

# The Strength in a Father's Heart

by Carter Conlon

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*Carter Conlon emphasizes the critical role of fathers in society and the church to combat the effects of fatherlessness and guide the next generation towards God.*

**Duration:** 38:03

**Scripture:** Exodus 20:1, Malachi 4:1, Matthew 6:33, John 1:23

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the power of a father's voice in bringing hope and life to seemingly hopeless situations. He refers to a story in the Bible where Jesus speaks into a situation of death and commands a young man to arise. The preacher also highlights the importance of fathers turning their hearts towards their children and vice versa, as a remedy to the godlessness and sin that threatens to destroy societies. The sermon concludes with a reminder to not forget the word of God, as it is the source of strength and guidance in the face of fear and challenges.

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## Transcript

Praise God. I wanna speak to you this morning from the book of Malachi chapter four. If you'll go, last book in the Old Testament before Matthew, actually the last thing that God says for 400 years, the next voice after Malachi is John the Baptist introducing Jesus Christ.

So just to put it in context, this is a significant chapter, Malachi chapter four, because it speaks in duality. Everyone who studies it pretty well agrees on this one thing, that Malachi speaks about two events as if they're one, the first coming of Jesus Christ and the second coming. Now you'll see clearly it moves to the conditions in the last days of this world as we know it.

And he gives an incredible solution to the problems that we will face and are in great measure facing already today. And the solution is a lot simpler than most people realize it is. And so Father, I thank you God for the touch of heaven on my life today and in this sanctuary.

And for those that are online and those that will hear this on radio across the nation, thank you Lord Jesus Christ for bringing us back to the simplicity of the gospel, bringing us back to the simplicity of your design for the family, your design for fathers and for men. Thank you Lord for all that you're teaching us and where you are leading us as a people. Help us to push away the fog of lies that have surrounded this generation and to simply embrace the truth.

And I ask Lord for all of us, myself included, for the men of this church to embrace the role that you have given us at this moment in our history. Help us to be men. God Almighty, deliver every man in this sanctuary and at the sound of my voice from self-focus, self-consumption and just plain selfishness.

Give us a heart Lord for families and for children and to see this moment in our culture turned back to God. Father, I thank you with all my heart for this and I praise you in Jesus' name, amen. Malachi chapter four, beginning at verse one.

Malachi says, for behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven. All the proud, yes, and all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, that will leave them neither roots nor branch.

Now this is a day that's coming on this world, the scripture, the totality of scripture bears witness to this day that's coming to this world when the rebellion that humankind has launched against the Lordship of Jesus Christ, wanting to be God in themselves, establish their own borders of behavior, their own standards of what's right and what's wrong, will suddenly be confronted by an overwhelming distress. Jesus himself said, men's hearts are gonna fail for fear of the things coming upon this earth, the powers of the heavens. The scripture tells us themselves will be shaken.

Not only will there be a shaking on the earth as societies begin to devolve into lawlessness and violence, but there will also be corresponding calamity in the heavens. The waves of the seas, the scripture says, are going to be roaring. Mountains will be shaking and falling into the sea, a day of fearfulness and all of the roots that the godless have tried to plant in the earth in a sense to own it, to dictate to it, to govern it, to guide it, to reestablish its behaviors and its boundaries.

All of those roots, right to the roots will be destroyed by what's coming on this entire society into this entire world. Only that which cannot be shaken is going to remain. You read it in the New Testament.

There's a shaking coming both to the heavens and to the earth so that everything that can be shaken will be shaken. Every tree not planted by the father will be uprooted. There will be no strength to stand in these last days except for the righteous, except for those who know Christ as Lord and Savior, except for those who have yielded to God and are living according to the plans and the purposes of God.

Now we see on the one hand, this uprooting and this burning of everything that tries to exist, govern itself, guide itself, establish its own rules, ultimately back into the garden of Eden, trying to be God in itself. That was the inherent sin of humankind. We can be as God is.

We can dictate our own future. There will be no consequence. We can decide what is good.

We can decide what is evil. We do not need God governing us. David the psalmist said, why did the heathen rage and the kings of the earth imagine a vain thing? And now we're starting to see rage.

