

COG 60: Father's Day | Preparing, Celebrating, Discipling

I. The Problems with Father's Day

- **The cultural difference between Mother's Day and Father's Day.**
 - In America we have this bad habit of focusing on all the best qualities of mothers on Mother's Day and all the worst qualities of dads on Father's Day.
 - However, the most biblical approach for pastors on Father's Day would be to preach an even-handed encouragement and challenge since God does both.
 - God commends both parents and also corrects both parents. He celebrates dads and moms, and He challenges them both to be conformed more to His image.
 - And since the most valuable approach is the most biblical approach, then I hope pastors won't go too easy on dads this Father's Day. Yes, let's give honor where honor is due, but let's also realize that every dad must continue to grow spiritually.
- **The cultural minimizing of fathers.**
 - During the 50's it was normal to hear men admonished to take charge and lead his family. Why is that? Well, because the cultural-christianity of the decade was made up of a lot of guys taking their families to church on Sunday but neglecting their fatherly duties the rest of the week.
 - Slowly but surely over the next few decades more and more fathers were becoming absentee. Divorce rates went up, mothers were given priority over dads when it came to custody, and soon the statistics became dire.
 - It seems as if many nations are practically giving up on dads. America especially has become extremely antagonistic to fathers.
- **The divine value of fathers.**
 - In the same way God the Father is hierarchically the leader in the Trinity, so earthly fathers are expected by God to be the ultimate authorities in the home. This is not because the father is somehow better. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all equally God, and yet they function within a hierarchy where the Spirit submits to the Son and the Son to the Father. They are all equal in form though they are different in function.
 - Dads are no better or worse than moms or kids, but God expects the kids to submit to mom as mom submits to dad. And if dad is doing his job, he is supposed to lead the family in the same way God leads His people.
 - That means that a fatherless family — whether physically or spiritually — is not functioning the way God desires.
- **Father's Day for the fatherless.**
 - Psalm 68:4-6; Deuteronomy 10:18; Psalm 27:9-10; Psalm 146:9; Jeremiah 49:11; Romans 8:15-18
 - Father's Day is actually more special for people who have no father to celebrate.
 - God the Father is the Heavenly Father to all who believe in Him.
 - If your dad was a bum, if you didn't even know your dad, if your dad was a great guy, but he's no longer able to fulfill his fatherly duty because of Alzheimers . . . you have all the fatherly care you need in God.
 - If your dad is a wonderful, Christ-honoring father . . . God is still a better one.
 - Unlike Mother's Day and Grandparent's Day, Father's Day is an opportunity for all believers everywhere to focus on the great, majestic, perfect Heavenly Father.

II. How to Celebrate God on Father's Day

- Preparing

- Exult in the passages about the perfection of the Father, learn from the passages where God communicates His expectations for fathers, and glory in the passages where God promises to care for the fatherless.
- Spend time praying for your father — if he's still alive. If he's a good dad, pray that God would help him to continue to mature in his sanctification. If he's a bad dad, pray that God would soften his heart and draw Him to Christ.
- If your father is gone, thank the Lord for the part his played in your life . . . even if that only means that God used him to conceive you. That in itself is an amazing gift!
- If you're a father, plead with God to teach you and reprove you and change you and mature you so that you can mirror Him in your fathering.
- Put up a picture of your dad or your surrogate dads or your spiritual dad on your Celebration Wall along with a Scripture passage that will draw your mind to praising God for the godly men in your life.
- Prepare the hearts of the other fathers in your life by encouraging and challenging them and strengthening them in their relationship with the Heavenly Father.

- Celebrating

- Spend some of that time in church.
- Spend some time reading and discussing what the Bible has to say about fathers. Thank the Lord together for the fathers in your life and pray for their physical and spiritual needs.
- Whatever you do, and regardless of the kind of man your father is or was, I encourage you to honor your father in one way or another. Send a card. Call him up. Visit him in prison if you need to. Perhaps God will use your soft heart and desire to reconcile with your dad as a way of drawing your dad to Him.

- Discipling

- Whether you're speaking into the lives of other fathers, teaching young men how to be a good father, or simply rejoicing together with your fellow disciples about the awesomeness of The Father, I hope you'll do it together.
- Sharpen each other. Strengthen each other. Mold each other. Help each other be better conformed to the image of Christ.
- Have a great day on Father's Day because you serve a great God and — whether your dad is here or gone, good or bad — you rejoice in the awesomeness of God.