

A Dad Who Cares  
Hebrews 12:5–11

June 18, 2006

**SERMON NOTES** (Scriptures shown in New Living Translation)

A. Introduction – we have a heavenly Father who cares: 1 Peter 5:6–7

B. A Dad Who Cares, Encourages Hebrews 12:5

1. And have you entirely forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you, his children? He said, ‘My child, don’t ignore it when the Lord disciplines you, and don’t be discouraged when he corrects you.
2. God exemplifies this by ...

3. A dad does this by ...

C. A Dad Who Cares is Involved Hebrews 12:6

1. ‘For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children.’
2. God exemplifies this by ... (Romans 8:9, Ephesians 3:17, 19)

3. A dad does this by ...

D. A Dad Who Cares is Temperate Hebrews 12:7–10a

1. <sup>7</sup> As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Whoever heard of a child who was never disciplined? <sup>8</sup> If God doesn’t discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children after all. <sup>9</sup> Since we respect our earthly fathers who disciplined us, should we not all the more cheerfully submit to the discipline of our heavenly Father and live forever? <sup>10a</sup> For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how.
2. God exemplifies this by ... (2 Corinthians 7:8)
3. A dad does this by ... (Colossians 3:21, 1 John 1:7)

E. A Dad Who Cares, Guides to Potential Hebrews 12:10b

1. But God’s discipline is always right and good for us because it means we will share in his holiness.
2. God exemplifies this by ... (1 Peter 1:15–16, Romans 12:2)
3. A dad does this by ...

F. A Dad Who Cares is Patient Hebrews 12:11

1. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening – it is painful! But afterward there will be a quiet harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.
2. God exemplifies this by ... (2 Peter 2:9)
3. A dad does this by ... (Proverbs 22:6)

G. Conclusion

A. Introduction

1. Here is a poem addressed to fathers: —{2}.

There are little eyes upon you.  
And they're watching night and day;  
There are little ears that quickly  
Take in every word you say;  
There are little hands all eager  
To do anything you do;  
And a little boy who's dreaming  
Of the day he'll be like you.

You're the little fellow's idol;  
You're the wisest of the wise,  
In his little mind about you,  
No suspicions ever rise;  
He believes in you devoutly,  
Holds that all you say and do,  
He will say and do, in your way  
When he's a grown-up like you.

There's a wide eyed little fellow,  
Who believes you're always right,  
And his ears are always open,  
And he watches day and night;  
You are setting an example  
Every day in all you do,  
For the little boy who's waiting  
To grow up to be like you.

Author Unknown

2. and here is part of poem by a teen-age girl, Maggie Gross <sup>-(3)</sup>.

Do you know, do you understand,  
that you represent Jesus to me?  
Do you know, do you understand,  
that when you treat me with gentleness  
It raises the question in my mind  
That maybe He is gentle too?  
Maybe He isn't someone who laughs when I am hurt.  
Do you know, do you understand  
That when you listen to my question  
and you don't laugh, I think,  
What if Jesus is interested in me too? ...  
If you care, I think maybe that He cares.  
And then there is this flame of hope  
That burns inside of me for a while...

a. Maggie, in this poem, cries out for a father who cares, one who will show her what God is like

3. We, as Christians,

a. as God's children by the new birth and by adoption

b. have a heavenly Father who cares

c. Jesus never tired in teaching the disciples about the Father

d. when they asked to learn to pray, He taught the dearest name by which we can address God in prayer is ... 'Father'

e. because, as a father, He listens to our concerns

f. as Peter assures us, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you (1 Peter 5: 6-7 NAS)

g. and fathers, this morning on Father's Day, let us learn together some of the lessons from this Hebrews passage which our heavenly Father models for us as earthly fathers

4. 'A Dad Who Cares'
  - a. will Encourage his child
  - b. will be Involved with his child
  - c. will be Temperate toward his child
  - d. will Guide his child to his potential
  - e. will be Patient with his child

B. A Father Who Cares, Encourages

1. [And have you entirely forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you, his children? He said, "My child, don't ignore it when the Lord disciplines you, and don't be discouraged when he corrects you."](#)

(Hebrews 12:5 NLT)

2. Positive Reinforcement

- a. is a principle that is stressed
  - (A) both in teaching youngsters in a class
  - (B) and in raising youngsters in a home
- b. but it is nothing new
- c. God, the perfect parent, practices it as
  - (A) He teaches us in spiritual truth
  - (B) and as He raises us as His children
- d. and, here in these verses, He does it even in the midst of when He is disciplining, correcting, even punishing, us

3. a dad who cares

- a. when disciplining, correcting, even punishing his child
- b. show that it is not in anger by more than just saying those time-worn phrases, 'This is going to hurt me more than it hurts you' and 'I am doing this for your own good'
- c. but he will leave no doubt in that child's mind that what is being done, is being done in love
- d. because it is accompanied by encouragement to overcome some failure, to achieve some result, to do what is right
- e. a dad who cares, encourages his child

