

# The Power of Blessing

THE RED DOOR COMMUNITY CHURCH

## HOW TO PREPARE A BLESSING TO YOUR FATHER

I would like to outline some simple guidelines that may help you in beginning to write a blessing for your father. For most of our parents' lives they probably heard from their children a litany of all the mistakes and the things they did wrong. In a blessing we want to convey to our father gratefulness for all the things they did right. Remember that God wants to use us as His agents to help impart His answer to our father's key question, "Am I still needed? Have I really accomplished anything of significance in my life?" So I would suggest following simple steps in preparing your blessing.

### **Make a list of everything your father did right.**

Many times fathers don't remember many of the things they did correctly. Perhaps they only remember their own sins, faults and mistakes. Take this opportunity to remind him of the things he did well. Remember that who they are and what they did are not the same thing.

### **Make a list of everything you appreciate about your father, and for which you are grateful. Write some words to thank him for these things.**

### **Make a list of godly character qualities you have observed.**

Perhaps your father is not a believer and you are struggling to think of godly qualities. Pray and ask the Lord and He will show you the true intentions of your father's heart.

One man told me that his mother was hyper-critical and all she did was criticise him and tell him all the things he did wrong. I responded that he could write on his list that his mom had a gift of discernment. I explained to him that criticism is simply misdirected discernment. So God will help you see godly qualities that have been in your parents, that you can include in your blessing.

### **Make a list of experiences that were meaningful (or perhaps comical) between you and your father.**

Every family has had experiences that were extremely meaningful only to the family members. Some of those experiences were frustrating at the time but very bonding for the family. Perhaps you remember one or a series of experiences (even if traumatic) with your dad that were meaningful to you and you would like to recount them and bless your dad for their participation in your life.

### **Take your lists and begin to use them to craft a blessing declaring the good things, and the significant impact your dad has had in your life, and thanking him for his life.**

Once you have these lists, you can then use them to begin to put together a letter to bless your dad. Make it reflective of your personality style, and if you would like it to be permanently remembered write a letter. Or you may even just want to speak it.

### **Set a day that is special to you and your dad and publically read and present your blessing to your dad.**

You may wish to select a birthday, anniversary, father's day, or any other day that would be significant to him. You may simply choose a day when you and your parents are available.

Some people have expressed a concern to me that their father would never allow them to read such a letter publically to them. However, those same people have come back later with a powerful story of how blessing opened the heart of a father who prior to that had been very closed. I have encouraged people with this concern to pray and ask for God's favour and timing to ask their dad if they could bless them. Most are surprised by the openness that they experienced when they prayed in advance and expected God's favour.

## AN EXAMPLE - Written on the 7th September 2003

I want you to know dad how glad I am that God chose you to be my dad. I am so grateful that our relationship has been restored, even if it is in the 'twilight years' of life. It is NEVER too late. There are so many things about you that I appreciate and love so here goes.

Thank you for teaching me to dance - I so loved dancing the quickstep and fox trot with you. As we would glide across the dance floor all eyes would be on us and compliments would fly! You were such a great dancer - self-taught I believe. I remember many nights at home when the coffee table would be put aside and the carpet rolled back and you would teach us to dance, never deterred by the countless times we stood on your toes! I feel sure that when we were little tots we stood on your feet as you danced with us.

Thank you for the many family holidays you took us on. I remember being woken up well before dawn along with Robert, Jeannette and Wanda and bundled into the car, blankets, pillows and necessities, to go on yet another little adventure holiday. Never wildly extravagant but we were all together and that's all that mattered. On long stretches when you were still driving well into the night we always got so excited when we saw city lights in the distance - which meant that either our destination was near or a road stop eminent.

I remember on camping holidays that you cooked scrumptious bacon and eggs for us all so mum could have a break from cooking. I think having servants in Africa destroyed the chef in you!

I remember the big baboons that we fed on the side of the road on yet another trip somewhere and the amazing Sinoia caves on the way to Durban. The lions, elephants, giraffes and all the wildlife Africa offers was there, in the wild, for us to experience and enjoy. Thanks dad for exposing us to such beauty.

Remember dad when you got that red and white speedboat. Your pride and joy! The many skiing weekends at Makoma Dam and countless hours of teaching us to water-ski. What fun we all had! I also remember the yearly trips to Lake Kariba and driving over the escarpment to get there with boat in tow. We had so much fun with our friends skiing all day and catching up on the beach at night. Remember dad when I was caught unawares; crossing the lake to the other side of the Rhodesian boarder with two friends and we were 'taken into custody' by the boarder patrol, accused of being spies. I remember being so scared that we would be locked up but you came to the rescue and after many hours of convincing the boarder officer that we were just holiday makers circling around the wrong island. They let us go. Thank you for fighting so hard for me.

Remember the magnificent African sunsets!

I also remember the weekends we went to the drive-in movies where mum always made such yummy pies for us we had some lovely family times. Dad, I see so clearly now how hard you tried to do family stuff and how proud you have always been of your family.

Remember how strict you were when the boys came calling? That's when the 'underground resistance' began and Jeannette and I found a few ways to outwit you - it wasn't easy! Dad I made it through despite all your worrying!

Over the years we have had our ups and downs, laughter and tears, struggles and pain but I sincerely believe that your heart is good and kind, loving and caring, passionate about your family and always ready to help. You have done so many good things for your family even though sometimes misunderstood.

You have achieved so much in your life despite a dysfunctional upbringing and limited education. This did not stop you from rising to the rank of Major in the British and then Zambian, army and being well respected by your peers.

You held the record for the 100-yard dash for years; you became one of the elite S.A.S soldiers and a Paratrooper. You excelled in whatever you put your hand to. You were a wonderful provider for your family and an immovable rock but behind the tough exterior lurks a soft heart.

Dad, this Father's Day I would like to honour you as my father and now my friend. I would like to thank you for all the wonderful opportunities you gave us, for pushing us to excellence and wanting so much more for us than you had in your own childhood and life.

I am so very sorry for the wasted years and for resenting and judging you but I am so grateful for the relationship we now have dad and even more so for loving me the way you do - I am blessed beyond words.

Thank you for being my dad!