

Husbands and Fathers - Part 3

by Derek Prince

Derek Prince's sermon highlights the essential role of fathers in embodying and revealing God's fatherhood within the family structure.

Duration: 28:33

Scripture: Exodus 12:3, Mark 9:23, John 14:6, John 17:1, Ephesians 3:14-15, Revelation 22:3-4

Topics: "Family Leadership", "Fatherhood Of God"

Description

This sermon by Derek Prince emphasizes the importance of understanding the fatherhood of God and how it impacts every family. It delves into the significance of representing God as a father to our families, the responsibility of fathers to intercede and offer sacrifices for their families, and the role of fathers as priests, prophets, and kings in their households. The sermon highlights biblical examples such as Job's intercession for his children and the Passover ordinance, stressing the eternal impact of a father's faith and representation of Christ to his family.

Transcript

Derek Prince Ministries Proclaiming the inspired word of God around the world. Derek Prince is an internationally recognized Bible teacher and author. Through books, audios, videos, and radio broadcasts, Derek seeks to reach the unreached and teach the untaught.

In over 50 years of ministry, Derek has reached over 100 nations in more than 50 languages. And now, Derek Prince. Ephesians 3, 14 and 15 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.

Now there's something there in the original which isn't brought out totally in that translation. The word that's translated family there is patria, and it's directly derived from the Greek word for father, which is pater. We've got a lot of words in English derived from it.

Patriot is one. Patristic would be another. And so what Paul is saying is, I bow my knees to the Father from whom every fatherhood in heaven and on earth derives its name.

That is actually Philip's translation. Let me say that once more. Paul says I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, or every fatherhood.

You have to use both words really. So what Paul is saying is every family is a fatherhood. The head of every family, the source of the life of every family is a father.

And every fatherhood is derived from the fatherhood of God. So the fatherhood behind all other fatherhoods and the reality behind all families is the fatherhood of God. It's the supreme reality of the universe.

It makes all the difference on how we view things. What do we view as the source of the universe? Is it a big bang? Well who knows what bang might come next? Is it just some inanimate force that relentlessly works out? Or is it a father? You'll be a totally different person when you once grasp the fact that the fact behind all life is the fatherhood of God. You see, the realization of fatherhood will give you identity.

It will give you security. It will give you motivation. We are surrounded today by billions of people on earth who lack those things-- security, identity, and motivation.

God's purpose is to provide those through the revelation of Himself as Father. And the primary channel of that revelation is the family, which is the prime expression of fatherhood. See, I think many evangelical Christians really have never understood the destiny of our faith.

We stop halfway. We never really make the journey to the end. Let me explain what I mean in John 14, verse 6, which is a kind of favorite text for evangelicals.

Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. Now many evangelicals stop there. I am the way, the truth, the life.

It's a tremendous statement, but it's incomplete. Because if Jesus is the way, where is He the way to? What's the destination if Jesus is the way? He's not the destination. What is the destination? The rest of the verse tells us.

No one comes to the Father except by me. Jesus said, I am the way, but the destination is the Father. Now I have encountered thousands of evangelical, charismatic Christians, Christians of all sorts, who are born again, who know Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Their lives are committed to Him, but they've never completed the journey. They've never really come to know the fatherhood of God. In John 17, that famous high priestly prayer of Jesus, he brings this out as the ultimate revelation of the gospel.

It's the fatherhood of God. John 17, verse 1, he says, Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son that your Son also may glorify you.

That title, Father, occurs six times in this prayer. It's the theme of the prayer. And then in verse 6 he says, I have manifested your name to the men whom you have given me out of the world.

What name did Jesus manifest? Not the name Jehovah. The Jewish people had known that for fourteen centuries. What was the name that was new? That's almost unknown in the Old Testament.

Only about three places in the Old Testament. What is the name? Father, that's right. I have manifested you as Father to these people.