Hollywood actors are touching microphones and raging against anything of God, anything that represents godliness or boundaries or borders or behavior. It's truly amazing. We're seeing this incredible rise in the earth as it is in many facets of society against everything of God and everything that represents the order of God.

Now to the children of God, to the sincere believer here this morning, to people like you and I who said, I'm not here to play games with God. I'm not here to try to pack God into my life view. I'm here to find out what

is the value system of God.

I'm trusting the Holy Spirit to implant that in my heart. I'm asking God to make me into a new creation, that which God has designed me to be. But to you who fear my name, the son of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings and you shall go out and grow fat like stall fed calves.

Now, when the whole world is crumbling, the whole world is losing heart, you will be growing in grace. There will be a strength given to you, which is not of any amount of human effort. It comes from God and God alone.

Hallelujah to the lamb of God. He will arise and his life will be so evident in you when others are running for fear of what's happening on the earth or fear what society is becoming. You will begin to grow in this incredible grace that God gives to those who belong to him.

And the virtues of God given to us by his Holy Spirit will begin to abound in each of our lives. That's why it's so important to be sincere in your walk with God now. No more games.

No more games. No more using the church as a dumping ground for bad behavior. No more games.

I'm going with God. Like the old song we used to sing, I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back. The cross before me and the world and all of its rebellion against God is behind me.

I'm going with him. And verse three, Malachi says, you will trample the wicked and they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I do this. In other words, their roots will burn.

Their reasonings will falter. They will fail, but you will still be walking. You will still be standing, though they lie in ruins and their objectives are in ashes.

You will be standing in this world in the last days and you will not be overpowered by the fearfulness and godlessness that will literally attempt to sweep the earth and all of the people with it. He finishes the Old Testament with this one admonition. Remember the law of Moses, my servant, which I commended him in Horeb for all Israel with the statutes and judgments.

To you and I, it says today, don't forget the word of God. You can't live the Christian life on emotion or somebody else's revelation. You get into the word of God.

You start to read this book and get it into your heart. This is going to be your strength, folks, in the days ahead. This is how you're going to stand.

Behold, he says, I send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse. Phenomenal finish to the Old Testament.

God gives a remedy. Says there's going to be this incredible calamity come to the earth. There's going to be this burning, this failing, this falling, this calamity, this fearfulness.

But I've provided something to break this onslaught of godlessness, to break this onslaught of sin that's going to try to destroy cultures, countries, societies, and it's just as simple as the hearts of the fathers turning to the children and the children back to their fathers. There is incredible strength in the fathers that are here. Do you understand that? You have been given a role of God to turn back lawlessness, a role of

God to bring stability everywhere you go, not just in your own house, but in among children.

I want to read to you some articles. I was doing a lot of research on this this week when the voice of the father, the guidance of the father in society is absent. Real Clear Politics, an article written on the 27th of February, 2018.

I didn't know these things until I read this, but in the 27 deadliest mass shootings in American history, 26 of them were committed by those who were fatherless. Fatherless children are twice as likely to commit suicide. 71% of high school dropouts come from fatherless homes.

Now, folks, this is not just the opinion of somebody on the far right or far left. This is actually documented. It is statistically proven.

It is not even debatable. You can research it yourself. Now, I want to just give you some statistics on this.

CNN article, 27 deadliest mass shootings in history committed by young males since 2005. Only one was raised by his biological father. There's a clear connection between the quashing of masculinity, which many on our generation are deeming toxic, and the rise of violence among youth.

The whole pretense is nonsense. Masculinity or testosterone, when channeled correctly by a guiding male figure, can be the most productive good thing in the world. Of course, no guidance or poor guidance can be disastrous.

USA Today wrote, without dads as role models, boys' testosterone is not well-channeled. The boy experiences a sense of purposelessness, a lack of boundary enforcement, rudderlessness, and often withdraws into video games and into video porn. At worst, when boys' testosterone is not well-channeled by an involved dad, boys become among the world's most destructive forces.

When boys' testosterone is well-channeled by an involved dad, boys become among the world's most constructive forces. Even girls, when fathers are missing in the vast majority of American homes, become more prone to promiscuity, depression, and self-harm. This is not a condemnation of all single mothers or their sons, but should act as a wake-up call.

