

**Wisdom for Dads**  
**Proverbs 20**  
**Lester Zimmerman**

Today we take time to honor our fathers. I have been a father of two wonderful girls and now the grandfather of three very special granddaughters. This has been an amazing journey for me. You see, girls were like an exotic species to me. I grew up in a family of 6 boys. I had no sisters.

When I became a dad of girls I had a lot of learning to do. I had to learn how little girls are wired. And when I thought I had things figured out they would change.

- **Feelings, emotions, hormones, were all over the place. I had to adjust to**
- **Dolls, and tea parties, pretty dresses, and those chick flick movies.**

Nothing has changed much over the years. I still am trying to figure out this exotic species. **The Cinderella movies have turned into Hallmark movies** which all have the same plot and ending.

But I love my wife, daughters and granddaughters with all my heart. I love being their dad and papa. My wife had done a wonderful job helping me navigate these waters and helping my kids when I was clueless and not understanding.

**Being a dad is a special gift and privilege.** We have a much greater impact on the lives of our children than what we realize. **Their worth, value and identity is greatly impacted and shaped by their father.**

This is true of both girls as well as boys. At a certain age, little girls look to their daddy to validate their femininity and boys their manhood.

I was recently studying the root causes of those struggling with gender confusion.

*The Health Research Council found in addition to child sexual abuse, trauma, loss, and family disruption there was nearly 100 percent absence of fathers in the homes of boys who suffer from severe gender dysphoria, another term for transgenderism.*

Fathers are far from perfect but they play a critical role in the lives of their children. For those of you without fathers, God promises to play a special place in your lives as a father. He is a father to the fatherless.

If we turn to God as our father he can heal that father gap in our lives and validate our worth, value and identity.

To those of us who are fathers, let's do our best to be good dads and leave a good legacy for our children.

**For my Father's Day message this morning I would like to draw some wisdom from the book of Proverbs.** Proverbs was written by Solomon who had been given extraordinary wisdom from God. God was pleased with Solomon's desire as a young man to gain wisdom above wealth.

Solomon recorded many practical nuggets of wisdom for us. They apply to men and women, children, youth and people of all ages and backgrounds. Study the book of proverbs. Keep going back to it in your Bible reading and it will help make you wise.

This morning I want to look at one small section and apply it specifically to fathers, but it also applies to every one of us.

**Read Proverbs 20:1-12** verse by verse.....

*1: Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.*

Life lesson is ....

**1. Dads pass on strength to their children when they conquer their own life controlling issues.**

Whether the issue is alcohol, drugs, pornography, or being a workaholic it will affect our children. It not only leads us astray but they tend to follow our steps.

We know for instance that children of alcoholic parents struggle with life related issues. We also know that children tend to take to excess what parents do in moderation.

- As a parent, you might think you don't have an issue but you are setting patterns for your children they might not be able to control.

**On the positive side,** if you win the battle over these things in your life you pass the victory on to your children. **Your strength becomes their strength.** You give them a chance at a successful life.

The bible talks about the sins of the parents being passed on to the third and fourth generation. But a parallel truth is that the victories of the parents brings victory and strength to successive generations as well. My personal spiritual victories are affecting my children and grandchildren. That is a powerful motivation.

*2 A king's wrath is like the roar of a lion; He who angers him forfeits his life. 3 It is to a man's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.*

**2. Dads who control their anger provide a sense of safety and security for their children.**

Fathers, when we discipline it must be out of love. We may be angry and upset but we channel it in a proper way that creates a response of repentance and not fear in our children.

The Message translation quotes Verse 2 this way – *“Quick-tempered leaders are like mad dogs - cross them and they bite your head off.”*

If you have anger issues, go get help. Don't take it out on your family. There is a reason you struggle with anger. Find out why and get healed.

Also, choose your battles wisely with your kids. Don't make everything an issue.

*4 A sluggard does not plow in season; so at harvest time he looks but finds nothing.*

**3. Dads are to teach their children a strong work ethic in balance with spiritual priorities.**

Give your children chores. Don't just give them everything they want just because you can afford it. Teach them to work for some things.

