

1 Kings 12:1-16

June 16, 2013

Wisdom-A Father's Safeguard

Introduction: This text is an unusual text, at least at first glance, for a Father's Day message, but is rich with significance when viewed carefully.

- ✓ The Kingdom of Israel had grown strong under its first three kings, Saul, David, and Solomon.
- ✓ A history of antagonism had begun to threaten the relationship between the north and the south for many years.
- ✓ Judah, the largest tribe in population, enjoyed prominence as the leader of the tribes in their trek through the wilderness and received the largest area (in the south) because of their great population.
- ✓ Ephraim, a northern tribe and the preferred son of Joseph, also demonstrated a feeling of superiority among the northern tribes.
- ✓ Solomon taxed the people heavily under his regime and the fault line between the north and the south became greater. (Actually a short term split of the north/south when David reigned).
- ✓ Solomon died-Rehoboam was ready to be crowned as king in Shechem.
- ✓ Northern tribes, led by Ephraim, sent Jeroboam to plead the case of taxes with Rehoboam.

"Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you." 1 Kings 12:4 NKJV

- ✓ Asked for three days to consider and seek advice.
- ✓ Advice of the elders.

And they spoke to him, saying, "If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever." 1 Kings 12:7 NKJV

- ✓ Answer of the young men.

Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us' — thus you shall say to them: 'My little finger shall be thicker than my father's waist! 11 And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!'" 1 Kings 12:10-11 NKJV

- ✓ Rehoboam followed the advice of the younger men rather than the elders.
- ✓ The northern tribes split.

Now when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying: "What share have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Now, see to your own house, O David!" So Israel departed to their tents. 1 Kings 12:16 NKJV

- ✓ Remained divided until Assyria-722 and Babylon-586 destroyed them.

Takeaway From this Story

- ✓ Had Rehoboam heeded wise counsel, rebellion and division could have been avoided.
- ✓ Because he did not listen to wise and mature advice, the kingdom split-disaster occurred.

Extraordinary Application

- ✓ There are scores of “experts” today providing counsel and direction to parents on how to raise their children.
- ✓ Rebellion, violence, delinquency, etc., are all on a rise.
- ✓ Education scores are lower than ever.
- ✓ The enlightened and modern counsel seems to be failing.
- ✓ We have rejected the time-tested wise counsel of scripture.
- ✓ What does it say to Fathers?

At least seven wise concepts that fathers are called to that provide a powerful safeguard in raising their children.

I. A Father's Character-Integrity

He who walks with integrity walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will become known. Proverbs 10:9 NKJV

*Nothing to hide-nothing to fear

NOTE: Many fathers struggle with saying much because their own lives are ungodly (secret sins, desires, habits)

- ✓ Don't want to be seen by children as hypocrites
- ✓ Lead in a very lax manner

If I walk in integrity-no fear-I am secure

(ILL) Integrity/Sincere-“no wax”

NO COVER UP

II. A Father's Words-Wisely Chosen

He who has knowledge spares his words, And a man of understanding is of a calm spirit. 28 Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; When he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive. Proverbs 17:27-28 NKJV

“Think before you speak.”

(ILL) Grounded for 10 years~

(ILL) Personal failure here

- ✓ Don't badger
- ✓ Don't put down

A. Words are crucial

These six things the Lord hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: 17 A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, 18 A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, 19 A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren. Proverbs 6:16-19 NKJV

NOTE: 3 of 7 abominations are about words wrongly used.

1. Words are powerful-penetrate and spread-can wound

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit. Proverbs 18:21 NKJV

There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, Proverbs 12:18a NKJV

2. Can heal and restore

But the tongue of the wise promotes health. Proverbs 12:18b NKJV

Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad. Proverbs 12:25 NKJV

Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, Sweetness to the soul and health to the bones. Proverbs 16:24 NKJV

- B. Wise words require learning and wisdom development

The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness. Proverbs 15:2 NKJV

The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil. Proverbs 15:28 NKJV

III. A Father's Temperament

Fathers, do not irritate and provoke your children to anger [do not exasperate them to resentment], but rear them [tenderly] in the training and discipline and the counsel and admonition of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4 Amplified Bible

Fathers, do not provoke or irritate or fret your children [do not be hard on them or harass them], lest they become discouraged and sullen and morose and feel inferior and frustrated. (Do not break their spirit). Colossians 3:21 Amplified Bible

1. A father's temperament can de-escalate a child's anger

A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. Proverbs 15:1 NKJV

2. A father's temperament can accomplish significant change in a child

By long forbearance a ruler is persuaded, And a gentle tongue breaks a bone. Proverbs 25:15 NKJV

IV. A Father's Leadership

Don't fail to correct your children. You won't kill them by being firm, 14 and it may even save their lives. Proverbs 23:22 CEV

- A. Consistency
- B. Calmness
- C. Character
- D. Compassion

V. A Father's Example

Listen to your father who begot you, And do not despise your mother when she is old. Proverbs 23:22 NKJV

NOTE: How impactful it is to your children when you continue to honor your parents even in adulthood.

VI. A Father's Testimony

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 NKJV

- A. Not just sport stats and technique
- B. Talk about the Word, God, things of the kingdom

(ILL) Dad on the steps of the bedroom

VII. A Father's Treasure

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward. 4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. 5 Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed, But shall speak with their enemies in the gate. Psalms 127:3-5 NKJV

- A. An upstanding family is wealth and honor enough, even if material prosperity eludes you.
- B. It is not untypical of God's gifts that first they are liabilities or at least responsibilities before they become assets.
 1. Children cost us
 2. Bring us pain (ILL) How true that is with a mom
 3. Before their full blessing emerges

Derek Kidner- "The greater their promise, the more likely that these children will be a handful before they are a quiverful."

(ILL)

- Jacob in his early years-heal grabber
- Joseph in his arrogance at 17
- John the Baptist tumbling in his mother's womb

Conclusion: A reversal of the societal rebellion among our children will not be easy, BUT it is achievable. It will require a revival in godly fathering.

- ✓ Develop godly character
- ✓ Words of my mouth
- ✓ Temperament
- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Example
- ✓ Testimony
- ✓ Steward the treasure