

Crossroads Community Church

Sunday June 15th, 2014

God our Heavenly Father blessed us with a wonderful day on which we honor all fathers from past, present and future. Regardless of who you look up to as a father figure; a Dad, a Grand-dad, a Step-Dad, an uncle, a big brother, a coach, a teacher or a Pastor, we are grateful for the impact godly men have on our lives. We may not have all had a great relationship with our Dads, we may have had to say good-bye too soon or we just never knew our dads, but we are sure of one thing, God is and always will be our Father. Worship was all about honoring Him as our ultimate Father and friend who waits for all of us with His open arms. Pastor Don prayed;? Thank You God for always hearing us when we call, you are our rock and you are faithful, thank you for guiding us to teach our children well, Amen.? He then presented us with a great earthly example of a father.

?We all know that God chose Mary to be Jesus' mother, but we also know He chose Joseph to be his earthly father. It is significant that God chose a couple to care for His Son on earth, it shows the importance of both parents in a child's life, in this case godly parents.? In scripture is recorded many things that Mary has said or done, along with many others involved with Jesus but we don't see any record of Joseph saying much. In the gospels of Matthew and Luke when the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce that she will be the mother of Jesus the conversation was recorded. When Jesus was born, the Angels' choir, the shepherds and Mary's words are all recorded but none of Joseph's, so how can we take him as an example of a good father? Let us look a little closer at his character for we know that actions speak louder than words as in the parable story of the two sons asked by their father to work the fields, (Matthew 21:28-31).

Joseph had 3 important character traits that made him a good father; Righteousness, Responsibility and Religion. In Matthew 1:18-19 we get a good look at his ?Righteous? character, ?This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.? Joseph loved Mary and chose to spare her shame, he chose discretion over disgrace and kindness over revenge and this even before he received any message from God. He loved Mary as God calls all men to love their wives, that is the best gift a father can give his children , loving their mother, (Ephesians 5:25). God defines the success of a man by the heart, the kind acts a man does in loving their families, teaching their children about right and wrong according to God and helping their fellow man.

The next character trait we see in Joseph is ?Responsibility?. He was faced with a difficult decision and was making a good one by man's standard, in Matthew 1:19 however as we read on in verses 20-25, God guided him through a dream to the best decision. He was a responsible man and obeyed the Lord's command concerning his wife and chose to raise Jesus as his own. He chose God's greater purpose for their lives. Do you think Joseph understood fully all the ramifications of following God's plan? Probably not but his responsible character lead him to father Jesus the One through whom God's plan of salvation for all of humankind would be fulfilled.

The next character trait Joseph possessed is ?Religious? in every positive sense. He was a devout Jew, he knew the scriptures, He lived the godly life God required of His chosen people, he lived by example,(Deuteronomy 6:6-7). God knew that Joseph would teach and guide Jesus with the same strong faith he had which would also strengthen Mary and Jesus throughout their entire lives, (Luke 2:39-41).

Beloved Fathers, by Joseph's example of good character we can see the importance a father's teaching and guidance is for our sons and daughters and the strong love and support is for our wives. Joseph may appear as the strong quiet type but his life speaks louder; the way he took care of Mary and raised Jesus helped them both live through every hardship they faced from the scandalous pregnancy before marriage up until the suffering of Jesus towards the cross. Joseph took action; out of love he took the time needed to do it. Let us not minimize the impact we can have on our families and the world around us, Joseph's strength of character and faith in God raised up our Messiah the Savior of the world? So this week men let us choose to set our own agendas aside and spend time playing with our children and loving our wives in Jesus name, Asherey Shalom!

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