

# THE FATHER'S HEART

As I began to contemplate on what would be of interest to those of you who are reading this article my mind was filled with some of the various teachings I've seen on being a better husband or father. The subjects are many: child training, love languages, spiritual headship, dating issues, and family vision to name just a few. Each is important, and all include many great ideas and "techniques" on how to improve the things we do in fulfilling our role as fathers. As I attempted to select amongst the many issues, I reflected on the title of this column – "The Father's Heart". I started to ponder on the meaning of that phrase. Just what is the "father's heart"? What should my heart look like? And what do my children see when their looking at my heart?

It's no coincidence that the God of Creation is known as our Heavenly Father. He has chosen to have relationship with us as a father does with a child. Does it not make sense that we should model our relationship with our children after His relationship with us? In light of this, I pose two questions. What does our Heavenly Father's Heart look like? And, does my own "father's heart" look like His? Wrapping these questions together let's ask ourselves - Do we reflect Our Father's Heart to our children? Or, more simply put, are we "representing" God to our children? Wow! What a huge order. Yet, that is exactly the task set before us. So, let's look at a few key areas to measure ourselves against.

## GOD'S CHARACTER

How well do we represent all of God's character? Do we love our children unconditionally? Do our children have the freedom to fail? Yet, do we also require justice? Do we require our children to strive for God's standards in all that they do? Do we show God's mercy and grace? Yet, do our children know that consequences always follow their actions? Do we provide order in our family? Yet, do we recognize each individual's unique needs? Can our children see God's character in us, their earthly father? If not, let's start today.

## GOD'S COUNTENANCE

How well do represent God's countenance? Do we really listen to our children? Do our children "feel" our love for them? Do we show them love in their Love Language? Are we fair with them? Do we discipline without anger? Do our children see patience exhibited in us? Do we bless them with our words or do they know the sting of sarcasm? Do our children trust us with their private world? Do we always communicate to our children with the same countenance Our Father does with us? If not, let's start today.

### GOD'S WISDOM

How well do we represent God's wisdom? Are we a Proverbs father? Are we instructing our children in the way they should go? Are we modeling God's wisdom? Do we know what God has to say about finances, work, family, friendships, government, etc.? Are we communicating it to our children? Are we making it attractive to our children? Do our children see God's wisdom in us? If not, let's start today.

May I suggest that our role as a father to our children is the closest relationship here on earth that our children have as an example to their relationship with God the Father. If so, then let's strive to "represent" our Father's Heart in all that we do.

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