



**The Godly Father  
Father's Day Message  
Joshua 24:14-15  
Westport Christian Church  
June 20, 2010**

"Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." (Josh 24:14-15NASU)

The idea for creating a day for children to honor their fathers began in Spokane, Washington. A woman by the name of Sonora Smart Dodd thought of the idea for Father's Day while listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Having been raised by her father, after her mother died, Sonora wanted her father to know how special he was to her. It was her father that made all the parental sacrifices and was, in the eyes of his daughter, a courageous, selfless, and loving man. Her father was born in June, so she chose to hold the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane, Washington on the 19th of June, 1910. In 1924 President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. Roses are the Father's Day flowers: red to be worn for a living father and white if the father has died.

Did you hear about the little boy who was asked to define Father's Day? His reply was, "It's just like Mother's Day, only you don't spend as much on the present."

Anybody can be a father, but it takes a special man to be a dad. It takes an even more special man to be the "Godly-father" Scripture informs us to be. I believe that Joshua was a godly-man and an example of being a godly-father.

At the beginning of chapter 24, Joshua assembled all the tribes of Israel together at Shechem. He summoned the elders, leaders, judges and officials of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. As the leader of the Hebrew people he made a covenant for the people to God. He drew up for them decrees and laws in which they agreed to follow. With all the accomplishments that Joshua made, the most important life achievement was being a godly-father. The greatest fathers are godly-fathers. I would like to challenge all dads to commit (or recommit) to being a godly-father today. Please allow me to ask a very important question. What are you doing that shows you're a godly-father? Today, I would like for us to look at two qualities that Joshua possessed that made him a "godly-father."

The first quality that Joshua possessed is that . . .

I. He was the priest of the home.

One of the main purposes of a priest is to be a go between for God and those he is serving. The priest was responsible to go to the people of behave of God and to go to God on behalf of the people. Men, we are to be the priest in our family. We should be going to God, praying for our children and giving them the guidance they need to life a godly life. We need to be sharing Christ with them as they grow, instructing them in the ways of the world.

Men, it is your responsibility to teach them and model for them God and his love, not your wife! Did you hear about the little fellow, frightened by lightning and thunder, who called out one dark night, "Daddy, come. I'm scared." "Son," the father said, "God loves you and he'll take care of you." "I know God loves me," the boy replied. "But right now I want somebody who has skin on." If I were starting my family again, that is what I would want to be above all else - God's love with skin on. Joshua per suaded being God with skin on.

You maybe thinking, what qualified Joshua to be the priest of his family? It was simply he spent time with God. He talked with Him—he built a relationship with Him. Joshua COULD NOT show God if he DID NOT know God. Men, your kids need God with skin on.

A while back I heard a touching story about a humble, consecrated preacher whose young son had become very ill. After the boy had undergone an exhaustive series of tests, the father was told the shocking news that his son had a terminal illness. The youngster had accepted Christ as his Savior, so the minister knew that death would usher him into Glory; but he wondered how to inform one in the bloom of youth that he soon would die. After earnestly seeking the direction of

the Holy Spirit, he went with a heavy heart through the hospital ward to the boy's bedside. First, he read a passage of Scripture and had a time of prayer with his dear child. Then he gently told him that the doctors could promise him only a few more days to live. "Are you afraid to meet Jesus, my boy?" asked his devout father. Blinking away a few tears, the little fellow said bravely, "No, not if He's like you, Dad!" Guys it is so important for your children to see God active and working in your life.

I came across this thing that stated, ten things you can do to blow your child's life.

1. Have fights in front of your children. (Then when quests come, turn around and act affectionate toward one another.)
2. Stifle your children's questions by saying, "Don't bother me now; I'm busy."
3. Take no interest in your children's friends. (Let them run around with whomever they choose and don't worry if they want to date at a young age.)
4. Never discipline your children; try to use psychology instead.
5. Nag them about their schoolwork; never compliment them on their achievements.
6. Demonstrate your love for them with material things. (Give them everything and anything their little hearts desire.)
7. Never discuss the facts of life with them. (Instead, let them learn about sex from their friends, public school, or pornographic literature.)
8. Never let your kids know that your praying for them.
9. Absolutely refuse to believe it if you are told that your children have done something wrong.
10. Let your children make their own choices in the matter of what they believe.

Dads, you are to be the priest in your family, who goes boldly before the throne of God on behalf of your family, especially your kids!!! When we often talk about trials and hardship, we often mention something about Job. But do you know what the scriptures teach about Job and his family? "Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, 'Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.' This was Job's custom" (Job 1:5)

So many dads relinquished the priesthood in the home and gave that responsibility to the mothers or grandmothers the honor of being priests. God has never set up the roles in the family that way!!! Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Eph 6:4NASU) Joshua is a great example for men to follow in being the priest in the home, but it doesn't stop there. You see the second things we must see is he. . .

## II. Had a plan for his family.

When Joshua stated "as for me and my house" he was setting up what they, the family was going to do, we will serve the Lord! The plan he had established for his family was that he was going to do anything and everything he could do to help them to not only know the Lord but to serve the Lord. We must make that decision as well. That must be our plan! Dads, what is your plan for the souls in your house? Church? Bible classes? Serving? Are you sharing your faith with your children? Do you tell them about how Jesus is working in your life and how He is providing for the family? In a small farming community in the 1930's, a woman had a difficult time delivering her sixth child. The doctor said she would live through the delivery, but that's all he could promise. Her dying words to her husband was, "Charlie, make sure you get our babies to heaven."

Dads, the most important place you take your children isn't on vacation, state finals, tee ball, dance, etc...the most important place you take your children will be to heaven. What's your plan?

**CONCLUSION:** Joshua's most important life achievement was being a godly father. The greatest fathers are godly fathers.

We've looked at two qualities that Joshua had that made him a godlyfather. He became the priest of the home. (He was the spiritual leader.) He had a plan for his family. He parented intentionality to lead his house to serve God.

Today, God wants dads to commit to being godly father & godly grandfathers. Men, we must be godly leaders, for our children are counting on us.

### ONLY A DAD

Only a dad with a tired face, Coming home from the daily race, Bringing little of gold or fame, To show how well he has played the game, But glad in his heart that his own rejoice, To see him come, to hear his voice.

Only a dad of a brood of four, One of ten million men or more, Plodding along in the daily strife, Bearing the whips and scars of life, With never a whimper of pain or hate, For the sake of those who at home wait.

Only a dad, neither rich or proud, Merely one of the surging crowd, Toiling, striving from day to day, Facing whatever may come his way, Silent whenever the harsh condemn, And bearing it all for the love of them.

Only a dad, but he gives his all, To smooth the way for his children small, Doing with courage set and grim, The deeds his father did for him, This is a line for him I pen, Only a dad, but the best of men

**AMEN**