

Sunday Morning Sermon
6/21/2026

From Broken to Blessed: God Uses Imperfect Fathers

Psalm 103:13-14 (ESV)

"As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust."

Today, we celebrate fathers. But if we're honest, many fathers come into church carrying invisible burdens.

- Some carry regrets.
- Some carry guilt.
- Some wonder if they've done enough.
- Some feel like they've failed.

Psalm 103 reminds us that God understands our weakness. He knows our frame. He remembers that we are dust.

God has never been looking for perfect fathers.

He has always been looking for surrendered fathers.

Introduction: The Cracked Pot

There is an old story about a water carrier in India who carried two large pots suspended from a pole across his shoulders. One pot was perfect, but the other had a crack. Every day, by the time he reached home, the cracked pot had lost half its water.

The cracked pot felt ashamed and apologized to the water carrier for years. One day the carrier said, "Have you noticed the flowers growing on your side of the path? I planted seeds there because I knew about your flaw. Every day you watered them, and now those flowers bring beauty and joy to others."

Many fathers feel like that cracked pot. They focus on where they've leaked, failed, or fallen short. But God sees the flowers that have grown because of His grace working through imperfect lives.

One father said, "I knew I wasn't perfect when my kid asked Siri a question before asking me."

Another dad said, "My children treat me like Google. The difference is they argue with my answers."

That's fatherhood. We don't always have the right answers. We don't always get it right. But God isn't looking for perfect fathers. He's looking for surrendered fathers.

Transition

You may feel cracked, but God still carries you and uses you.

Point 1: God Sees the Potential in Imperfect Men

Illustration: The High School Coach

A young man barely made his high school football team. He was small, uncoordinated, and often sat on the bench. Most people saw someone who would never become much of an athlete.

But one coach saw something different. He saw determination. He saw heart. He saw potential.

Years later, that same young man earned a college scholarship and eventually became a successful coach himself.

The difference wasn't what others saw, it was what one person believed he could become.

That's exactly how God sees fathers. While we focus on our weaknesses, God sees what we can become when we surrender to Him.

Biblical Example

When God looked at Gideon, everyone else saw a scared farmer hiding in a winepress.

But God saw something else.

Judges 6:12 (ESV)

"And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, 'The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor.'"

Gideon wasn't acting like a mighty warrior.

He was hiding.

Yet God called him what he would become rather than what he currently was.

God doesn't just see who you are.

He sees who you can become.

Application

Your family may see your imperfections.

God sees your potential.

Point 2: God Redeems Our Failures for His Purpose

Illustration: The Burned Forest

After a devastating forest fire in Yellowstone National Park, visitors thought the land would never recover.

But within months, new growth began appearing. Certain pinecones require extreme heat to release their seeds.

What looked like complete destruction became the very thing that produced new life.

Sometimes fathers look at mistakes, broken relationships, financial failures, or poor decisions and think everything is ruined.

Yet God specializes in bringing new life from burned places.

Joel 2:25 (ESV)

"I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten..."

That is one of the most powerful promises in Scripture.

- God can restore what sin destroyed.
- God can restore what time has stolen.
- God can restore what regret keeps reminding you about.

A father was helping his son with math homework.

After twenty minutes of struggling, the son looked up and asked, "Dad, did they have math when you were in school?"

The dad replied, "Yes."

The son said, "Well, they must have changed it because you're getting every answer wrong."

Sometimes fatherhood feels like that.

- We don't always have the answers.
- We make mistakes.
- We fail.

But thank God our children don't need a perfect father. They need a father who knows where to find grace.

Romans 8:28 (ESV)

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."

Notice it doesn't say all things are good.

It says God works all things together for good.

Application

God can bring growth from places you thought were permanently damaged.

Point 3: God Honors the Father Who Walks in Repentance

Illustration: (Why Fatherhood is important!!!)

A father lost his temper one evening and yelled at child over something minor.

The next morning, he felt convicted.

Instead of pretending it never happened, he sat down with his child and said, "I was wrong. I should not have spoken to you that way. Will you forgive me?"

Years later, that child said, "Dad, that moment taught me more about being a Christian than any sermon I ever heard."

Why?

Because children learn humility by watching humility.

Biblical Example

King David wasn't perfect.

He made terrible mistakes.

Yet Scripture repeatedly calls him a man after God's own heart.

Why?

Because when confronted with sin, David repented.

Psalm 51:10 (ESV)

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

David understood that repentance wasn't weak.

Repentance was strength.

1 John 1:9 (ESV)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

God isn't looking for fathers who never fall.

He's looking for fathers who know how to get back up.

Application

Some of the most powerful leadership happens when a father says, "I was wrong."

Point 4: God Blesses the Faithful, Not Just the Flawless

Illustration: The Bricklayer

A man spent forty years laying bricks.

Day after day.

- No headlines.
- No awards.
- No recognition.

One day, his grandson asked, "How did you build such beautiful buildings?"

The grandfather replied, "One brick at a time."

Great fathers are built the same way.

- One prayer at a time.
- One bedtime story at a time.
- One ball game at a time.
- One conversation at a time.
- One faithful decision at a time.

Galatians 6:9 (ESV)

"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

One father said, "I spent years teaching my children to walk and talk. Now I spend the rest of my life telling them to sit down and be quiet."

Every parent understands that.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (ESV)

"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

- Every prayer matters.
- Every conversation matters.
- Every act of faithfulness matters.

Application

1. You don't need to be spectacular.
2. You simply need to keep laying bricks.

Conclusion Illustration: The Stained-Glass Window

When you look closely at a stained-glass window, all you see are broken pieces of glass.

Some are jagged.

Some are odd-shaped.

Some appear worthless on their own.

But when the sunlight shines through them, those broken pieces create something beautiful.

Many fathers focus on the broken pieces of their lives.

God focuses on what happens when his light shines through them.

2 Corinthians 4:7 (ESV)

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us."

God has always used imperfect people.

The goal is not to be a perfect father.

The goal is to be a father through whom God's light shines.

Closing

Some fathers in this room are carrying regrets.

You wish you could go back and do things differently.

You wish you could get back those missed ballgames.

Those angry words.

Those lost years.

Those broken relationships.

But here's the good news of the Gospel:

God is not limited by your past.

God can restore what years have stolen.

God can heal what sin has damaged.

God can redeem what seems impossible.

Philippians 1:6 (ESV)

"And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."

- Your story is not over because you've made mistakes.
- Your story is not over because you've failed.
- Your story is not over because you've fallen.

As long as God is writing your story, there is still another chapter to come.

The enemy wants you to focus on your failures.

God wants you to focus on His grace.

The enemy says you're disqualified.

God says you're forgiven.

The enemy says it's too late.

Isaiah 43:19 (ESV)

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"

God says, "I'm not finished with you yet."

Closing Statement

God has never been looking for perfect fathers.

He has always been looking for surrendered fathers.

If you place your broken pieces in His hands, He can create something beautiful for your family, your children, and generations yet to come.