Growing Strong Dads

Being a Father isn’t just a HUGE privilege, it’s also an awesome responsibility. Because Dad’s have a tremendous influence on their families.

I’m going to share some startling statistics to validate that point from the website, fathers.com. which calls fatherlessness in America an epidemic.

First, the percentage of children growing up in homes raised by mom.

Their source is the U.S. Census Bureau

The website reveals that in those homes…

* 71% of all high school drop outs come from homes where the biological father was not present.
* 71% of all teenage pregnancy, where the biological father isn’t present.
* 85% of all children with behavior disorders.
* 90% of all homeless/runaway children.
* 63% of all teenage suicides.
* 85% of all youth in prison.

It’s not that mom’s aren’t doing a good job… but I believe it proves that God structured marriage the way He did in Genesis 2:24 for a reason”

God also instructs us who we should be in a relationship with 2 Corinthians 6:14.

Not to limit our fun, but to bless us and our family and their future. Nobody can out bless God.

Some believe that God and His Word will only limit our fun… to which I would ask, “do those statistics that we just read sound like fun to you”?

The purpose for God’s Word is not only to introduce you to Him (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit)… so you can make the smart choice of having a life altering, eternal relationship with God, through His Son Jesus...

And often God’s Word benefits you and your family through us yielding to the historical Biblical examples of folks who followed God and did what He said and were blessed and folks that lived like they were above God’s Word… or believed they didn’t need God… which never ends as well as God plans for the individual and their family.

I wish that I had a father that would have shared with me as a boy growing up, the things that I am sharing with you today.

For many reasons today, pregnancy (not just teenage pregnancy) often occurs outside of marriage (it did in mine).

Dee and I did not have a relationship with Christ when it happened, but I knew what I needed to do… no other choice ever entered my mind.

Why do so many men struggle to commit to marrying the mother of their children?

A wise old woman once said, “honey, he’ll never buy the cow as long as he’s gets his milk for free.”

God knew this in the beginning, that’s why he said the milk is for after the wedding!

But you know it takes two to put the cart before the horse…

1. Strong Dad’s marry Mom for life.

Now let me clarify, two things… if you have divorced, I’m not saying you are weak… and secondly, if you have divorced, God is loving and will forgive…

God can and wants to make every man/dad strong or stronger…

Once you’re married how do you stay married, and be a strong husband & father and positive influence to your family?

Billy Graham’s wife, Ruth once said, A successful marriage is made up of two good forgivers.”

Conflicts will arise in your marriage…

Have your disagreement and forgive.

Personally I like conflict in my marriage… because that means we get to make up!

Men, the objective is never to win… It’s to resolve.

If your goal is to win…, you’ve lost, even if you think you’ve won.

And parents don’t fight in front of your children…

As a matter of fact, don’t fight in front of anyone…

Kindly ask them to leave first!

Learn how to resolve your conflicts privately. And learn how to fight fair Even boxing matches have rules….

By fair I mean don’t run to people outside of your marriage, gossiping behind your spouse’s back, when you should be working to resolve…).

And don’t respond to your spouse before you’ve heard the whole problem.

How many of you have or are planning to do that?

Proverbs 18:13

When you start interrupting one another, talking over one another, and yelling at one another, it is counterproductive to the making up part of the process.

Sit down and talk it out… without the added drama…

How you know you’re equally yoked with a believer is when you both are committed to Ephesians 5:21: “submit to one another out of your reverence and respect for Christ” who died so you could resolve your conflicts (which often are rooted in the selfishness of wanting our own way)…

For the sake of your marriage and your children.

Do Ephesians 4:31–32: “Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you” (NLT).

1. Strong Dad’s Love your wife.

Just because men are married doesn’t necessarily mean they love or know how to love.