The breakdown of the family unit has grave consequences for society as a whole. The godless can choose to ignore this reality or continue to mock those of us who believe in biblical value for espousing traditional value and continue to attack masculinity in general as the source of the problem, which is total fraud. That is not the way God designed it, and none of it is true.

And I think it's time for you and I to rise up against the effeminization of males in this country. Which brings me now to this point, the uniqueness of The Church of Jesus Christ is that no matter what is happening on this earth in Christ and because of Christ, we have become a family. This is a family here today.

We're not just a congregation. We're not just a gathering of people who come here to hear a gospel message on Sunday and Tuesday and whatever other day you come to the house of God. We have become brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers.

We are related to one another by the blood of Jesus Christ. We are now a family. Thank God for that.

We are a family that Christ promised would have healing in our wings and that because of his divine working inside of this God-ordained institution called The Church of Jesus Christ, that we would have the

power to push back the curse of lawlessness and violence and the devolving of our society in this generation and to push back the false reasonings against manhood, against the home, against the family, against children. We have the power as The Church of Jesus Christ. Do you understand? Malachi says it's the heart of the fathers turning to the children and the children to their fathers that has the power to stop the advance of the last day curse in the world.

Do you fully understand that? The last day curse can be stopped, which means the fathers in the church become the fathers of the church and the children in the church become the children of the fathers. Not just our own children, folks, all children in the body of Christ. We as the men of God in this church are the fathers of the children who attend this church.

You'd be amazed what a word can do for a young person's life. You'd be amazed what a word of encouragement or direction or caution, whatever it is, or just a hand on a shoulder, you'd be amazed what that can do for a child who's never had that, never known that, never understood what it means to be loved or guided by a father. It can stop the curse.

Let me give you a practical example. One of our elders, Victoria Griffin, her husband, Derek Griffin, is, Derek, wave at everybody so they know who I'm talking about. Derek is ordained by this church and Derek lives in a part of the city where there was a continual parade of violence.

There were shootings, there were crime going on in the neighborhood. There's a huge percentage of fatherless young men and women in his neighborhood. So Derek decided, through prayer, felt led of God to do something about it.

He now has a dozen young men that he is personally mentoring in his community. And yes, praise God. And every Friday night, he has a Bible study in a local community hall and there's up to 100 young people now attending his Bible study.

He has become the voice of the father that has been missing in his community. And people who keep the statistics of the violence in this part of the city are telling Derek that crime in general, crime in general, violent crime included, is down as much as 40 to 50% since he started mentoring young men in his community. Praise God.

And so I applaud men like Derek who are standing up to do something. And the statistics prove it, that the voice of the father turning to the children has the power to push back the curse, the curse of shootings, the curse of death, the curse of drugs, the curse of violence, the curse of listlessness, the curse of dropping out of school and having no future. The voice of one father in a community is pushing the curse back.

So don't tell me that there's not something that we can do as men of God. On this Father's Day, we can make a resolve in our heart. I'm not sitting on the sideline and giving this generation over to darkness.

I'm going to do something. And sometimes it may require, that's why this book we're giving you says courage on the front. It may require courage to step out.

And say, I don't care what they say. I'm gonna have a prayer meeting with young men in my school or my neighborhood or in the athletic field or whatever it is. I don't care what anybody says.

There is a time that we have to obey God and not men. There's a time to do right. There's a time for men of God to rise up and become men of God again.

And with a resolve in the heart says, I'm not giving over this generation. I'm not giving over my family. I'm not giving over the church, the young people that are coming to God.

Any of these kids, I don't know how many have fathers and how many don't on this platform. But I certainly am not willing to give any one of them over to any false ideology because I wasn't there to speak into their lives. Matthew chapter two, let me just share this with you.

Chapter three rather, verses 16 and 17, talking about Jesus Christ. It says, when he had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water and behold the heavens were open to him. And he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and the lighting on him.

And suddenly a voice came from heaven saying, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. You see, the father has the power to validate the journey of the son or daughter. There's something in the father's voice.

