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## THE GODLY DAD...(1 Thessalonians 2:7-12)

...Today is "Father's Day," and we as a church want to honor you, dad, for the very important role you have in your family. God has designed you to be the strength, protector, and leader in the home. Wow!  
...Over the past 3 decades, there has been an assault on masculinity resulting in role confusion. Men have been "feminized" and told to get in touch with their "softer side," that is until a woman needs a real man.  
...Paul in writing to the church in Thessalonica, a group of people he spiritually birthed, used the language of the family to encourage them. By this we can see the traits of a spiritual father and apply them to dads everywhere.

### FIVE QUALITIES THAT OUGHT TO BE FOUND IN YOU, DAD, AS YOU LEAD YOUR FAMILY FOR CHRIST. Do these, even if your own father did not!

...Paul's example is a portrait worth imitating in your home. Remember, you are God's appointed leader.

#### I. Dad, It Is Important For You To Express Tender Affection For Your Kids.(7ff)

- A. Paul could have used many words in Greek to express words of affection. In verse 8, the word he used for "love" (NIV) is a word of strong intensity and endearment taken from the nursery.  
..It is both tender and masculine.
1. This is a father holding and treating his child in a very gentle way.
  2. This applies not only to the little ones, but also to older children who also need Dad's tender affection. (Remember the Prodigal's father...he ran to him, hugged and kissed)
- B. We express this tender love to them in a couple of ways:
1. We must affirm our children for who God made them to be...their gifts, abilities, etc
  2. We must appreciate what they do. Be their cheerleader in life. Give your approval...
  3. Dad, don't hold back your physical touch...even giving kisses.

#### II. Dad, Strive To Live A Transparent Life Before Your Family. (v.8)

- A. The Gospel is all-important! It is the most important thing in life. What a wonderful thing to share the Gospel with your children and see them come to Christ. This was Paul's experience...
- B. But there is more. Dad, you must live with a transparency before your family, allowing them to see how to live a life that honors the Lord Jesus.
1. Share with them your struggles, failures, and successes.
  2. Your children will benefit when they find us open and vulnerable.  
...You may even need to ask them to forgive you from time to time. Do it!

#### III. Dad, Possess An Unselfish Diligence In Your Labors. (v.9)

- ...For many men, work is very important. It is what we do to provide for our loved ones.
- A. Paul reminds his spiritual children of his hard work. "our toil and hardship...working night and..."
- B. For many families, this is the most vivid memory they have of their dad. "He worked hard and..."  
...Perhaps, many times working at a job hated, but continued to do so to provide for you...  
...Illustration: Tim Russert's dad...worked 2 full time jobs in Buffalo...
- C. Kids, before you complain about this, think where you would be if your dad was the opposite...  
...irresponsible...lazy... One man writes, "many a family has a hard working dad to thank for their survival. In many ways, Dads show their love by working and providing.
- D. Dad, work hard, but always keep your perspective. Also, train your children to be hard workers.

#### IV. Dad, Be Spiritually Authentic Before Your Loved Ones. (vv.9-10)

- ...Your kids know you, really know you, so strive to be godly and earnestly love the Lord before them.
- A. Paul tells these that "he had preached the Gospel to them...and we were...holy, righteous,etc..."  
...He means by this, my words matched up to the way I lived, and you know it was true.
- B. Dad, be the spiritual leader in your home. It seems to be a rare thing today, but should not be!!  
...Daily "hunger and thirst after the Lord," by reading the Word, praying, and urging your family follow you. Men be the pace setter, for time is short, they are growing fast, and soon gone...

#### V. Dad, Exert A Positive Influence Upon Your Children. (vv.11-12)

- A. Paul refers to his ministry with them as being one of "active encouragement," as "a father."  
...When he searched his mind for an example of one who brought a positive influence...it was dad.
- B. Look at Paul's words: "encouraging, comforting, and urging..." (v.12) That's you DAD!!!!

### LESSONS FOR OUR LIVES: