

“The Gift of Fathering”

(2 Samuel 9: 1-3a)

Fathers’ Day

GFC

June 17,2018

2 Samuel 9:1-3 (NLT)

One day David asked, “Is anyone in Saul’s family still alive—anyone to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan’s sake?” ² He summoned a man named Ziba, who had been one of Saul’s servants. “Are you Ziba?” the king asked.

“Yes sir, I am,” Ziba replied.

³ The king then asked him, “Is anyone still alive from Saul’s family? If so, I want to show God’s kindness to them.”

Ziba replied, “Yes, one of Jonathan’s sons is still alive. He is crippled in both feet.”

INTRODUCTION:

- This passage of scripture contains a beautiful story that illustrates to us the power of fathering.
- Our culture bears the marks of fatherlessness in many ways, none of which are positive.
- Fatherlessness pervades our culture in many ways:
 - Homes are missing fathers who have become deceased
 - Families are missing fathers who have abandoned them
 - Families with fathers are still “missing” them because, work, financial pressures, or other choices have caused them to become absentee fathers
- Rather than speaking about the negative impact of fatherlessness, today I’m sharing the POSITIVE IMPACT of *The Gift of Fathering*
- This story illustrates how men doing the fathering; and the impact on those who need to be fathered could model this powerful role.

THE BACK STORY:

- Mephibosheth was the grandson of King Saul and the son of Jonathan, Saul’s son.
- David was bound by covenant promise to Jonathan to be loyal to him forever.
- Jonathan and Saul were both killed in battle on the same day.
- Fearing assassination by the enemies of Israel who killed them, Mephibosheth’s nurse ran into hiding. In the process, she dropped the baby, who was five years old at the time.

- As a result, he became crippled in both feet, and remained that way all his life.
- He lost his inheritance, position, destiny and future prosperity, ***all as a result of the negligence of a person who was supposed to protect and preserve him...***

I. THE HEART OF A FATHER TAKES THE INITIATIVE:

v 3: “Is anyone still alive from Saul’s family? If so, I want to show God’s kindness to them.” (NLT)

- A father views himself as God’s covenant representative in the family and the agent of God’s kindness
- That kind of heart TAKES INITIATIVE when he sees the need for an opportunity to father
 - He doesn’t wait to be asked
 - He doesn’t wait to be told
 - HE SEEKS OUT THE OPPORTUNITY AND ASKS THE RIGHT QUESTIONS; THEN TAKES THE INITIATIVE TO ACT!
- It is a father’s responsibility to ANATICIPATE the need, in a way that can PREVENT of problem; as well as RESPOND to the need when there is a problem!

NOTE:

“Kindness” = covenant loyalty, as dispensed from God.

That is, AS FATHERS, WE ARE MOTIVIATED BY OUR COVENANT LOYALTY TO GOD as the reason for taking our role seriously and carrying it out to our best ability. It is NOT BASED upon whether or not our sons or daughters DESERVE it.

II. A FATHER’S HEART CALLS OUT OF LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE:

Vv 6-7 “...David said, Greetings... don’t be afraid...” (NLT)

- David tries to “make it easy” for Mephibosheth to approach him.
- He didn’t use FEAR or INTIMIDATION in an effort to CONTROL Mephibosheth
- He used LOVE and ACCEPTANCE TO HIM
- He stated his objective early (No psychological manipulation) to release all fear in Mephibosheth – ***I intend to show kindness to you...***

NOTE:

- Father's heart CALLS AND DRAWS rather than DRIVES AND COMMANDS
- LOVE based upon RELATIONSHIP is MORE POWERFUL than REJECTION based on PERFORMANCE
- A father leads by LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE not by CONTROL
- Control may keep a child connected for a season; but when older, they bolt
- LOVE connects forever, regardless of how near or far a child may live, or how old they get.

NOTE:

WHEN FATHERS LOVE LIKE THIS, HOME BECOMES A PLACE THEY'LL LONG TO RETURN TO, RATHER THAN A PLACE THEY WANT TO GET AWAY FROM!

