

## **When Fathers Pray: The Ultimate In Homeland Security**

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Here's a moment every father can relate to, from a dad named Scott Taylor. He writes,

*A few years ago on a lazy Saturday morning my son Philip, then 5, invited himself into my bed. After about 5 minutes of intense tickling, wrestling and laughing, we collapsed together on the now coverless, pillowless bed. It was just a few seconds later that he raised his head from my chest, looked into my eyes, and said, "Dad, your the bestest Daddy in the whole wide world." And then, before I even had a chance to sample this precious morsel of parental affirmation he added, as he lay back down beside me, "And you're a buggar-head!"*

Here are some words that most dads have said at some time or another to their children.

*This is going to hurt me more than it hurts you.*

*Quiet. I'm watching the ball game.*

*Don't forget to check the oil.*

*Bring back all the change*

*Who changed touched the thermostat?*

*Where is the remote control?*

*Do I look like I'm made out of money?*

*If you don't quit, that I'm going to call your mother.*

*If you don't tell mom neither will I.*

*Just wait till you have kids of your own.*

Another son wrote home to his dad. He said, "Dear Dad, Please let me hear from you more often, even if it's only a five or a ten."

Did you hear about the children who begged their parents for a hamster and after the usual

fervent vows that they alone would care for it, they got one. They named it Danny. Two months later, when mom found herself responsible for cleaning and feeding the creature, she located a prospective new home for it. The children took the news of Danny's imminent departure quite well, though one of them remarked, "He's been around here a long time—we'll miss him." "Yes," mom replied, "But he's too much work for one person, and since I'm that one person, I say he goes." Another child offered, "Well, maybe if he wouldn't eat so much and wouldn't be so messy, we could keep him." But mom was firm. "Its time to take Danny to his new home now," she insisted. "Go and get his cage." With one voice and in tearful outrage the children shouted, "Danny? We thought you said, 'Daddy!'"

Many dads have abandoned their calling from God, and many wonder if we even need dads. Maybe we can just get rid of dad, like a messy hamster. This morning I want to take on that attitude. I want all dads to both understand and embrace what God has placed them here to do.

In summer, 2001, the term homeland security had no meaning whatsoever. But that changed on 911.

Not long after 911 President Bush created a new cabinet position for homeland security. America has an enemy – an enemy the for the most part remains hidden in the shadows waiting for the perfect moment to strike.

Homeland security is not cheap. The bill this year is nearly 40 billion dollars.

When the homeland is threatened it is time for the leaders to step up to the plate. It is time for them to protect their people – it is time for them to use the best resources that they have

at their disposal.

If you have your Bible, turn to 2 Chronicles 20. I want us to read a passage that will show us what a leader of Israel did when his homeland was threatened. I want us to see what, the most powerful resource we have to protect our homeland, is.

2 Chronicles 20:5-9

*5 Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the LORD in the front of the new courtyard 6 and said:*

*"O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you. 7 O our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? 8 They have lived in it and have built in it a sanctuary for your Name, saying, 9 'If calamity comes upon us, whether the sword of judgment, or plague or famine, we will stand in your presence before this temple that bears your Name and will cry out to you in our distress, and you will hear us and save us.'*

What did Jehoshaphat do when his homeland was threatened? He prayed!

Prayer is - coming into the presence of God; it is entering the throne room of the KING of kings and LORD of lords; it is communicating with the creator of the world; it is bringing our questions to the one who has the answers; it is connecting our lives with the ALL knowing, ALL present – and ALL powerful KING of kings... Prayer is coming near to God...

I love what Moses told the people in

Deuteronomy 4:7; "What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way our Lord is near us whenever we pray to him?"

Prayer can do anything, because prayer is partnering with God, and as Jesus tells us, "With God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26)

Prayer can do anything but we have to ask!  
When the church prays, things happens,  
wonderful things... When the church prays:

We become united  
We receive divine guidance in important  
kingdom decisions  
We unleash the power of God  
The word of God comes alive  
People get saved  
And when the church prays – the church prays  
more...

I want us to think about a different homeland that needs security. I want you to think about an enemy that has declared war on the church and on your home. An enemy that scripture says is like a lion just want for the right moment and the right person to attack. An enemy who like, America's enemy is usually unseen and hidden... An enemy that has great power and will stop at nothing less then totally destroying us. America is not the first homeland to be threatened...

God has always had a homeland security plan. A major component of the plan is Fathers—men, and not just any kind of men. They are praying men. Men who are spiritual leaders, real spiritual warriors.

E.M. Bounds in talking about the great leaders of the past like Paul says:

“They were leaders for God because they were mighty in prayer. They were not leaders because of brilliancy in thought, nor because of the exhaustless resources, their magnificent culture, or their natural endowment; but they were leaders because by the power of prayer, the command the power of God...”

Do our homes need protection?  
Do our kids face any dangers?  
Are there forces out there that seek to hurt our spouses?  
To destroy them?  
To lead them astray?  
To steal away – their innocence? Purity? Self worth? Hope? Value? Future? Freedom?

I want to look at three praying dads of the Bible. It is my pray the we can learn something from them... About both, protecting our homes... and praying for our kids...

Prayer is battle – to pray is to go to war. To pray is to ask Almighty God to engage His heavenly army.

