

Father's Day Panel

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In preparing for Mother's Day services and messages, most of the sensitivity and hesitation we feel as leaders comes from knowing that there are people in the room who long to be mothers and, for whatever various reasons, have not been given that privilege. There are still some people who perhaps are struggling with their relationship with their mother, but that is not typically where we feel the need to be the most sensitive on Mother's Day. Father's Day, on the other hand, is probably the reverse. It can be a hard day for some longing to be dads, but we feel the tension is far more around people's troubled relationships with their fathers. So, we just want to acknowledge that tension as we start talking about fathers and their impacts on our lives. Not everyone wants to celebrate their fathers, and even many fathers have regrets about how their journey as fathers has turned out. Yet, this is a topic we can't just ignore. Study after study continues to show just how important a father's involvement in the life of his kids can be. Multiple authors synthesized many of these studies in an article for *Developmental Psychobiology* in 2021 and gave us just a few of the impacts of someone having a father who is positively involved in their life:

- Children show increases in cognitive, social, and self-regulation skills, while overly permissive or authoritarian styles are correlated with acting out in disruptive or harmful ways, as well as a decrease in cognitive skills
- Reduced risk of delinquent behavior or substance abuse
- One study showed that a Father's involvement with his child around age 7 was a strong predictor of that child's educational achievement at 20 years old, independent of the mother's involvement or family structure
- Father involvement in adolescence predicted lower outputs of cortisol (stress hormones) in response to challenges when their children reached the ages of 19-22, regardless of whether or not the father was the child's biological father
- Finally, one group of researchers set out to find out how long term some of these impacts were and found that even 30 years later children of fathers who were positively involved in their lives between the ages of 9 and 11 showed healthier levels of cortisol output during stressful or challenging situations and have better sleep patterns

It is wild to think that how a Father relates to their children from a young age has such long-term impacts on that child's development and ability to process and live in their world in a regulated and mature way. So, with that in mind, I want to jump into our first question for our panel here today.

How do you feel that your relationship with your father has impacted your life and your own parenting in both positive and negative ways?

In February this year, our staff went on a retreat together where a man named Dave Patty came and did a series of lectures for us on the Father Heart of God. One of the things that he said during that retreat was that-

"Not all our problems or wounds originate from our relationship to our earthly father, but healing for everything we face in life can be found in God our Father."

So, while we most likely have both positive and negative relationships with our earthly fathers, what we need most and what truly transforms us is when we have a relationship with our Heavenly Father. Ephesians chapter 1 captures this so well when it talks about what are able to receive from our Heavenly Father:

- He blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ
- He gave us dignity by choosing us- our relationship with him isn't an accident, he wanted each one of us specifically
- Predestined us to adoption- meaning he made a plan before we were born to make us a part of his family
- He gave us redemption and forgiveness, or in other words, he took people of little value and made them valuable while also not holding their sin against them
- He lavished grace on us
- He made known to us the mystery of his will- to bring people back to himself through and in Jesus
- He chose us to be reflections of him, so that people might rejoice in God
- He marked us with the seal of the Holy Spirit to guarantee our status as part of his kingdom

There is so much here that could take a whole series of sermons to unpack, but today, I more want to hear how all of these things that we receive from our Father God actually work themselves out in our lives. So, I would love to ask our panel one more question.

In what ways has God's "fathering" of you changed and transformed not only you, but also the way that you parent?

Personally, I have a great dad, and I had a great dad growing up. I never doubted that he loved me and wanted the best for me. However, I am a highly ambitious and driven person, but I am not sure my dad always knew how to help me form my identity, given how ambitious and driven I was. So, that part of me actually grew through my high school years and on through my early career years as a missionary. I wanted to achieve goals and climb the ladder because it helped me feel that I had value. The problem was that just achieving goals and trying to get more influential positions is like drinking salt water. It only made me more thirsty. So, I believe that my heavenly father allowed me to face frustrations and failures for a season because they helped me recognize that I had an identity problem. My value could not come from all that I was trying to accomplish; instead, the Spirit showed me that it had to come from God the Father choosing me as his child. He already placed the ultimate value on me by giving his life for me and inviting me into his family. Jesus has joined his life to my own. He couldn't communicate greater value; he gave up his life for me, and has promised to be with me every moment of my life. This allowed me to stop striving. I feel like I almost used to have an audible voice inside my head telling me how I had to prove myself or that I was worthless when I didn't accomplish those things. That voice has gone all but silent and lets my feet rest on the foundation of my relationship with Christ, rather than the shaky foundation of my own achievements, and I have far more peace today and less angst as a result.

