he can give godly advice on how things can be made right.
  - 1. He can't give that advice if he is not with that child.
  - 2. He can't give that advice if he pays no attention to that child.
- E. I came across a list of ten commandments for fathers and the first one was, "Thou shalt hold no other group more important than the family unit, in all thy ways being faithful to it."
  - 1. There is no social organization more important than my children.
  - 2. There is no job more important than my children.

### **III. A father is a man who trains his children properly.**

- A. Ephesians 6:4.
- B. Proverbs 22:6.
  - 1. The phrase "way that he should go" literally means "the way he is

- bent.”
2. Each child is different and learns differently and needs to be taught in a way that is effective.
  3. This doesn't teach that if you teach a child the way of God he will never depart from it.
  4. It means we are to teach a child in the manner that is most effective for him or her and the likelihood of that child leaving that teaching is far less than if we didn't.
- C. We need fathers to train their children to love God, His Son and the Lord's church.
1. That points back to being a man of faith.
  2. Our children have to know from our actions that these things are important and that they are a way of life.
- D. It also goes back to being attentive to his children's needs.
1. He can't train his children being an absentee father.
  2. It takes effort and it must be given.
- E. Long ago, Manoah made a great request of God...(Judges 13:8).

**IV. A father is a man who is heaven focused.**

- A. Do your children know you want to go to heaven above all else?
- B. It must come first in your life.
1. When disciplining your children, it needs to be known that it is done because the father wants to be right with God.
  2. If we don't discipline them, then we are going to answer to God for that.
- C. When attaining heaven is first and foremost in our lives as fathers, our children will see that and learn from it.
- D. I came across this poem: a careful man I want to be, a little fellow follows me; I do not dare to go astray for fear he will go the self-same way; I cannot once escape his eyes, what 'er he sees me do he tries; like me he says he si going to be that little chap who follows me; I must remember as I go through summer suns or winters snow; I am building for the years to be that little chap who follows me.
- E. If we want our children to be focused on heaven, it has to be our focus.

**V. A father is a man who is enthusiastic about serving God.**

- A. Do our children see us excited about working in the church?
- B. Or, do they see us try to figure out ways to not be involved in things for God?
1. If something we want to do comes up, don't we twist our schedule as much as we can to make it happen?
  2. What about being at a gospel meeting on a Tuesday night?
  3. Or making a visit that we know we should make?
- C. They see us yell at ball games but do they see us excited about serving God?
1. They see us holler when we land a big fish.
  2. Do they see us excited when someone obeys the gospel?
- D. If we are truly heaven focused people, our children will know that we want

to serve God.

**VI. A father is a man who receives the reward.**

- A. When we as fathers lie on our deathbeds, will we look back knowing we did the best we could for our families?
- B. You see, a godly man who fulfills his role as a father will know that heaven is his reward.
  - 1. He will know he was not perfect.
  - 2. He will know there were times when he set a poor example.
  - 3. However, he will know he repented and made things right.
- C. The best thing our children can see is that when we do sin, we don't try to explain it away or cover it up.
  - 1. We tell them we sinned and we asked God for forgiveness.
  - 2. If it was something against them, we ask them for forgiveness.
- D. When these other aspects are a part of our lives, we will gain the reward of heaven.

Main points from an outline by Robert Alexander