

**June: Walk in Love with the Fathers
and Other Men in Your Life.
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Verse:

The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; he who fathers a wise son will be glad in him.
Proverbs 23:24

Upward Gaze:

Heavenly Father, I pray for these women reading this study. I pray at whatever stage of life they are in they're able to take something from this study to help them or to encourage others around them. Help us not forget Your love for us as our Heavenly Father, Your constant presence, love, and attention in our lives. In Christ's most holy and precious name I pray, Amen.

Development of Theme:

I was very blessed to grow up in a Christian home. My father was a Methodist minister in addition to being a Director of Family and Children Services. I've always been raised in the church and in the Word. For thirty-six years, I had the blessing of being a daughter to a wonderful man I called Daddy.

I remember as a child watching my dad prepare his sermons. I would see him pour over scripture. I would see and hear him in prayer asking God for guidance. My dad was a wonderful spiritual role model for my sister and me. He took his job seriously about being the spiritual head of our home. "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 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. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates" (Deuteronomy 6:7 – 8 KJV).

I think the hardest word in the above scripture is diligently. It's means sacrifice of self for others. Our society is a "me first" way of living. You can even look around at families and see the parents thinking me first; children when I get around to it.

I've had other men in my life who have helped me grow closer to the Lord. My husband's grandfather was the most amazing man I knew. He was devoted to doing God's work, pouring over scripture, ministering to anyone he felt God leading him to minister to. He started the jail ministry in his church. Additionally, he started Evangelism Explosion at his church. He was man who was not ashamed to let the world know who he served and who he loved. He felt it was wrong not to let others know about the love of Jesus. After all we are called to be ambassadors in a world that needs the love of Jesus.

I did not become a strong voice for God until my later years. I had his Word in my heart. I prayed and did Bible studies but despite my upbringing I wasn't confident. I guess it's that crazy kid and parent thing. I needed another person in my life to echo the same things my father did to make it all come together. Through my husband and his grandfather, it finally clicked with me. Before, I felt like I was going through the motions of being a good Christian.

I know it's very old school, but I believe it. Fathers are the leaders of our homes. Prayerfully, the father is not a dictator but one who values the opinion and communication with his wife. We are to submit to our husbands and pray for them. Meanwhile, it is stated in Ephesians 5:25-30, they are to love us as Christ loved the church and laid down his life for her. Ideally in a marriage we are both to love and support one another for the good of the family and to make those decisions together that glorify God. I know that this is a fairytale for some but that's not what God intended. He intended it to be a reality.

A Father's job is to, "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it" Proverbs 22:6. Mom's come along side and nurture and support a father's job.

My prayer is that you too have grown up or currently have some wonderful men in your life that help you in your spiritual journey. I know, as you do, that not everyone is so fortunate. I know many who find it difficult to speak to God as a father because their earthly father was so cruel to them. It's a real battle that unfortunately too many women must face. However, God is good to soften our hearts and place the right people into our lives. It could be a minister, an elder, a male co-worker who loves the Lord and isn't afraid to share his testimony and faith.

I've been given the men all the shout outs, but we women play an important role in men's lives. Their faith and being strong in it, usually has a woman in the background somewhere. There's a grandmother who wakes every morning to pray for her grandson. A mother praying for her son and her future son-in-law. A wife praying for her husband. We too must be diligent in our prayers for the men who mean so much to us. We must become prayer warriors for them. Asking God to reveal to us the men who we need to be praying for.

Inward Glimpse (Reflection):

Who are the important men in your life? What makes them important?

Do you have unresolved issues in your life with your earthly father that keeps you from a full relationship with God? If so, take this time to hand the hurt and disappointment over to Him.

Are you actively influencing your son, grandson, any young man in your life to be a Godly man?

How are you actively working with the men in your life to influence the world for Christ? How are you showing younger men and women God's calling to work together for God's purpose?

Outward Glance (Discussion):

Commit to pray for the men in your life.

Commit to pray for the future men in the lives of your family.

Pray for young boys/men of your church. Ask for the names from nursery through the singles class.

One more peek:

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!

1 John 3:1