That is perhaps why I find the prayers of Paul at the end of this chapter so interesting and important. What is he praying? He is praying that we are given a Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that we can explain truth better? So that we can make better decisions? Have

successful ministries? No, so that we can know him better and know the hope to which he has called us. Later on in Ephesians, Paul will list out how this new life that God our Father has given us works itself out in our stories through changed lives, but actions are not the agent or goal of change.-

Paul knows that relationship with our Father God is both the goal and means of change.

- God is like the sun, and as we all saw last week, prolonged exposure to the sun transforms what is in its path. Our Heavenly Father is the same; the more we are in relationship with Him, the more we are changed and transformed. However, there are some things that can block us from receiving what we need from our Heavenly Father.
- Lies we believe about ourselves or God: We can receive those lies through messages from others, including our earthly fathers, or through painful experiences
- Idols: anytime we turn to anything else to give us life, peace, comfort, etc., outside of Christ, we are turning to an idol, and that keeps us from full exposure to the Heavenly Father
- Unforgiveness: When we hold on to bitterness and unforgiveness, it actually keeps us from experiencing the forgiveness and presence of God

These are all weighty things, and none of us want to have our lives defined by lies, idols, or unforgiveness, but the reality is that we can't always see how those things are controlling us. I have found in my own life I need others to help me see those places of brokenness. People who are close to me tend to have a pretty good grasp on some lies that I believe or some idols I am clinging to. So, I have discovered that as I live vulnerably with them, the Holy Spirit helps reveal those places in my heart that still need to be transformed.

I also need the truth of scripture to flood my being and fill my heart with truth about who God is. Ephesians 1 would actually be a great place to start. It reminds us of how our Heavenly Father gave us value by choosing us and making us part of his family. As we meditate on and let those truths sink into our souls, we find that our view of ourselves and of God changes.

No matter what our upbringing both the good and bad we have received from our earthly fathers or mothers, our Heavenly Father desires to write a new story with our lives and when we enter relationship with him we won't remain the same. He will draw us to himself and transform us into the image of Jesus.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Heart for Moms Summer Park Days! | Tuesdays | 9:30-11:30AM | A New Park Each Week

Hey, mamas! Looking for a fun way to get out of the house, let the kids run wild, and connect with other moms this summer? Join us for Heart for Moms Park Playdates! We'll be meeting every Tuesday morning from June 17 to August 26, rotating through some of our favorite local parks. Bring your coffee, pack some snacks, and come make sweet summer memories with us! Want the weekly park schedule? Text or call Emily Kukis at 503-309-3534.

YA: Summer Bowling Night | Thurs., June 19 | 6:30 PM | SuperPlay in Beaverton

Young Adults (18-30): This Thursday, instead of the normal group, we will meet at the Church and van over to SuperPlay Bowling and Arcade! Sign up and bring a friend! For more information about this event or Young Adults, please contact Pastor Jacob at jacobh@isonrise.com.

Senior Ministry: Summer Evening BBQ | Fri., June 20 | 4-6PM | Dining Hall

Join us for our Summer BBQ in the Dining Hall! Games, and music! \$6 entry cost. Register through the Church Center App. or come see us in the lobby on June 1st and 8th!

Sonrise Kids: 2nd-5th Grade Movie & Game Day! | Mon., June 23 | 2-4:30 PM | Bron Hall

Join us for a fun movie day! For more information, please email BethB@isonrise.com or come see us in Kid's Ministry!

Women's Min: Axe Throwing | Wed., June 25 | 6-8PM | Blue Ox in Hillsboro

Join us at Blue Ox Axe Throwing on Wednesday, June 25th, from 6-8 PM for a fun evening! Whether you've thrown before or it's your first time, come ready to learn a new skill, share some laughs, and build meaningful connections. Bring your friends and enjoy delicious drinks and appetizers available for purchase, supporting a fantastic local business while you mingle and make new acquaintances. Register through Church Center.

Family Campout | Aug. 7-10 | Mt. Hood Village RV Resort

Join us for the Sonrise Family Campout this year at Mt. Hood Village at the base of Mt. Hood. Bring your family, dog, and neighbor for some mountain fun! Registration will close on July 16th. Nonrefundable after July 31st. For more info, please contact Emily Kukis at 503. 309.3534 or email at coreyandemilykukis@gmail.com. Additional details can be found on Church Center.

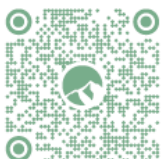
Songs from this morning:

House of the Lord - Phil Wickham

He Reigns - Newsboys

Goodness of God - Bethel

Living Hope - Phil Wickham & Brian Johnson



**For more info or to
register, visit isonrise.com
or explore events/groups
on the Church Center App.**

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