III. A FATHER SEEKS TO ESTABLISH AND RESTORE IDENTITY:

v 7b "... I will restore to you all the land that once belonged to your grandfather Saul..." (NLT)

- One of the MOST POWERFUL impacts of fathering on sons or daughters is that it ESTABLISHES IDENTITY!
- Out of an established identity, GROWS A SENSE OF LEGITIMACY – which is the PERSUASION that "I have a place here, in my family, my society, my culture and the world
- Identity and legitimacy fosters a sense of CONFIDENCE, SECURITY AND ADEQUACY that circumstances cannot take away!
- Restoration of IDENTITY results in an EXPECTATION OF INHERITANCE
- INHERITANCE FOSTERS AN UNDERSTANDING OF LEGACY.

NOTE:

Mephibosheth spoke of himself to David as, "a dead dog" – useless, worthless!

V8: "...Who is your servant, that you should show such kindness to a dead dog like me.?" (NLT)

NOTE:

When Jesus was tempted by the devil in Matthew 4, he was able to resist and conquer him through the WRITTEN WORD OF GOD and also the WORD OF HIS TESTIMONY... In chapter 3, after His baptism, God spoke from heaven saying. "This is my beloved Son in whom I'm well pleased."

- Jesus knew WHO He was; and He also knew WHY He was!
- Identity, legitimacy and legacy lead to FULFILLED DESTINY

- **THIS WAS HIS TESTIMONY!**

BONUS:

You and I are in Christ. Just as God saw us all in Abraham, the father of faith as part of the stars in the sky and the sand by the seashore; God the Father knew us before the foundations of the world! When spoke this over Jesus, He spoke it over all the sons and daughters that would come from this LAST ADAM!

IV. A FATHER BUILDS RELATIONSHIP, UNITES HEARTS AND BUILDS ESTEEM:

v 7c: “...and you will eat here with me at the king’s table...”

- Breaking bread; sharing a meal has VERY POWERFUL SYMBOLIC MEANING
 - It meant that you were HIGHLY VALUED
 - It meant that you were ACCEPTED AS AN EQUAL in the FAMILY
 - It meant that you attained a STATUS AS AN HEIR BY COVENANT RIGHT

Revelation 3:20c: “... and we will share a meal together as friends...” (NLT)

John 5:18b “...he called God his Father, thereby making himself equal with God.”(NLT)

- A father’s must never make a child feel LESS THAN; or SUBSERVIENT TO.
- Relationship built upon full acceptance fosters UNITY and is SHARED FROM FATHER TO SON or DAUGHTER
- Shared UNITY results in HEALTHY ESTEEM and a sense of EQUAL VALUE that will enable sons and daughters to ACHIEVE THEIR DESTINY!

V. THE ‘SPIRIT OF ADOPTION’ AND PRESERVING THE NEXT GENERATION:

V11b: “...and from that time on, Mephibosheth ate regularly at the David’s table, like one of the king’s own sons...”

- David, in effect, ADOPTED Mephibosheth as HIS OWN SON
- He restored his identity, value, esteem, purpose, destiny
- The passage also mentions Mephibosheth’s son, Mica!

NOTE:

HERE IS THE CULMINATION OF THIS WONDERFUL STORY:

- **YOU COULD NOT BE ABLE TO “WALK” PERFECTLY, AND STILL EAT AT THE KING’S TABLE**
- **YOU COULD NOT “HAVE IT ALL TOGETHER” AND STILL HAVE A SON**
- **YOU MAY HAVE SUFFERED A TRAUMATIC EVENT THAT “CRIPPLED” YOUR WALK, BUT YOU CAN STILL HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE NEXT GENERATION:**

MEPHIBOSHETH means, SHAME NO MORE:

MICA means, WHO IS LIKE YAWEH!

A FATHER CAN BE ADOPTED AND RECEIVE THE FATHERING HE NEEDS TO BE RESTORED!

A RESTORED FATHER CAN STILL IMPACT THE NEXT GENERATION TO LIVE FOR GOD IN THIS WORLD AND ACHIEVE THEIR DESTINY!

Romans 8:15 (NIV)

“The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by Him, we cry Abba, Father.”

ILLUSTRATION: “A FATHER’S RANSOM”