Now, Jesus had an earthly father, an adopted earthly father. His name was Joseph. We know Joseph was there when he was 12 years old, but somewhere between 12 and 30, he disappeared from the scene.

We most assume he died. We don't know for sure, but most who study it say at some point Joseph died. He's no longer there.

But we see Joseph in the formative years of Jesus being the one who's teaching him how to be a carpenter because he was a carpenter and Joseph taught him. That's good, son. That was a great terror.

You did this or you can understand this. Joseph is the earthly physical voice of those upbringing years in the life of the physical man, Jesus Christ. Now, at the time that he moves into his life purpose, at 30 years of age, that's when he's making a public declaration of the journey he's about to take.

Joseph is not there to say, well done. I'm so happy for the direction you're taking. And so a voice coming from heaven, which we know of course is the voice of the father who was his real father.

But a voice comes from heaven saying, this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. Now notice something. He doesn't say, this is my son who's going to the cross.

This is my son that I've commanded to obey me. There's a lot of things he could have said. But when Jesus went down in the water, it was the voice of the father because there was no physical person there.

So you and I become that secondary voice. May I call it that? We become that voice to a young boy, young girl when the father is absent. We don't know how long the father was there, but the father's gone.

And we become that voice. And it was a voice that just said, I'm well pleased with you. I'm well pleased with what you're doing.

I'm well pleased with your direction. I'm well pleased with the choices that you're making for the future. It's the voice that some young people just long for, standing at the sidelines of their very first basketball or baseball game.

And your son or daughter might be the worst one out there, but that's that voice saying, go. Did you see that? Did you see that? That was my daughter just hit that ball. That was my son that just caught that pop fly.

Did you see that? Now, most kids pretend that they're embarrassed when their father's, and I'm one of those. I'll tell you right now, I'm one of those. I used to have a big, long red horn that I would blow when my son came out on the ice to play hockey.

Both my sons. I was the guy that, you know, everybody, you know, they all hang their heads when you come out. You know, it's my dad.

I know it's my dad. But they would really miss it if that wasn't there. Let me tell you right now.

They would miss it. Even though they might hang their heads, there's a secret pride inside of their heart. That's my dad.

That's my dad. That's my dad that's in the sidelines. When my daughter used to play volleyball, she was one of the few that could get the ball over the net.

It was probably one of the worst volleyball teams I've ever seen in my life, but I was there. I was there. That's my girl.

Hallelujah. That's my girl. I don't care if she never hits the ball.

That's my girl. Do you understand? She's out there. She's out there.

This is my beloved son and whom I'm well pleased. You don't have to know everything every kid in this church is doing. You can go by them and say, I'm just so happy, son.

I'm so happy, young lady, that you're in church today. You've made such a good choice. It's so pleasing to God and makes me feel so good to see you here.

It's just that validation when young people are making the right steps and going in the right direction. And when we look at this, with the voice of the father, there was an immediate empowerment of the spirit. The two come together.

The validation of the father, and you'll see the Holy Spirit now coming on Christ and enabling him now to take on this journey. You see, it all works together. You can't just have somebody being baptized and the Holy Spirit comes.

That's only two out of three. The full picture is brought to the fore. The full strength is given when the voice of the father is there saying, this is my child in whom I am well pleased.

It's so important, guys, so important that you don't forget the kids in this church. So important you don't forget the teenagers that come here. Three o'clock service is packed with young people now.

And six o'clock, a lot of young people are coming. It's so important that you don't forget them. You never know what a word can do.

It can make the difference between success and failure in life's journey. And again, in John chapter 12, in verse 27 and 28, Jesus said later on in his journey, now my soul is troubled and what shall I say? Father saved me from this hour, but for this purpose, I came to this hour. So Jesus, by his own admission, is troubled.

He's come up against opposition and the opposition is not only physical, it's spiritual opposition that's come against him and everything inside of him. There's a measure, I suppose, of trepidation about the steps that are now ahead of him. And he says, father, glorify your name.

And it's the type of the son or daughter that's saying, help me, Lord, to bring glory to the family name. Help me to do what is right. But I recognize I can't do this on my own.

