

# The Father's Blessing (Father's Day, 2008)

Now...Joseph was told, "Behold, your father is sick."

So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him.

When it was told to Jacob, "Behold, your son Joseph has come to you," Israel (Joseph) collected his strength and sat up in the bed.

When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" And Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." So he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." Now the eyes of Israel were so dim from age that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them.

Excerpts from Genesis 48:1-3; 8-11 NASB

## I. The Kingdom of God: Recovering What Has Been Lost

### A. The Father's Blessing

1. One of the world's greatest problems is the lack of the "father's blessing"...the successful generational transfer of benefits from a father to his children.

2. There is no way to calculate the damage done to our nation and culture because the father/son connection failed:

- The FBI studied 17 kids who had shot their classmates in towns like Paducah, KY; Pearl, MS; Littleton, CO. All 17 shooters had only one thing in common...they all had serious issues with their fathers.
- A few years ago, the officials at Folsom Prison offered free Mother's Day and Father's Day cards to the inmates. Over 2,000 Mother's Day cards were claimed; but only 20 prisoners sent cards to their fathers.
- Phone companies report the phone calls on Father's Day weekend are a fraction of the long distance calls made on Mother's Day...but the phone companies make more money because many of the Father's Day long distance calls are "collect"!
- In 20 years of pastoral work, I have never met a young person who was confused about his sexuality or struggling with homosexual tendencies who had a healthy relationship with their father.

3. As we focus on the Kingdom of God this year, we have to recapture the concept of recovering the divine order of things, including the fact that whatever God does, He does generationally!

### B. The God of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob

1. God is identified several dozen times in the Old Testament as "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

2. God wants us to understand that whatever He is building will always stretch BEYOND your lifetime!

- a. No family or church can ever be judged “successful” until it’s passed the “Three-Generation Test”!
- b. The Kingdom view is the “long” view!

3. God called Abram and renamed him Abraham, which means “Father of a multitude”.

4. God’s calling of this man was based on generational considerations!

**And the Lord said, “Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?**

**For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.”**

**Gen 18:17-19 KJV**

5. Abraham was chosen because God knew he would bless his children!

**And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac...**

**Genesis 25:11 KJV**

6. Isaac’s son Jacob had a revelation of the importance of the father’s blessing, and pursued it so hard he was willing to cheat and deceive his own father to get it!

**And Esau said unto his father, “Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father.” And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.**

**Genesis 27:38 KJV**

7. All of the conflict in the Middle East between Israel and her Arab neighbors, all the terrorism, all the bombings began with two brothers battling over the father’s blessing!!!\*

*The Arab nations and the roots of Islam are all found here, the “sons of Esau”.*

8. Our children and grandchildren are crying out for our blessing!

9. The damage done when our blessing is withheld can’t be calculated.

### **C. Fathers under Pressure**

1. The demands of fatherhood are considerable:

- a. Financial responsibility-How to provide a better life for the family
- b. Time pressure-the sense of guilt for not spending enough time with the kids

c. Media pressure-The portrayal of fathers as inept or irrelevant has influenced how are children see us and judge us.

2. So how can we recover the “father’s blessing”?
3. Gary Smalley, in his book *The Blessing*, gives five practical things we can do to see a successful generational transfer.

## II. Five Ways to Transfer the Blessing

### A. Give Meaningful Touch

1. There’s no substitute for hugs, kisses and contact.
  - a. Jacob hugged and kissed his sons and grandsons.
  - b. Jesus picked up the little children and held them in his arms.
  - c. In the early church, we see the “laying on of hands” to impart spiritual gifts, healing and blessing.
2. To “lay our hands” on something means to bless it!

### B. Offer Verbal Affirmation

1. Words are powerful.
2. Words can do great good or inflict incredible damage.

**Death and life are in the power of the tongue...  
Proverbs 18:21 KJV**

- a. “I’m proud of you.”
- b. “You did that well.”
- c. “I love you...unconditionally.”\*

*\*It’s critical that fathers plant the seeds of unconditional love deep into his children’s souls; it’s their first taste of what God’s love is like.*

### 3. Attach Value

- a. To bless can mean “to honor.”
- b. We need to value our children.
  - Look them in eye when we talk to them.
  - Stop and listen when they talk to us.

### 4. Paint a Picture of a Positive Future

- a. Sow seeds of faith for the future.
- b. Identify their gifts and attach value to them:

- The way you like to draw means you'll always be creative in whatever you do
- You want to be a policeman? That means you have courage
- You love animals so much...maybe you will be a veterinarian
- You love to talk and communicate ideas...you'd be a good teacher!

## 5. Demonstrate Active Commitment

- a. Kids spell love two ways: T-I-M-E and M-O-N-E-Y
- b. We can't just SAY we love our kids, we have to demonstrate it through sacrifice\*

\*One man said to his friend, referring to his toddler crawling around the playpen, "See that kid? That's what I traded for the convertible I wanted!" Whether he was serious or not, the choice to have children ought to carry with it the implicit understanding that the parents will do without some things they'd like to have in order to raise and care for their offspring!

- c. All true love has a sacrificial element to it.

## III. The Greatest Love

**"Greater love hath no man than this,  
that a man lay down his life for his friends."  
John 15:13 KJV**

### A. The Father's Love

1. Most children do not understand that we love them enough to die for them.

Patrick Morley in his book, *Man in the Mirror*, tells about a fishing trip. A group of fishermen had landed in a secluded bay in Alaska and had a great day fishing for salmon. When they returned to their sea plane, they were surprised to discover that it was aground because of the fluctuating tides. They had no option except to wait until the next morning when the tides come in. But when they took off, they only got a few feet off the ground and came crashing down into the sea. Being aground the day before had punctured one of the pontoons, and it had filled up with water.

The sea plane slowly began to sink, and there were three men and a 12-year-old son, Mark. They prayed, and then jumped into the icy cold waters to swim to shore. The water was cold, and the riptide was strong. Two of the men reached the shore exhausted. They looked back, and their companion, who was also a strong swimmer, did not swim to shore because his 12-year-old son wasn't strong enough to make it. They saw that father with his arms around his son being swept out to sea. He chose to die with his son rather than to live without him.

2. There's not a real father in this room who would not lay down his life so that his child might live.
3. We love them enough to die for them. Will we love them enough to live for them?

## **B. Blessing or Curse?**

1. God chose John the Baptist to prepare the way for the ministry of Jesus and the coming of the Kingdom of God to earth. Here's what the Prophet Malachi said about John:

**Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.  
Malachi 4:5-6 NASB**

2. The coming of the Kingdom is tied up in the father's blessing.
3. Either we will recover the father's blessing or suffer a curse!
4. The "curses" of our land come from a Kingdom disconnection; restoring the father's blessing can cure it.

**"Lord, grant us a revival of revelation in the father's blessing!  
Restore our hearts for the children, and the children for their fathers.  
Teach us to renew the Kingdom and bring the blessing, even unto the third and fourth generation of them that love you, and keep your commandments!  
Amen!**