

Are You Fulfilling Your Role As A Father?#511

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Fatherhood is more than begetting children. It also includes begetting an environment conducive to godly living.

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:14). First, let us observe that the words of this text, *of our Lord Jesus Christ*, are not found in the most ancient manuscripts. This is not to say that there are biblical or theological problems with the addition of these words: *of our Lord Jesus Christ*, but it is to say that we should focus on the fatherhood of God in a broader sense than that of His being simply *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

The fatherhood of God began long before God begat His only begotten Son, Jesus, in the virgin Mary. The fatherhood of God goes back to a period even before Genesis when there was no time. God first created the angels. After that, God begat the universe and that is when God became Father the second time around. As God flung the stars into space and as each star settled into its place, as they beheld the glory of God, they immediately, as if led by a master conductor, began to sing for joy in the most perfect harmony. Even as God was speaking to Job out of the whirlwind, He asked Job where he was: *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy* (Job 38:7). Where were you and I, dear friend? Now, the music of the stars has not ceased to this very day. Years ago, I read that scientists had developed instruments that can take us far beyond our spectrum of hearing, and they have discovered that there is music in outer space.

The fatherhood of God continued with begetting during His creation. God's fatherhood began with begetting a world with an environment where each part begotten speaks of Himself, whether it was a grain of sand, a mountain of granite or the most distant star. All of God's creation speaks of His attributes (Rom. 1:20): His presence, His love, His power, His wisdom, His infinite knowledge, His generosity, His patient long-suffering and His holiness.

You do not become a father until you beget, until something of you comes forth from you and begins an existence, until something out of you enters history, until something out of you, which was not, now is and bears something of your image or likeness. You must learn and then remember that fatherhood is not just about bringing sons and daughters into the world, but it begins with and includes begetting an environment that becomes the proper

habitat for your sons and daughters to live out their existence in the favor, in the light and under the protection of God who is holy.

As Jesus was riding into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, He said to the Pharisees: *...I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out* (Luke 19:40). With this statement, Jesus was not making a poetic statement or speaking figuratively. He was not lying nor was He kidding—there is life in the stones; there is life in everything God has created. God is life, and all that comes out of Him has life in it. God never created a dead thing that would not respond to His voice. The sun, the moon, the stars, the animals—such as Baalam’s ass—and yes, even the stones of the field are in league with Him.

We humans distinguish between dead, inorganic matter and living, organic matter. God does not do so. All He created has life. At His word, rocks gave forth water in the desert; at His word, the sun stood still to help Joshua finish his battle; at His word, the winds blew when Jonah got into the wrong ship; and at His word, water turned into wine. Everything God created has an ear and responds to His voice.

There is life in every atom—electrons revolving at tremendous speeds around a nucleus of protons and neutrons—and what drives it all, my friend? And what would we find in the very nucleus of an atom if we had a microscope a billion times more sensitive than the best in the world—perhaps a whole new universe? As the ant is limited in its perception of what an airplane is, how much are we limited in knowing what is in a raindrop, in an electron, or in a galaxy a billion light years away from us?

First, God begat the angels, next He begat the universe, and then He created man in His own likeness and image. He begat Jesus as the Son of Man when He was conceived into human flesh; then He begat the church on the day of Pentecost. And then, in the future when we shall meet Him in the air, God will beget new bodies for us. Finally, God will beget a new heaven and a new earth. Hallelujah! Yes, this is the fatherhood of God: *...I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. What you just read is all in that word, “Father,” and a billion times more! So then, it is your duty as earthly fathers to broaden your perspective more with regard to what you are called to in fatherhood. It is more than providing food, clothing, and shelter for your children during their first 18 years. Yes, even many animals will do that much, minus the clothing, of course.

As you fill the role of God while leading your family, you must include in your call to fatherhood the creating of an environment that nourishes not only the body and mind of your sons and daughters, but you must also provide an environment that nourishes their souls if you want your role in their lives to rise above the animal level of fatherhood. You must create a micro-universe for your children even before you beget them, a micro-universe that speaks from every corner: "Go with God!" You must create in your home and surroundings a habitat where the wind of the Holy Spirit blows through your life to the souls of men and women, and the Spirit of Jesus is ever present even in your most trying times.

Therefore, father, create a home for your family where the books on the shelves are such that they neither confuse nor distract your child from the narrow way. Create your home to be a place where you need no apology on Judgment Day for the music, movies, video games, television programs and internet you or your children have kept and used. Create a home where conversations are filled with "God talk," where evil is shunned and ungodly relationships are avoided. Create a home where patience and long-suffering never run out; where tempers never flare; where voices are never raised in anger; where no one is ever allowed to pout; where prayer and praises are as common as breathing; where servanthood is the watchword; where sacrifice is considered one of the highest virtues; and where going the second and third mile is the rule rather than the exception.

In your role as father, look at all that God, as your Father, has begotten for you. You should also beget more than only your own flesh and blood. You should take from His riches and create a custom environment where the souls of your children will flourish and bloom in the light of the glory and mercies of the Lord so that they can live with Him forever.

Yes, fathers, create in your home an environment where men of God are not criticized but prayed for, where mothers are treated like queens and where the needy are looked after. Create your home to be a place where forgiveness is granted 70 times 7 times (Matt. 18:22), where saving and giving are of greater importance than spending and getting, and where the mother's discipline is backed up consistently by the father's words and strong hand. Create a home where you are as accessible to your children as God is accessible to you. Your home should provide an environment where you have love and approval in your eyes as you watch your children grow up, where church attendance is not sporadic but regular, where prayer meetings are regularly attended, where

visiting the sick ranks higher than sports, television programs or hobbies, and where the best of plans are dropped in a second when the Holy Spirit speaks and says, "Come with me."

Create your home to be a place where excuses are only allowed when circumstances are beyond your control; where laziness is unknown; where punctuality is no stranger; where industry and hard work are known as a blessing; where jesting, joking and kidding are unheard of; where the Bible is read daily; where children are not spoiled; where Sundays are filled with a focus upon God and not sacrificed for work, or fleshly and worldly pleasures; where children are fed wholesome food to protect them from preventable diseases; and where elderly people are honored and looked after. Dear father, shall I add more or is this enough?

Remember to do what Paul did: *...I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* May God grant to you all of His tender mercies in the expansion of your duties so that you will be able to hear that sweetest of all voices on Judgment Day: *...Well done, good and faithful servant... Enter into the joy of your lord* (Matt. 25:21).