

CCC Fathers Day The Blessing

Welcome: Happy Fathers Day

"To get his good-night kiss he stood beside my chair and raised an eager face to me, a face with love alight. As I gathered in my arms the son God gave to me, I thanked the lad for being good, & hoped he'd always try to be. His little arms crept around my neck, & then I heard him say, Four simple words... Four simple words that I shall never forget, four words that made me a hard working coarse man turn my life to the Lords way and pray. These four words turned a mirror on my soul, a light on the secrets in my life that no one knew. How could four little words have such power from such a small person? I still hear them today 30yrs later... My little boy said, 'I'll be like you.'"

Fatherhood has changed a lot over the years and yes Fatherhood may have changed as in our society, but I don't

think God's perception of what a father is to be and do... has changed one bit. I found myself this week going into the book of Genesis reading about the first fathers that had a relationship with God and how they lived and honored God with their family.

So this morning I'd like for us to look at a story in God's word, the bible, in the 27th chapter of Genesis, It's a story about Isaac bestowing his blessing to Jacob. Now the blessing was intended for the oldest son, Esau. But through deception the blessing was given to Jacob instead. but that doesn't change the Father that Isaac is... The story goes like this... Isaac & Rebecca had twin sons, Esau & Jacob, and they were not anything alike. Esau was an outdoorsman with hairy arms & hands & he loved hunting & fishing. Jacob was more of a homebody, & spent a lot of time with his mother.

Their father, Isaac, has grown old & blind, & he decides it is time to pass on the blessing to his oldest son, Esau. Now a Jewish father's blessing was a formal passing on of the father's honor & authority to his oldest son. And since the oldest son was assuming the leadership responsibilities of the family or tribe, he also received a double share of his father's possessions. So the bestowing of the blessing was a very important event indeed.

So Isaac tells Esau the oldest son, He says, "*I am now an old man & don't know the day of my death. Now then, get your weapons - your quiver & bow - & go out to the open country to hunt some wild game for me. Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like & bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die.*"

So Esau leaves, & while he is gone, Rebecca, his wife, seizes the opportunity to secure the blessing for the

younger son, Jacob, who was her favorite son. She quickly prepares some tasty food & tells Jacob to put on Esau's best clothes and to help fool blind old Isaac, she puts goat skin on Jacob's hands & arms to make them feel hairy. Then she sends him in with the food to ask for the blessing. Listen to the conversation here vs. 19, "*Jacob said to his father, 'I am Esau, your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Please sit up & eat some of my game so that you may give me your blessing.'*"

Now Isaac was suspicious because Jacob's voice didn't sound like Esau's. So Isaac, the father asked, "*How did you find it so quickly, my son?*" Jacob replies, "*The Lord your God gave me success.*" Then Isaac said to Jacob, '*Come near so I can touch you, my son, to know whether you really are my son Esau or not.*' Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him & said, '*The voice is the ...*

voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.' He did not recognize him, for his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; so he blessed him."

Now the blessing that was given is found in vs 27-29. "So he went to him & kissed him. When Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he blessed him & said, 'Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed. May God give you of heaven's dew & of earth's richness - an abundance of grain & new wine? "Many nations will serve you & people will bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, & may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed & those who bless you be blessed."

After he received the blessing from his father, Jacob left. Shortly after that, Esau came in with the game that he had killed & prepared, & was ready to receive his father's

blessing. Listen to vs's 33-34. "Isaac trembled violently & said, 'Who was it, then, that hunted game & brought it to me? I ate it just before you came & I blessed him - & indeed he will be blessed!' When Esau heard his father's words, he burst out with a loud & bitter cry & said to his father, 'Bless me - me too, my father!'"

What I want to do is examine the blessing that Isaac bestowed upon Jacob. See sometime the deception of Jacob and his mother Rebecca to Esau get all the attention and teachings. But the blessing of Isaac contain 4 ingredients that we all, specially fathers ought, to be present in every home today. And when those 4 ingredients are present, & practiced consistently, then our children will grow up solid, secure & confident of themselves, able to go out into the world & function normally." But if those ingredients are absent in the home, then too often the child ends up like

Esau, living a life of bitterness & anger. So let me share with you the 4 ingredients of Isaac's blessing.

I. THE FIRST INGREDIENT WAS A MEANINGFUL

TOUCH - It doesn't sound like much but we read that "Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him." Vs. 26 says, "*Then his father Isaac said to him, 'Come here, my son, & kiss me.'*"

Now this is not an isolated incident in scripture. Almost every time a blessing is bestowed, it involves touching - the laying on of hands, a kiss, an embrace - something that conveys acceptance & love.

We see in the Gospel of Mark that people brought children to Jesus so that He could touch them. Jesus took them & placed them on his knee, & laid His hands upon them, & the scripture says, "*He blessed them.*"

Jesus knew exactly what children need to feel loved &

accepted. We see that Jesus He touched them & blessed them.

It's important to do that in our homes, too. When children are very small you can't communicate love and acceptance with words... because they don't understand words yet. But the best way to communicate love to a very small child and I will even say all ages, is to demonstrate it by touching them, cuddling them, holding them close.

Jacob was 40 years old when Isaac touched him & kissed him to convey the blessing to him. And no matter what the age, I think it is important to continue to communicate love & acceptance & affection in some meaningful way.

The first ingredient of the blessing from a father was a meaningful touch.

