

“Godliness Begins With Dad at Home!”

Joshua 24:13-18

Intro. – What a powerful and fruitful appeal. Joshua gives to Israel to “serve the Lord.” Now Joshua had the benefit of several blessings:

- 1) He knew the history of his people
 - enslaved in Egypt...
 - wanderings in the wilderness for 40 years...
 - crossing Jordan to occupy Promised Land...
- 2) He spoke with real experience:
 - walked with Moses for 40 years...
 - inherited Moses’ responsibilities in leading the nation of Israel...
 - bore those responsibilities for twenty five years...
 - he was now 110 year old...
- 3) He appeals with the power of a good example:
 - in other words, his life reflected his appeal...

Joshua’s life gives us insights as to THE SOURCE of godliness in the home. His life reflects the kind of life God would desire of all dads. You see, the Bible makes clear godliness begins at home – it begins with dad!

Purpose: to better understand the role/responsibility of dad in the home

Make no mistake, Father’s Day lends itself to acknowledging God’s divine plan in giving the ultimate responsibility of marriage/home to Dad. This in no way means women/moms are second class citizens or that their role is any less important or significant. It simply is saying according to God’s divine plan, the dad of the home/marriage will be held accountable to God for the direction that marriage and home go.

With this fresh in mind, lets look at three areas God reveals through Joshua that dad’s must pay particular attention in being the godly leaders God intend them to be:

I He Acknowledged His RESPONSIBILITY

- *“as for me and my house”*

A. Family = Basic Training Unit

1. Moses spelled this out twenty five years before in Deuteronomy 6:6-9; 11:18-21 *“You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. And you shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. And you shall write them on the door posts of your house and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens remain above the earth.”*
2. Paul, under God’s inspiration gives the same emphasis in Ephesians 6:4 *“...bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”*

B. Family Usually Follows the Parents (especially the Dad)

1. This is why at home there is no substitute for parental communication, time or attention:
 - obvious today that the majority of kids are starving for attention... where going to get it?
2. With that in mind, have you noticed how rare it is for a mother to be less faithful than the dad?
3. Here’s the point – if you have the kids for Bible School/Youth/VBS the percentage of influencing those kids is greatly reduced... If you have the mom then you probably have the kids to influence more... BUT if you have the dad, you probably have the wife/mom, the kids, the dogs, cats and the family vehicle...

Dads, we must acknowledge our responsibilities!

II He Indicates a PLAN

- *“...we will serve the Lord”*

- A. A Godly Example
 1. It has been said, “Kids learn by three important means: example, example, example.”
 2. How do young people learn values, morals and character traits? Are they simply born with them?
 3. Hardly – godly parents instill these values, morals and character... likewise, godless parents instill lack of values, morals and character...
- B. A Family Devotion
 1. This suggests also that Joshua and his family prayed, served and talked of the Lord together...
 2. Indispensable elements of spiritual well being are those private and family devotion times...
 3. Illus. – at the Nichols household, meal time and bed-time...
 4. Dads, we must have a plan to lead out in godliness = “passing the faith along”...
- C. A United Family
 1. Joshua said “me and my house” – no tie will bind a family together more than to be devoted (in mind and purpose) to the Lord.
 2. You’ve seen these: “A House Divided” -- No separation is so deep, so wide, so decisive as for one partner walking the high road and another walking the low road...

Godliness begins with us, dads/men with a definite plan for our families!

III He Expresses Godly DETERMINATION

- choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... but for me and my house...” = bulldog determination expressed by Joshua...
- A. Willingness to Stand Alone if Necessary
 1. Could never be said of Joshua that he was weak, wimpy or a “girly man”...
 2. Wouldn’t be first time Joshua stood alone – in Kadesh Barnea, 65 years before he and Caleb stood alone... to the point of being threatened death...
 3. With God on his side, Joshua showed this always put him in the majority...
 4. This is the call of each man/dad here today – if God calls on you to stand alone, do so with assurance that God enables and guarantees victory...
- B. Willingness to Provide a Spiritual Oasis
 1. A place away from the world where stability, security, assurance and rest can be found...
 2. Home must be that “spiritual oasis – place where dad give his family water and food that quenches and satisfies hunger for all of eternity.
 3. Home can and must be the environment to grow Christians above everything else.

Conclusion: Kinda of like the man flying from Seattle to San Francisco. Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sacramento along the way. The flight attendant explained there would be a delay, so if the passengers wanted to get off and stretch the plane would re-board in fifty minutes. Everyone got off except a lady who was blind. The man noticed her as he walked by and could tell she was blind because her seeing eye dog lay quietly beside her. He could also tell she had flown this flight before because the pilot approached her, and calling her by name said, “Kathy, we’re in Sacramento for about an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?” The blind lady replied, “No thanks, but my Ruff would like to stretch his legs.” Now, picture this: all the people in the gate area came to a standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walking off the plane with a seeing eye dog. The pilot was even wearing sunglasses. People literally scattered. They not only tried to change planes, but they tried changing airlines!

Use this to illustrate the idea when it comes to today’s dads everything is NOT as it seems...

“What the World Needs”

Dads who cannot be bought
Whose word is their bond
Whose character is above wealth
Who will be honest in small matters as well as in great matters.

Who love their wife as Christ loves the Church
Who will not apologize for the truth
Who are godly examples to their children
Who rely upon the Lord for strength and leading
Who glory only in the cross of Christ.
To this list I would like to add:
“What the World Needs”
Dads who...
Who acknowledge their responsibility...
Who follow a divine plan...
Who have a Godly Determination