That's why it says, father, glorify your name. And then again, a voice came from heaven saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. And it's the type of a father that says, I've stood behind you before and I will stand behind you again.

Even when you're weak and you feel like you're gonna be overcome, when you're concerned, when you're fearful, you feel like the opposition is too much and you can't go forward, I've stood with you before and I will stand with you again and you will bring honor to the name of God. You will survive and bring honor to the name of God. Not only to validate the young people, but to say, you're not alone.

You can call me if you need me to help you. But I'm here with you. I just want you to know I'm with you.

And sometimes that's all it takes. Just somebody, a young person just knows there's somebody here that is willing to stand with them. Somebody here is willing to believe for them.

Somebody here is willing to validate them. And now in the gospel of Luke chapter seven, this would be my final point, verses 12 to 14. I wanna show you a situation where Jesus himself now becomes the father's voice when all seems lost.

It's that ability that God gives to us as fathers to reclaim young people who feel that all hope is gone. Their strength is lost. They're such a disappointment.

There's nothing left to live for. That's why so many of our young people are cutting themselves, even in this church, folks. You understand? There's a deep sense.

We have a whole thing on depression coming up and I do recommend that people should be here to listen to this because it's a plague now with young people in our generation. In Luke chapter seven, verse 12, this is about Jesus. When he came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out.

The only son of his mother and she was a widow and a large crowd from the city was with her. This was a single mother and she had lost hope. The son has lost hope.

Life is gone. It seems like there's no future. It says, when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, do not weep.

Then he came and touched the open coffin and those who carried him stood still and he said, young man, I say to you, arise. So he was dead, sat up and began to speak and he presented him to his mother. Then fear came upon all and they glorified God.

He spoke into a hopeless situation. When life was gone, when it seemed like there was no future, he spoke into this situation and he said, young man, I say to you, arise. There is power in a father's voice.

Do you understand? There's power. There's so many young people who feel that there's no future. They feel like laying down.

They can't get out of bed. They're so riddled with discouragement and depression but God has ordained in the voice of the father, the power to tell them to get up. And the scripture says, when the young man got up, he began to speak and in the original Greek, what it really says is he began to speak the way the one who was speaking to him was speaking.

He began to speak the way God speaks. He began to see a future. His life was not going to be defined by death and hopelessness and being carried out and put away and buried.

Jesus spoke to him and when he rose, he began to speak and repeat technically the words that had been spoken to him. This is in part what amazed everyone. I had no idea what his speech was like before he died but I know that when he was raised up again, his speech changed.

That's the evidence of the touch of God and God has given fathers that power to speak into this next generation. Much more than you and I will ever fully understand. I believe the devil has done everything in his power to rob men in this generation of an understanding what their role is in the days, not just now but in the days ahead.

But by God's grace, we are going to reclaim that heritage and I'm believing with you here today that we are going to become that generation of fathers that have the power to turn back to our children and when we turn back, when our hearts are not self-focused, when we are focused on others coming behind us, their hearts will turn towards us and the Bible says it has the power to break this curse of sin on the world in these last days. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

The voice of the Lord is powerful. You read it in Psalm 29. The voice of the Lord can scatter things that have existed in this world for years.

The voice of the Lord can make a way through flames of fire. The voice of the Lord can command life. The voice of the Lord can dispel confusion.

The voice of the Lord can produce something in the heart that causes everyone in the temple of God to give him glory and that voice has been given to the fathers in this generation. By God's grace, we will speak. By God's grace, we will stand.

By God's grace, we will be men. We will not cower under the spirit of this age we are now living in. It's time for men to be men.

It's time for men to stand up. It's time for men at the cost of whatever it costs to us. We simply can't be willing to give this generation over to darkness and live focused on ourselves.

What a paltry way to live when we have such a high calling. By the grace of almighty God, by the grace, you might be discouraged. You might be in debt.

You might be discontent. May, let's get together in the cave and let's start to pray like David and his mighty men did. Let's believe that when we come out, we're going to reclaim, regather that which is lost.

Praise be to God. Here's my altar call, calling all men. That's my altar call, calling all men to be men, calling all men to stand up and be counted, calling all men to make a difference, calling all men.

