

“A Father’s Blessing”

Genesis 27 records the story of Isaac bestowing his blessing on his son, Jacob (though it was intended for Esau, the eldest of the twin brothers). Through deception and family favoritism Jacob received the blessing instead of Esau. A Jewish father’s blessing was a formal passing on of the father’s honor and authority to his oldest son. And since the oldest son was assuming the leadership responsibilities of the family or tribe, he also received a double share of his father’s possessions. Isaac blessed Jacob with these words recorded in Genesis 27:27-29: “*And he [Jacob] came near and kissed him [Isaac]; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: ‘Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed. ²⁸ Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. ²⁹ Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, and let your mother’s sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!’*”

Isaac’s ancient Hebrew blessing contained four elements that ought to be present in every home today. **First**, is *a meaningful touch*. Isaac touched his son and invited his son to come near and kiss him. The bestowing of a blessing usually involves the laying on of hands, a kiss, and an embrace. Jesus did the same with the children people brought to Him: *He placed the children on His knee, laid His hands upon them and blessed them*. Studies show that touched babies and children develop much more quickly than untouched babies. Parents communicate love and affection by touching their children, cuddling them and holding them close. Meaningful touch is extremely important; but inappropriate touching is forbidden. Adults who offend little ones by touching them inappropriately face severe punishment from God as their guardian angels directly report offenses committed against innocent little ones to God. **Second**, is *a spoken message of affection and love*. We should complement our children with positive message that communicate our love and affection. While there’s always room for constructive criticism, parents must avoid harsh words that don’t accomplish much and may cause great harm. Parents should not lump a child’s identity to their mistakes or sins. Punish the action, but don’t condemn or curse their spirit or character in the process. Learn to be positive and influence your home in a positive way. A **third** element of Isaac’s blessing is *communicating how important our children are to us*. Don’t leave things unsaid. Don’t leave your family members wondering how you really feel about them—tell them! Tell your children that they are special, and that you desire God’s best for them. Give your children your full attention when they come to you and want to talk. And **fourth**, Isaac’s blessing contained *the picturing of a glorious future*. Help your children raise their sights and see that their future is bright. What a privilege it is for parents to help their children find their place in this world, and discover who they are in Christ, and how they’ve been marvelously and wonderfully made. Here’s two great gifts parents can give their children: roots and wings.

Discussion Guide/Action Steps

1. Are you lavishing your children with lots of hugs, kisses and meaningful touches?

2. Speak words like these often to your children: “*You’re worth something;*” “*You’re such a good little boy or girl;*” “*I’m so glad that God gave you to us.*”
3. Even if you’re not great with words, make sure your family members know how you feel about them (you could say it to them, or record a video and let them watch it, or write it out in a card or letter).
4. Look up and listen to the song entitled, “*Find Your Wings*” by Marc Harris and Tony Wood.