And then the last verse of that amazing prayer says this, I have declared to them your name and will declare it. The revelation is not complete, but it's begun. That the love with which you love me may be in them and I in them.

What will bring this love to fruition and fulfillment is the revelation of God as Father. And then if we go on to the last chapter of the New Testament, Revelation chapter 22, verses 3 and 4, we come to the end of the journey. This is the destination.

We're not left still somewhere on the way. By the time the New Testament ends, the journey is complete. It says here, There shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.

What's the ultimate reward for faithful service? Continued service, that's right. There's nothing better than serving the Lord. So His servants who have served Him in this life shall serve Him forever.

And then it says, They shall see His face. And remember that's the most tremendous climax because Paul said of the Father whom no one has seen nor can see, who dwells in light unapproachable. It's going to take all the processes of salvation to bring us to the place where we can see the Father's face.

And then it says this, His name shall be on their foreheads. What name? Father. Now when you have a name on your forehead in the Bible, it means you have apprehended the truth in that name.

At last we really will have understood what it is to have God as our Father. There's an interesting passage in Revelation, in chapter 14, which speaks about the 144,000 about whom so many people have so many different theories. Personally, I simply believe they're just the people that are described exactly.

12,000 from every one of 12 tribes. But as my friend Bob Mumford says, how can I help it if I'm right? See, if I attribute it to him I sound humble, you see. All right, let's move on.

Revelation 14, verse 1. Then I looked and behold, a lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 having His Father's name written on their foreheads. Now some texts will say having His name and His Father's name. But you see, if you look at the last verse of that section, verse 5, in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

That's a marvelous recommendation. What's distinctive about them? They have the Father's name in their foreheads. They've apprehended what it is to have God as Father.

So you see, the tremendous sacred privilege of every human father is to represent to his family the fatherhood of God. The supreme revelation of the whole Bible. God doesn't just write things on pages.

God puts truth in persons. We have the Bible, thank God, for the written Scripture. But Jesus said, I am the truth.

And I think many of us would acknowledge that if it was mere abstract truth it would never satisfy us. What satisfies us is the truth in a person. See, I was a professional philosopher.

I was tremendously wrapped up in all sorts of exciting theories about life and its purpose and the ideal state. I was a student of Plato, a devoted student of Plato. I read every word Plato ever wrote in the original language.

But my problem was, I couldn't live in that rarefied atmosphere all the time. So about half the week I'd be up there with the theory of ideas, and the other half of the week I'd be right down there living it in a very carnal way. And I never was satisfied.

Because just abstract truth doesn't satisfy us. When I met Jesus, I knew I had met the truth in a person. And that satisfied me as no abstract truth could ever do.

And in a certain sense, God has committed to every father the responsibility to represent as a person the ultimate revelation of the Bible. Fatherhood. I would say the most godly thing that any man can ever be is a father.

The most God-like thing. Because that's the ultimate revelation of God Himself. Now, every father does represent God to his family.

That's not an option. The question is, does he represent Him rightly or wrongly? And I suppose the greatest curse of our present age is fathers who've misrepresented God. I remember the record of a man who was witnessing on the street.

To young men and women. And he said to a young man he was talking to, God wants to be your father. And the young man answered, My father is the man I hate most in life.

See? Instead of being a recommendation, it was a barrier. Most sociologists and psychologists and other people in that sort of profession would agree that a child forms its first impression of God from its father. Is the father loving, accessible, compassionate, strong? It's easy for the child to picture God that way.

But if the father is bitter, angry, critical, or just absentee and irresponsible, that child begins life with a very negative idea about God. And often it takes a great deal to break down that negative approach to God. Let's go a little step further now in this picture of what it is to be a father.

I think I need to say at this point that I'm not providing merely theory. I have experience. When I married my first wife, I inherited eight adopted daughters on the same day.

So, I mean, I started ahead of most people. Of those daughters, six were Jewish, one was a Palestinian Arab, one was English, and later we adopted a black African baby. So we have a pretty good cross-section of the human race in our family.