II. THE SECOND INGREDIENT WAS A SPOKEN

MESSAGE OF AFFECTION & LOVE - Listen as Isaac

blesses his son in vs. 27, "*Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field.* . ." Now I suppose that today's child would not consider it a compliment to be told from their father, "You smell like a field. I just wanted you to know that."

But to an old outdoorsman like Isaac, who thought he was speaking to Esau, the smell of a field about ready for harvest was a great smell. It was a compliment, a positive message that communicated his love & affection. That smell was something dear to Isaac.

You see, too often parents are quick to criticize, quick to remind their children of all ages of their mistakes. Making frustrated commitments to our children like, "You dummy, why did you spill the milk?" "You're lazy." "You're too fat." You'll never make it and that was stupid... Parents are quick to speak words of criticism that really don't

accomplish much at all. All they do is cause a child to withdraw from them in a personal way.

Yes, of course there is room for constructive criticism from the parent. But it's more important to communicate love through words that say, "You're worth something. You're such a good little boy or girl. I'm glad that God gave you to us. I remember saying one Christmas to my son, I said, Thomas St. George your better than any Christmas present I could ever receive. He lite up brighter then the Christmas tree. Father's Day is special just because you're here."

Those are words that communicate acceptance & love. And they need to be spoken over & over again, even when our children stumble & fall.

III. THE THIRD INGREDIENT WAS THE ATTRIBUTING OF A HIGH VALUE - Notice what Isaac says in vs. 28, "*May God give you of heaven's dew &*

of earth's richness - an abundance of grain & new wine."

He's saying, "You're special, so God will give you the best He has to give."

We're constantly being told that we should teach our children to have a good, positive self-image, to build up their self-esteem. So it is important to teach the child, "You're so valuable that God even came into our world & died on the cross just for you." There is no greater value you can tell your children than this...

But it's not just by words. We teach high values in a number of ways to our kids. A lot of times when a child comes to us, we're so busy. We have one eye on the TV & one eye on them, & we can't concentrate on what they're saying. We have a word crutch for this action today it is called multi tasking.

So when a child comes to talk to you, turn off the radio or TV set. Lay aside the newspaper, & look your child in the eye. You'll see wonder after wonder when you look into a child's eyes, they will sparkle with excitement. They have so many things they're anxious to tell you. So look at them, & listen to what they have to say! And when you do that...that communicates value to them. "You're saying to them, you're worth something. You're more important to me than the ballgame, the races or newspaper, the whatever. You're saying, your an extremely valuable part of our family. I'm glad God gave you to us. And whenever you have something you need to talk about, I'm here to listen to you."

IV. THE FOURTH INGREDIENT WAS THE PICTURING OF A GLORIOUS FUTURE - In vs. 29

Isaac says to Jacob, "*May nations serve you & peoples bow*

down to you. Be lord over your brothers, & may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed & those who bless you be blessed." The father, Isaac is helping him to raise his sights & see that his future is bright. That is an important responsibility of parents, isn't it? Proverbs says, "*Train up a child in the way he should go, & when he is old he will not depart from it.*"

We've always made a spiritual application there, "*Teach ... them the things of God & when they're old they will not forsake them.*"

But there is another application there. We are to help our children find their niche; discover who they are, & why they've been made. God made them special. God has a purpose and a meaning for their life... So as they're growing up, help them understand their gifts & talents, & what they're best suited to do in life. Counsel & guide

them to become the kind of person God wants, & made them to be.

The mistake most of us make as parents is we try to get our children to become what we want them to be, other than what God made them to be.

In the movie, "Dead Poets Society," is a boy who wanted very much to become an actor when he grew up. But his father wanted him to be a doctor. The school put on a play which his father reluctantly attended. He was the star of the play & did such an outstanding job that he was given a standing ovation at the end.

After the play was over the father took his son home & said, "I'm not going to let you waste your life being an actor. I'm going to take you out of this school tomorrow & send you to a military academy." And that night, that boy committed suicide. Now I understand that was just a

movie... It's just a story, I guess, or is it? I wonder how many people have tried to force their children into becoming something God never equipped them for, or intended them to be and what the results were of their life.

Maybe you heard the story about a little girl named Sandra who was raised in an adobe house in a rural area of New Mexico, without electricity & running water.

In fact, her mother & father had to drive to El Paso, 200 miles away, so that her mother could be in the hospital when Sandra was born. Because they were so far away from any school, Sandra's parents home-schooled her. They ordered a variety of magazines to expose her to the outside world. She grew up in a very wholesome environment. Sandra fondest memories of her family are of the times when mom & dad took the whole family on vacation to visit state capitols. They went into every capitol

building & climbed their domes, west of the Mississippi. When Sandra graduated from high school, she went to Stanford University & graduated with honors. Sandra, maybe better known as Sandra Day O'Connor, was the first woman to be seated in the Supreme Court of the United States of America. All because mom & dad cared enough to help her see herself in the image in which God created her. And then to encourage her to be all that she could be.

Now maybe our children aren't that intelligent or gifted. But our responsibility as parents, specially fathers, is to help them see themselves for who they really are, & to help them prepare for a glorious future that they have with Jesus Christ.

This morning, God is the perfect parent who has conveyed to us all the ingredients of His blessing in just one verse of scripture. "*For God so loved the world that*

He gave His only begotten Son. Whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

This morning I offer God's invitation to you. He is a loving Father that desires to touch us, speaks to us, tell us how valuable we are, & help us see the glorious future that we have in Him. It is offered to you this morning to start a relationship with God the Father.