Be careful the work ethic you teach is not based on materialism as its goal.

Take time for your family. The biggest gift dads can give to their children is their time, not things.

*5 The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.*

**4. Fathers have the privilege of shaping and calling forth the dreams and destiny of their children.**

This is a great verse. There are deep waters and God given longing in each child's heart. We help them to discover it. We help draw it out of them.

We help them decipher the many luring and competing voices of the world and to discern God's voice in their life.

*What a joy it was to see my one daughter discover her passion and calling as a teacher and the other as a missionary to the nations. As a dad, my affirmation and encouragement was important to them.*

*6 Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?*

*7 The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed are his children after him.*

### **5. When dads walk in unconditional love and integrity, their children are deeply impacted and blessed.**

Dads are not always known for their sensitivity. But when their lives demonstrate love and godliness it leaves a powerful impact on the children.

*I don't remember my father affirming me much but his life did leave an imprint on us as kids. Today all five of my brothers are walking with the Lord and many of the grandchildren. He was a man of integrity. A man of his word. He left a legacy.*

*8 When a king sits on his throne to judge, he winnows out all evil with his eyes.*

*9 Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin"?*

*10 Differing weights and differing measures—the LORD detests them both.*

### **6. Dad's need forgiveness too.**

Dads fall short and mess up. I have found most everyone has some dad issues going on in their lives. Some areas that dad has disappointed, hurt, or not been there when you needed him.

I know I have let down my kids and wife at times. I know I could have been a better father. Every father I know says the same thing.

Holding onto grudges against our dad simply hinders our own healing. Forgive him today and if he is still alive look for opportunities to bless him.

Remember you mess up and need forgiveness too.

*11 Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right.  
12 Ears that hear and eyes that see—the LORD has made them both.*

**7. Dads begin shaping the heart of a child at a young age. Our children learn by what they hear us saying and what they see us doing.**

Dads, we need to be actively involved in training our children. We can't leave it up to mom or to Sunday School or youth group. You must take time to impart your spirituality, your beliefs and values into their lives on a one to one bases.

It doesn't happen by osmosis.

*I remember the bedtime prayers and discussion with my girls. Those were precious times of daddy just listening about their day and praying over them. They probably don't remember but I do. I was imparting into their hearts.*

**Conclusion:**

Fathers, I bless you today. I thank you for the effort you are putting forth to be a good dad. I know it is hard at times. I know at times you feel like a failure. Sometimes you don't feel appreciated for all you pour into your family.

**But I want you to know you are sowing seeds.** You are not microwaving kids into instant responsible teenagers and adults.

Keep sowing. Keep loving and keep walking in integrity.

**I would like to leave you with one challenge.** The one regret that I hear from parents whose kids are raised is if they had to do it all over again they would have given more of their time to their kids. **Young dads please hear us older dads!**

I know at this season of your life you may be struggling to make ends meet or you have a lot of things you enjoy doing. But I challenge you to consistently make time for each of your children. **None of us is allowed do-overs or mulligans.**

Date nights with daddy are your greatest investment that yield the greatest returns.

Dads, you have a tough job in the midst of a decadent culture. But God has fully equipped you to raise godly children. He will help you to be a superhero to your kids. And together we can raise a might army that can change our world.

## **Father's Day Blessing 2017**

**Lord today we honor our biological and adoptive fathers, our stepdads and foster dads. We also honor our spiritual dads who have poured into our lives**

**Today we ask that you bless them**

**Bless them with courage to do the right thing, to go against the flow, to stand for truth and pass on their victories and strength to their children**

**Help them to rise above the failures of the past and become warriors in defense of their marriages and families**

**Bless them as they pray, protect and provide**

**Help them as they battle to keep their priorities clear. Make them great fathers**

**Make them men of great influence wherever they go**

**Bless their hopes and dreams**

**Help them succeed in whatever they put their hands to**

**Affirm in their hearts their great value and worth in our lives**

**We honor them today**

**In Jesus Name, AMEN**