And it's very interesting. Because the older they grow, the more characteristic they are of their original race. It's very interesting.

I can't go into that. But what I'm saying is, I'm just not offering you theory. I'm far from saying I've always been a successful father.

I wish I could say it. But I've tried to learn from my mistakes, which have been many. And I would try to help some of you to avoid making some of the mistakes that I've made.

Why should everybody go ahead and make all the same mistakes all over again? So, as I say, I'm not talking from theory. Let's look now in 1 Corinthians 11, verse 3. 1 Corinthians 11, 3. I want you to know, the head of every man is Christ. The head of woman or wife is man or husband.

The head of Christ is God. If you put that from the top downwards, you have a descending chain of authority that starts with God the Father and ends up in the home. You see, that's why you can't play around with the Bible's teaching about family life.

Because it's based on the eternal nature of God Himself. God is a Father. He's the head of Christ.

Christ is the head of the husband. The husband is the head of the wife. Now in that chain you find two persons who relate both upwards and downwards.

Christ relates upwards to the Father, downward to the man. The man relates upward to Christ and downward to the wife and by implication his family. So in the same way that Christ represents God to the man, the man is responsible to represent Christ to his family.

Can you see that? If you want a definition of the responsibility of a husband and a father, it's to represent a Christian husband and father. It's to represent Christ to his family. If you're looking for a job description, that's it.

Now, there are three main ministries of Christ as I understand it, in which the Father should represent Him to His family. Christ is priest, prophet and king. And the husband has responsibilities in all three areas.

He's responsible to be the priest of his family, the prophet of his family and the king of his family. Let's look at each of those in turn. First of all, the Father as priest.

The priest is the one who does-- What's the distinctive word, the unique word connected with the priest? One word. Sacrifice. The Father is obligated to offer a sacrifice on behalf of His family.

In the New Testament, the primary sacrifice is intercession. Which incidentally, as we've been hearing, means praise, thanksgiving. You know that you help people tremendously in the Spirit when you just praise God for them.

There's a story, I didn't want to go into it but it comes to me, of a man named Praying Hyde. Some of you have heard of him. He was a tremendous missionary in the Punjab in India when India was still under the British.

And he was really, his ministry was prayer. Everything else was secondary. God taught him some tremendous lessons in prayer.

Quite early on he came across an Indian evangelist whom he considered to be ineffective and cold. So he wanted to pray about this man. He began, Lord, you know how.

He was going to say, Cold, brother so and so is. But the Holy Spirit stopped him and said, Don't you accuse God's servant to him. You see, how shall we accuse those whom God has justified? So he changed and he began to think of everything good in that man's life and to thank God for it.

Within a few months that man was a flaming, successful evangelist. What changed him? Not being accused, but being the object of thanksgiving. I would say to husbands and fathers, take a lot more time thanking God for your family.

Because you create an atmosphere around them that makes it easy for them to succeed. God has taught me this. If I cannot thank God for somebody, I have no right to pray for them.

I'd better not pray at all. Because my prayer will do them more harm than good. So that's just by the way.

But as I sometimes say, there's no extra charge for that. Let's look at a picture now of a man in the Old Testament, Job. Who was a model as a priest of his family.

We look at the opening chapter of Job. Verses one through five. There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job.

And that man was blameless and upright and one who feared God and shunned evil. And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. Also his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys and a very large household.

This man was the greatest of all the people of the east. Now his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day, and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. So, once every week as I understand it, all God's children got together to feast.

Seven sons and three daughters. Now Job knew their practice and this is what he did. So it was when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them.

And he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus Job did regularly.

Now that's the Old Testament pattern of intercessions. Offering sacrifice for every one of your children. And when you offer the sacrifice for them, you claim on their behalf the benefits of the sacrifice.

It says Job sent and sanctified them. I really don't know exactly what it means. But I think it means that in some way Job let them know that he had claimed the benefits of the sacrifice on their behalf.

