

FATHER'S DAY

2016

VIDEO: "STUFF DADS NEVER SAY"

(<https://skitguys.com/videos/item/stuff-dads-never-say>)

Unfortunately, many children also never hear their dads say...

..."I love you",

..."I'm proud of you",

..."I'm sorry",

..."Your Mom is awesome",

..."What do you think about this?",

..."No, we're not going to do that because that's wrong",

..."I am so thankful God gave you to me".

May that never be said of the fathers of Grace Community Church. May we be fathers who speak words of life, blessing, encouragement, truth and love to our children at every age. Never, never underestimate the impact of your words upon your children.

WORDS OF A WISE FATHER (PROVERBS 3:1-12)

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit King Solomon wrote words of wisdom to his children. Preserved in Scripture, these words guide all us fathers as to important truths about which we should be talking with our children.

Proverbs 3:1-12 (ESV)

¹ My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, ² for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.

³ Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴ So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.

⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. ⁷ Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. ⁸ It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

⁹ Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; ¹⁰ then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. ¹¹ My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof, ¹² for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

Time constraints will not allow us to study all 12 verses, but consider with me the wisdom we can glean from verses 1-4.

FATHERS, TEACH YOUR CHILDREN (3:1-2)

Proverbs 3:1-2 (ESV)

¹ My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, ² for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.

The first observation is that Solomon took it upon himself to teach his children. Too often, we fathers see our role as primarily providing for the family, applying discipline when needed and helping coach the kid's soccer or baseball team. But we're called to teach our children wisdom for life.

Another concern I have is that the one thing we fathers do tend to teach our children is that the most important thing in life is to get a good paying job. We certainly need to instill a good work ethic in our children and encourage them to be productive. But a high paying job is not the measure of success in God's kingdom. Of far greater importance is that we teach our children to love God, love others and make disciples. These are the things that last for eternity.

Dads, be on the look out for teachable moments. School, athletic events, dance rehearsals, Sunday school all provide opportunities to teach our children about God's creation, beauty, teamwork, rejoicing in the success of others, self-discipline, sacrifice, perseverance, attitude, failure and victory.

Include your children in what you are doing. If you're changing the oil on the car, invite your kids to get under there with you, show them how to do it and then let them do it. If you're navigating a difficult relationship, without naming names, invite them to think with you about the principles that need to guide your response.

Dad's, bless your children by teaching them wisdom for life.

Solomon taught his children two primary truths in verses 3-12; to be people who love and to genuinely trust God with their lives. We only have time today to think about his first teaching on love.

ABOVE ALL ELSE, LOVE (3:3-4)

Proverbs 3:3-4 (ESV)

³ Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴ So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.

Steadfast love translates the Hebrew word *hesed* which is a very rich and important word in the Old Testament. I believe it corresponds to *agape* in the New Testament. In the KJV *hesed* is translated *lovingkindness* which captures the fullness of this term. *Hesed* refers to both attitude and action. *Hesed* is love that leads to kindness.

King David commended the men of Jabesh-Gilead for their *hesed* shown Saul when they risked their lives to retrieve Saul's corpse and gave him a proper burial (1 Sam. 31:11-13)

2 Samuel 2:5-6 (ESV)

⁵ David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead and said to them, "May you be blessed by the LORD, because you showed this loyalty to Saul your lord and buried him.

⁶ Now may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you. And I will do good to you because you have done this thing.

The story of Ruth is a story of *hesed*. Ruth stayed with her mother-in-law Naomi from pure love. Boaz recognized the goodness of Ruth's action as *hesed*; as faithful love (Ruth 3:10).

Ruth 2:11-12 (ESV)

¹¹ But Boaz answered her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. ¹² The LORD repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!"

The ultimate *hesed* is the death of our Lord Jesus in our place on the cross.

We know that the two greatest commands are to love God with all our being and to love others as Christ has loved us. The Apostle Paul instructed the Church that above all things we are to love one another.

Dads, the single most important thing we must teach our children is love: God's love for us and our love for God and others. In the end we are all going to discover that a successful life is a life of love not wealth, power, prestige or pleasure. Please let us all learn this truth now before its too late.

Howard Storm was not a Christian at the time of his near death experience. In his case, he first descended into the horrors of hell. In the midst of the torment a voice told him to "Pray to God", something he initially thought was stupid because he did not believe in God. But out of desperation he did and was delivered from hell to heaven. Listen as he reports his experience in heaven.

[Read, *Imagine Heaven*, pages 239-242.]

Teaching our children to love is not something we talk about every once in awhile. Why? Because our natural inclination is to love ourselves and not others. In fact, most all of us are still battling that inclination well into adulthood. We need to constantly talk about love. It needs to be the main theme of our homes and our lives.

We all need to pursue spiritual transformation through the Word and Spirit to more and more completely die to ourselves so we might live and love to God and others. We need to constantly talk about love. We need to memorize Scriptures such as the two greatest commands (Mark 12:30-31). Write out our mission statement, "Love God, Love Others, Make Disciples" and post it over your front door or somewhere prominent for all to be reminded.

Images are powerful conveyors of truth. Buy pictures of Jesus washing His disciples feet; the Good Samaritan caring for the battered man. Decorate your house with pictures of sacrificial love.

Point out instances of love to your children. Celebrate when they express love through doing good to others. When appropriate, share with them your journey and your struggles in becoming a man of love. Express to them your earnest desire to become a loving man.

What will be the impact upon your children if you teach them to love?

Proverbs 3:3-4 (ESV)

³ Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴ So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.

What will be the impact upon your children? Favor and success in the sight of both God and man. What better could we do for our children?

May God's Spirit move afresh in the lives of all of us dads to be men who love and who are teaching our children to love.