Ladies, when you find a man faithfully loving God (whom they CAN’T see) with all of their heart, soul, mind and strength (as the Scriptures instruct) then you can be pretty confident that he will faithfully love you (who he CAN see). That’s a good way to find a loving husband and father right there…

How are men to love? Ephesians 5:25

When a man sacrifices his wants & desires for the Lord and his wife, he is setting a Christ-like example in the home for his wife & children that the whole family benefits from. Not to mention Society.

Showing her that you love her is critical… beyond taking her out to dinner… unless you sit and watch her eat…

Don’t consider taken her to New York a vacation, when it was for a family funeral or something… Show her intentional love, make it all about her.

Tell her often that you love her… sing her praises! Proverbs 31:28 says, “Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her”.

Brag on your wife in front of your kids, friends and family.

Why? Because when momma is happy…

Christ died publicly for His Bride, the church… and we are to love our wives as He loved the church, PUBLICLY!

It may be a sacrifice for you to publicly show affection and attention to your wife or to compliment her, but that is where the blessing are that will keep you and your marriage STRONG for LIFE!!!

1. Strong Dads, discipline their children in love. (so mom doesn’t have to!)

Proverbs 3:12 reminds us that “the LORD corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights.”

If you were disciplined in an ungodly way by your biological father you may not like the thought of discipline.

You may have been disciplined without your parents delighting in you which made you swear that you would never spank your child…

That has started a trend nowadays to be your child’s best friend, instead of their parent.

But your child doesn’t need you to be that. They need your parental love, guidance, wisdom, counsel and discipline in love when it’s necessary—and you’ll both know when it’s necessary!

Sometimes we reject the idea of discipline… often until we see someone else child who needs it!

Father’s, when it becomes necessary for you to exercise your parental right to discipline your child… do it with delight in your heart for your child… be a reflection of God’s character…

No drama… NO yelling… use it to connect your child with God’s Word…

Use it as a teachable moment that draws both of you closer to God and keeps your whole family on the right path.

Your family will have much STRONGER respect for you and the God you serve.

Don’t use discipline as a means of taking out your frustrations for other things that you have refused to resolve…

Lastly…

1. Strong Dad’s leave a legacy of faith.

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”

3 John 1:4

When David was on his deathbed, he called to his son Solomon.

Solomon was going to carry on David’s reign as king, and here is what David said to him;

1 Chronicles 28:9 NKJV - “As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.”

David left a legacy of faith. Our prime directive as STRONG DADS is to bring our children to faith in Christ, by our actions and our words.

I’ve heard parents say, but “I don’t want to influence my child into Christianity”, I want them to make their own choice…

And I respect that… But will you do the same when it comes to Santa Claus, and the Easter Bunny, etc…?

If you want your child to choose, then communicate truth to them and bring them to church and other places so they can learn and choose…

Strong Dads need to direct their children to the truth that Christ Jesus is the only Messiah… John 14:6

Don’t lie to your children… knowing that one day they will grow up and know that you’ve lied to them…

Isn’t it right around that age, when kids realize that their parents haven’t been honest with them that they become rebellious, stop trusting their parents and start believing they know better?

God does not want us to hope that our children will somehow stumble onto the pathway of Christ that leads to a blessed and transformed life/family…, and eternal life in heaven one day.

He teaches us to lead our children by His example and pray they won’t reject it, which already carries a high possibility.

Give them a reason not to doubt Jesus..

James Merritt, in his book “What God Wants Every Dad to Know”, wrote;

“Fatherhood is more than conceiving, feeding, clothing, educating, and sending children out on their own.

Dads have the responsibility of preparing their children for their eternal destiny of meeting God.”

I pray that you agree with that?

Some of you dads have done this well, and you should be proud of what God has done in through you and your family. “You got this”

Some may NOT think that you’ve done so well…, but as I said last week, it is never too late to turn to God… He always loves & forgives. He offers you a new beginning “You got this!”

Some of you may just be starting out… So let me encourage you…

Do the right thing by your wife and children…

Submit your life to God and your family…

Love them as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for them.

“You got this!”