That's the picture of intercession. Claiming the benefits of a sacrifice on behalf of those for whom you are praying. Because the sacrifice for us is the sacrifice of Jesus.

So intercession for our children is really in a way claiming the benefits of what Christ accomplished on the cross by His death on behalf of our children. Now you might say, if you were a little bit cynical, well, it didn't do much good. Because in one disaster all His children were wiped out.

Now here's one of the cases where you need to read the Bible carefully. I'd like you to turn with me to the closing chapter of Job. James says, Consider the patience of Job and the end of the Lord.

In other words, don't form any conclusions until you've read the end of the story. You remember after Job had learned his rather hard lessons, he was fully restored. Incidentally, when did restoration come to him? It's just a matter of interest.

When he prayed for his critics. So don't let your critics get you down. Use them as a ladder to climb up on.

Pray for them and God will release His grace to you. Now it says in verse 12 of chapter 42, Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning. For He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female doctines.

He had exactly double the number of livestock. But the next verse says, He had also seven sons and three daughters. He only got the same number of sons and daughters as he had before.

Why? Why didn't God double them? My understanding is because Job's prayers had been answered. And though they'd been carried out of time into eternity, they were in God's keeping, in the place of the righteous dead, waiting the redemption that comes through Jesus Christ. So it did pay, you see.

And in fact it shows how urgent it is to pray for your family. Job had no idea that a disaster was coming in which the whole family would be carried off in one moment. But his prayer prevailed.

Let's never look just at the results in time. That's a great mistake of contemporary Christians. The ultimate results are in eternity.

Well then let's look at the ordinance of the Passover which is a tremendous example of the Father's ministry as priest. It's recorded in Exodus chapter 12. And you'll recall that it was through the sacrifice of the Passover lamb that Israel were delivered out of their slavery in Egypt and brought out to be a new nation.

Whereas, the Egyptians who had no sacrifice endured the judgment of God upon their firstborn. Now the ordinance of the Passover depended on the Father. There was no one else who could do what the Father had to do.

And so Moses said in Exodus 12, verse 3, Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. So every father had a responsibility to provide a sacrifice for his household. And then the way that the sacrifice was made effective was by sprinkling its blood on the outside of the door, the lintel, the two doorposts.

And this is recorded in Exodus 12, 22 and 23. And you, that's every father, shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of his house until morning.

For the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians. And when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you. So the only protection in Egypt was the blood of the Passover lamb sprinkled visibly on the outside of the door of every home.

And there was only one person who could sprinkle the blood. Who was that? The father. See, the well-being of his whole household depended on the father's faithfulness as a priest.

Do you think God's principles have changed? I don't. I think it's the same today. And then turning on to the New Testament, we have that amazing incident of the epileptic boy in Mark chapter 9, whom the disciples could not heal.

But when Jesus came down from the mount of transfiguration, the father brought the boy to Jesus. And we'll just read the brief conversation. The father described all the sufferings of the boy, etc.

And Jesus said to him, If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes. Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. What impresses me about that is, the boy could not believe for himself.

But the Lord held the father accountable to believe for his son. I believe that's a principle. I believe that God holds fathers accountable to have faith for their children.

See, the boy was hopeless. He couldn't do anything for himself. He was an epileptic.

Jesus said if you can believe, it will be done. I wonder how many of us as fathers recognize our responsibility to exercise faith for our families. I noticed one thing about the ministry of Jesus which became very real to me when God plunged me into the ministry of deliverance.

Because I often had people that would come up in a meeting with a child and say pray for him or pray for her. I learned to ask a question. Are you the parents of the child? Quite often the answer would be no, we're not the parents.

The parents are not believers but we want to bring this child. I challenge you to search the ministry of Jesus. He never prayed for a child except on the basis of the faith of one or both parents.

There is no Scriptural precedent for that. Jesus never went against the Father's divine order. Parents have much greater responsibility than most of us are willing to acknowledge.

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