

The Father Factor

THE POINT: Men will appreciate the lasting and life-changing impact a father's influence (or the lack of it) can have on his child.

WARM UP. A pastor named Jerry Reed shared this via Sermons.org... "My lovely daughter, who is...the apple of her daddy's eye, once gave me this and told me it was her favorite 'Father's Day Poem':

'Dad, Dad, Dad. The dear old worthless geezer.
Oh the fuses I have had, with that old patient teaser.
He lacks the spirit of a mouse, most anyone can 'down' him.
We let him hang around the house. It's cheaper than to drown him."

- ◆ What is the message you get from this poem about the value of a father? _____

WORKOUT. Start on the back page with "The Father Factor".

1. Read **Exodus 34:7; 20:5-6**. How does the character or conduct of a father affect his child? _____

2. Read **Malachi 4:6**. What does it take for a father to love his child? _____

- ◆ What does it take for a child to have a loving heart for his/her father? _____
- ◆ What does God say will happen when fathers and their children are estranged to one another _____

3. Contrast the "curse" mentioned in **Malachi 4:6** with God's promise to children who honor their parents, as commanded in **Exodus 20:12**. _____

4. Read **Ephesians 6:1-4**. What is God's way for a father to raise his child? _____

- ◆ If you have a strained relationship with your child, what action will you take to improve the relationship? _____

THE TAKEAWAY. I realize that the best relationship with my child begins with a healthy relationship with the Creator as my heavenly Father when I believe in Jesus Christ and receive Him as my Savior and Lord. Only then will God empower and equip me to be the committed father that my child needs.

Pray It Loud (from the heart): My Heavenly Father, without You in my life, I would be lost and shattered. In the same way, my child will suffer when my fatherly presence and guidance is absent. Father, help me turn my heart to my child for a healthy parent-child relationship. Pour Your love into my heart so I can love my child with the same love I receive from You. In JESUS' name . Amen!

“The Father Factor” ~ Research by the National Fatherhood Initiative
<http://www.fatherhood.org>

[Condensed and repackaged by M.G. Matally]

Poverty	Children in father-absent homes are five times more likely to be poor. A child with a nonresident father is 54 percent more likely to be poorer than his or her father.
Incarceration	...youths in father-absent households still have significantly higher odds of incarceration than those in mother-father families. Youths who never have a father in the household experience the highest odds of going to jail.
Crime	Adolescents, particularly boys, in single-parent families are at higher risk of status, property and person delinquencies. Moreover, students attending schools with a high proportion of children of single parents are also at risk. In a study of INTERPOL crime statistics of 39 countries, it was found that single parenthood ratios were strongly correlated with violent crimes.
Drug & Alcohol	...controlling for community context, there is significantly more drug use among children who do not live with their mother and father. Youths are more at risk of first substance use without a highly involved father.
Teen Pregnancy	Being raised by a single mother raises the risk of teen pregnancy, marrying with less than a high school degree, and forming a marriage where both partners have less than a high school degree.
Child Abuse	Compared to living with both parents, living in a single-parent home doubles the risk that a child will suffer physical, emotional, or educational neglect.
Childhood Obesity	The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth found that obese children are more likely to live in father-absent homes than are non-obese children. BMI (Body Mass Index) in sons and daughters consistently higher when fathers were overweight or obese. Father’s inactivity is a strong predictor of children’s inactivity.
Education	Fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school. Father involvement in schools is associated with the higher likelihood of a student getting mostly A's. This was true for fathers in biological parent families, for stepfathers, and for fathers heading single-parent families. Students living in father-absent homes are twice as likely to repeat a grade in school.