Every man here, whether you're a father or a father figure, you see whether you've done right or you've done wrong. You know, some men would be sitting here today saying, but pastor, you see, I made such a

mess in the past. Thank God that in Jesus Christ, every day is a brand new day.

In spite of what happened in the past, today is a new day. Remember David made a mistake, King David, and in his mistake lost his whole family. And not only him, but everybody around him.

And when he began to pray, God told him, get up and go after what you've lost. And you will, without fail, recover all. And with a vastly inferior number of men to what they were facing, they obeyed God and they recaptured their families, recaptured their children from captivity.

They brought them back home. And I happen to believe that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. What he did then, he can do again today, just as powerfully as it's always been done.

So as we stand, I wanna just invite the men of this church, men who just say, I've heard this, and I want God to take my life to a whole different level. And if you'd come forward, then I wanna pray for you. We're gonna pray together, actually, at this altar.

We're gonna worship for just a few moments. Men in the balcony, go to either exit and make your way down in the main sanctuary, between the screens in the annex, if you will, please, and in North Jersey. Let's believe God.

Let's believe God for a spiritual awakening through the men of this generation. Let's believe God that we can recapture our children who have been captivated by the enemy. Let's believe God that we can turn back the curse that's hitting this generation because of godlessness.

Praise God. All the men that are here, and I see such hope for the future. And I cast my lot in with all of you that are standing here, and I'm asking God for a holy revolution in our generation.

I really mean that with all my heart. Our young people are captivated by people that are trying to gender confuse them, take away their identity, take away masculinity from young men. This is an hour in this nation when ungodliness is on parade.

But all it takes is a few good men, and it can make a huge difference for the future. I believe that with all my heart. So I'm gonna pray with you and join with you.

Thank you for bringing your little girl down here. Praise God. Father God, in Jesus' name, I'm sincere in asking you for a holy revolution against this baptism of godlessness that has touched our nation, destroying our homes, redefining family, confusing our children, radicalizing them in school against you and even against their own nation.

Father God, in Jesus' name, we recognize that in many cases we're starting from the ground up. This is where David was with his men in Ziklag, but he believed as he prayed that he could go and recapture from a much superior number enemy everything that had been taken away. And so Lord God, we're asking that through men in this generation, you would bring about a spiritual awakening, a revival.

God almighty, young people would find their identity and their direction because of Christ. Raise us up, Lord, to be a voice into their heart that can strengthen them, validate them, empower them and stand with them no matter what comes against them. God, help us to be men again.

Lord, just forgive us, Lord, for what happened to this nation. Forgive us, Lord Jesus Christ, for just allowing this incredible lie to come into this nation and redefine everything. Father, we ask, Lord, that you would

return this country to biblical value and push this godlessness out of our borders.

Thank you. Lord, we stand ready to defend what we believe. We stand ready to let you be God.

And today, maybe this is just our baptism. Lord, for the few years ahead of us, and I know that you're looking down at these men today and you're saying, this is my beloved son and whom I'm well pleased. So give us now the courage not to back up when it gets tough.

You said to your own son, I have glorified my name and I will glorify it again. And so Lord, keep us, God, when we're prone to faltering. Keep us, Lord, when we get discouraged.

Help us keep our mission ahead of us, Lord. May we not forget and make us that voice that can raise a generation from the grave and bring them back to life in Christ. God, help us now.

There's a great journey ahead of us, Lord, but you are calling us as a Gideon's army one more time, as an Esther before the throne of the king. You have been speaking to us, Lord, and we are hearing you. And so thank you, God, for these men.

These are my brothers in arms, Lord. These are the men of God that you will use to make a huge difference. Lord, I ask what you did through Derek Griffin and our doing in his neighborhood, you would do through us a thousand fold, Lord, through these men that are gathered here, Lord, that we will not draw back in the face of opposition or discouragement, but that we will see something of great worth ahead and travel with you and believe with you.

Father, I thank you with all my heart for what you will do, and I praise you and bless you for these men. These are the fathers. Turn their hearts to the children.

Turn the hearts of the children back to the fathers. And I thank you, God, for the simple prayer which you have answered. You've answered it already.

And I thank you for it in Jesus' name, amen.

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