The things that these dads brought to God – on behalf of their kids, are the same things that we need to bring before God on behalf of our kids.

### **Job’s Lesson: Pray For Their Purity**

From Job we learn that we should pray for the purity of our kids...

Read: Job 1:1-5

“There was a man named Job who lived in the land of Uz. He was blameless, a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil.”

These are good qualities for us to have as well. These are qualities of a righteous man that helps our prayers to be powerful and effective.

“He had seven sons and three daughters. He owned seven thousand sheep, 3,00 camels, 500 teams of oxen and 500 female donkeys, and he employed many servants. He was in fact, the richest person in that entire area. Every year when Job’s sons had birthdays, they invited their brothers and sisters to join them for a celebration. On these occasions they would get together to get and drink. When these celebrations ended and sometimes they lasted several days – Job would **purify his children**. He would get up **early in the morning** and offer a burnt offering for each of them. For Job said to himself, ‘Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.’ This was Job’s **regular practice**.”

Note that he sought to “purify his children.” He got up “early in the morning” to do this. And this was his “regular practice.” All of these are principles we can take and make a part of our lives today.

Is their reason to be concerned about the purity of our kids?

On a daily basis our kids face an unrelenting onslaught of temptation, through music, television, movies, the Internet and their peers.

Like Job – on a regular basis we need to rise up early each morning. Every morning we need to pray that God will protect their purity; that he will keep images and people that would steal that purity away... If our kids are in a relationship we need to pray that it will be pure in the eyes of God.

We need to pray that our kids will desire to

keep their purity and realize that it is Satan who is trying to steal it away. We need to pray that God will surround them with other kids who also desire purity.

And we need to pray that they understand that there is always forgiveness if they fail from God and from us.

If you made a regular practice of praying for the purity of your kids, do you think it would make a difference? James 5:16 reminds us that "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." Of course it makes a difference!

### **Abraham's Lesson: Pray For Their Future Spouse**

The next dad that I want to look at is Abraham. Abraham teaches us to pray for our son and our daughter's future spouse.

In Genesis chapter 24 we see Abraham who at the time was a very old man, doing something that is an awesome example for dads today. Abraham was living in a pretty bad neighborhood and he did not want his son Isaac to marry any of the women there because they were not godly. So he prayed that God would find a wife for Isaac far away from there, back at his hometown. Abraham knew that there, there would be a godly woman for his son. And not only did Abraham pray about this, he also sent a servant there to bring back a wife for Isaac. It's a beautiful story – God answered that prayer and Isaac and Rebekah are married.

Do you pray for your son's future wife? For your daughter's future husband? Do think that this is a prayer worth praying?

We need to pray that our kids will marry godly people. We need to pray that they have a

strong and unyielding desire to marry someone who loves Jesus and His Church. Someone who believes the truth of the Bible. We need to pray that they will marry people that will 'complete' them. That will help them become, all that God desires them to be. That will love them with God's kind of love.

We also need to pray for their future husband or wife – that God protects them, protects their purity, protects them from all harm, that they are growing each day in the knowledge of and love for God.

Parents are you praying for your children's future spouse? Will you start to pray this prayer on a regular basis? Do you think that it would make a difference?

And, like Abraham are you, will you – take whatever steps you can to make sure that they do?

### **David's Lesson: Pray For Their Desire To Obey God**

The next dad I want to look at is David – and in 1 Chronicles 29; David is very old and he prays for His son Solomon...

Look at vs. 19:

"Give my son Solomon the wholehearted desire to obey all your commands, decrees and principles, and to build this Temple, for which I have made all these preparations."

We need to pray that our children will have a strong, a consuming desire to obey all the commands of God... and to be actively involved in building His church and advancing God's kingdom.

Why? Because their obedience is how Jesus

said they show their love for him...  
Why? Because God's word will light their path  
and led them on the road to true life...  
Why? Because obeying God's word will keep  
them from all the things that happens when  
they don't...  
Why? Because obeying God's word will make  
them successful and joyful in life...

Consider what God told Joshua in Joshua 1:9:

"Be strong and very courageous. Obey all the laws Moses gave you. Do not turn away from them, and you will be successful in everything you do. Study the book of the law continually. Mediate on it day and night so you may be sure to obey all that is written in it. Only then will you succeed. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Do you believe that praying for you son and daughters to have a wholehearted desire to obey all of God's word – would make any difference? Do you think that's an investment that will come back to bless you?

Bill Cosby wrote, "Now that my father is a grandfather he just can't wait to give money to my kids. But when I was a kid and I asked him for 50 cents, he would tell me the story of his life. How he got up at 5 AM and walked 23 miles to milk 90 cows. And the farmer for whom he worked had no bucket, so he had to squirt the milk into his little hand and then walk 8 miles to the nearest can. All for 5 cents. The result was...I never got my 50 cents."

"But now he tells my children every time he comes into the house, 'Well, let's see how much money old Granddad has for his wonderful grandkids.' And the minute they take money out of his hands I call them over

to me and I take it away from them. BECAUSE THAT IS MY MONEY."

Dads, I don't know about taking the change that grandpa wants to give your kids. But I do know that praying for your kids will **change** them, and **change** their future and will bless you and your family **forever**. That I do know.

PRAYER

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