

Week of March 18, 2024

Focus: No More Excuses - Chapter 11

Theme: No More Passive Fathering

Scripture Memory: Ephesians 6:4

Overview:

As a child of divorced parents at a young age, I made a promise to myself that I would never want my wife nor my children to ever go through that trauma. My father and mother are great people. They raised me as well as they could. They were present in all aspects of my life, and I am thankful for them. The pain from the divorce still remains.

As a father of a daughter and a son, I have realized the vast amount of energy, mercy, patience, love, and support that are necessary on a daily basis to raise a child much less multiple. It takes a commitment, which can be a struggle on most days with so many other distractions in our lives. Statistics show that the presence or lack of presence of a father in a child's life significantly points them in a rapid upward trajectory or downward spiral.

After reading several books on raising children, I realized just how helpless I am without God at the forefront. I don't always have the energy, but God does. I don't always have the patience, but God does. I don't always love well, but God does. He sacrificed His Son for my life so that I could reflect His love to my children through me. At this stage in my life, I am really not concerned about my kid's future vocation as I am for their eternal destiny. Let that sink in for a minute. If Christ is in their life, they will be able to see His future for them, not some jaded pressure driven life without a purpose.

Whether you are a father or not, may this week's devotional be an encouragement to you. Be present for your kids, grandkids, nieces, nephews, cousins, wife, but most importantly for God. Without Him, we can't do the other.

Daily Devotions (Scripture & Meditation):

- **Monday:** Ephesians 6:1
 - What are examples of obedience in your life "in the Lord" that only the Lord sees?
 - What are examples of obedience in your life that the future generation sees?

- **Tuesday:** Ephesians 6:2
 - What are examples of honoring Christ in your life that only the Lord sees?
 - What are examples of honoring Christ in your life that the future generation sees?
 - Are you grateful or resentful of your parents? Is it possible that we are called to honor our parents, regardless of who they are or what they have done, at some level?
 - How can you honor your father and mother (or the memory of them) today?

- **Wednesday:** Ephesians 6:3
 - How often are you trying to find the next best thing to prolong your life?
 - Where is God in that search?
 - Are you living up to your expectations or following His direction for your life?
 - What changes will you make to become more in line with God's will and not yours?

- **Thursday:** Ephesians 6:4
 - Have you ever wondered how your joking towards your kids could be negatively impacting their lives?
 - How often do you talk about God's Word with the future generation?
 - How often do you pray with the future generation?
 - What changes will you make to become a peacemaker and not an instigator?

- **Friday:** Matthew 22:37-39
 - The love which is written in this text is self sacrificial.
 - Are you sacrificing it all for the Lord today?
 - How can you do that better?

- **Saturday:** Deuteronomy 6:4-9
 - How often do you read God's Word with and for the future generation?
 - What changes will you make to walk and talk about God with the future generation?

- **Sunday (Accountability Day):** Hebrews 12:7-11
 - Ask a brother about the scripture memory for the week to keep each other accountable.

Weekly Challenge:

Regardless of our past (good or bad) experiences with or without our earthly fathers, we have now been adopted by God. And regardless of our past (good and bad) experiences, we are now parents, grandparents, uncles, and mentors who have the opportunity to pour into a future generation. Seek and give forgiveness and celebrate a brighter future through Christ who strengthens you.

If you are a dad, have a special time with each child this week. Tell them that you love them often. Look for ways to glorify God and to lift others up as well.