

Abba, Father

by Paul E. Hamilton

One of the most humbling things God has ever done to me was entrust me with five wonderful children. God has commissioned me to raise them according to how He commands. It is my job to prepare them for the various missions God has planned for them in life. The specialness of parenting is reflected in the fact that God did not give the privilege of parenting to the angels in heaven. This is an awesome and sobering thought. Being a dad is a hard job. It requires a lot of sacrifice and a lot of humbling yourself. One Sunday morning, I made a comment that I had not originally planned on saying, but it was so powerful that I knew it was from God and not just my mortal mind. The statement was this:

“Our children are destined to repeat the same mistakes we men have made because we are too proud to admit to our children that we have failed.”

That is a true statement. As men, we live off our pride. Our egos are made up of how well we do at things. If we screw up and try to act like we are still perfect, our children see this and think “Wow, if Dad can do this and get away with it, so can I.” That is where the cycle of failure begins. We as men have failed the children of this world. We have forsaken what God has commanded us to do to chase after false dream of success in outside arenas. Just look at the statistics from the National Fatherhood Institute. 23 Million children do not live with their biological fathers. 40% of children from a divorce have not even seen their father in the past year. This is an outrage and a blight on our country.

A profound statement was once made. “Anyone can father a child, but it takes a special man to be a Dad.” As I stated earlier, I am humbled by that honor of being Dad to five children. Each and every one of them is different and needs different things from me. I do not claim to be the perfect parent, in fact, I know that I am not. I try to never be too busy to stop and listen to what they are saying. I am determined to raise them Biblically and not worldly. This causes a lot of headaches, especially with my teenagers, but they know I am trying to do what I feel is best for them.

God has provided me with two great examples of true fatherhood. The first person is my father, Joe Hamilton. My dad will be the first to tell you that he is not perfect, but to me, I could not have asked for a better dad.

Through all of my hard teenage years and early adulthood, no one supported me more than my dad. He was always there with advise and help, but was careful not to intrude too much. My dad, along with my mom, raised me to trust God, be faithful in my Christian walk, and to believe the Bible for what it says. Truly, I would not be the pastor I am today with their influence. My father also taught me about sacrificial love and supernatural faith. In 1988, my mother was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer. My dad never gave up hope and ministered to her day and night as she became sicker. When she passed away in January of 1989, he mourned for her yet was not bitter with God for her passing. To me, there is no better example of a “daddy” than mine.

The other example I have to being a true father is my Heavenly Father. You see, He has never left me nor forsaken me and He promised me that He never will. His fathering heart is extended to you, too. Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we have the right to call God “Abba” which means father. We become adopted sons and daughters of God when we accept what Jesus did on the Cross for us. God love you as His child. That statement alone should make your spirit jump for joy. No matter what you have done, no matter how bad you think you are, remember . . . God loves you. This bears repeating. God loves you. Let those three words soak in deep in your soul and set a new hunger in your life to know God better. Since Father’s Day is closely approaching, I challenge each and every father reading this newsletter to try to be more like our Heavenly Father. Take this time to be “daddy” to your kids, no matter what their age. Remember, any man can father a child, but it takes a special man to be a Daddy.