C. A Dad Who Cares is Involved

1. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes those he accepts as his children (Hebrews 12:6 NLT)
2. When God saves us from our sin through faith in Jesus Christ
  - a. making us His children by new birth and by adoption
  - b. He does not then stand back and say
    - (A) 'You have the Bible'
    - (B) 'You have the church'
    - (C) 'I'll check how things are going in ten years'
  - c. no, God involves Himself intimately, fully in our lives
    - (A) Romans 8:9 tells us that the Holy Spirit dwells in us
    - (B) Ephesians 3:17 tells us God the Son dwells in us
    - (C) and, Ephesians 3:19 tells us that the believer is to be filled with all the fulness of God
  - d. God actively takes part in our lives, including our discipline
3. a dad who cares
  - a. will actively participate in his child's life
  - b. not just a family provider
  - c. not just the one who gives the final word on a new pet
  - d. not just shifting the care, the correction, the training, the dealing with the problems over to mother
  - e. but, who, as the representative of God the Father, watches over and involves himself in the growth of that child

D. A Dad Who Cares is Temperate

1. As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Whoever heard of a child who was never disciplined? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children after all. Since we respect our earthly fathers who disciplined us, should we not all the more cheerfully submit to the discipline of our heavenly Father and live forever? For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. ...

(Hebrews 12:7-10a NLT)

2. one way in which God truly shows Himself as our Father
  - a. is that he disciplines us
    - (A) encouraging us in doing right
    - (B) chastising us in doing wrong
    - (C) and because of this we know that God cares for each of us as individual children
  - b. but, will you note, that the way in which He exercises this
    - (A) is one that is acceptable to us as His children
    - (B) one to which we can willingly, even cheerfully submit
  - c. in the cases of the church at Corinth, God chastised them through the letter from Paul, which we read, made them *'sorry, though it were but for a season'* (2 Corinthians 7:8)
  
3. let me comment on how this applies to us as human fathers
  - a. as we *'discipline for a few years doing the best we know how'*
  - b. a caring dad will balance his discipline
    - (A) he will recognize the proper level for each child
    - (B) if he omits discipline – or shifts it to mother to do – the child will grow to think that dad does not care
    - (C) if he is harsh, the Bible tells us the evil result: *"Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart."* (Colossians 3:21 NAS)
  - c. and, just as God has made a way for our relationship with Him to be restored when we 'mess up' – forgiveness by the blood of Jesus Christ: *"but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."* (1 John 1:7 NAS)
  - d. so a caring dad will see that the child-father relationship is quickly restored to normalcy once the correction is applied and not carried over day after day in continuing hostility

#### E. A Dad Who Cares Guides to Potential

1. ... *But God's discipline is always right and good for us because it means we will share in his holiness.* (Hebrews 12:10b NLT)
  
2. when our heavenly father disciplines us
  - a. He has a very clear purpose for us in mind

- b. which shapes His discipline, making it right and good for us
- c. in particular, that we will share in His holiness
- d. the Bible says, “but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behaviour; because it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’” (1 Peter 1:15-16 NAS)
- e. God, who made us, knows our weaknesses, but as is shown in this verse, He also knows our potential, and He corrects us so that we should “... not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2 NAS)

- 3. I have always enjoyed the books written by Arthur Ransome
  - a. which are specifically for children
  - b. but just as enjoyable often for us as adults
  - c. such books as *Swallows and Amazons* and *Great Northern?*
  - d. but in reading Ransome’s biography, I was saddened to learn that his father seemed only to see young Arthur’s failings and never his strengths; he was disappointed in his inability in certain areas, yet seldom rejoicing in Arthur’s abilities and youthful enthusiasms
  - e. Arthur’s father failed to see the young lad’s potential
- 4. a dad who cares
  - a. will not be a father who is always
    - (A) putting his child down
    - (B) criticizing and belittling the child
  - b. but will recognize God’s great potential in his child
  - c. and will nurture that child toward that potential
- 5. and – now this is the place where I really am weak –
  - a. a dad who cares will share with his child that potential
  - b. will communicate his vision of what his child is capable
  - c. fathers: God, your heavenly Father, does it with you! ... can you not do the same with your child?

## F. A Dad Who Cares is Patient

1. [No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening – it is painful! But afterward there will be a quiet harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.](#) (Hebrews 12:11 NLT)
2. our God is patient
  - a. when God disciplines us, He has the long term in view, not just a quick fix or an immediate positive response
  - b. He is looking forward to a certain harvest in our life
  - c. this is part of God's character: ["The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."](#) (2 Peter 3:9 NAS)
  - d. think back, will you, as to how God spoke to Moses spoke to Moses in the burning bush incident in Exodus 3 and 4
    - (A) God: I am going to deliver Israel out of slavery in Egypt and I am sending you to Pharaoh to carry it out
    - (B) Moses: who am I to do this?
    - (C) God: I will be with you
    - (D) Moses: they will question me, 'WHO sent YOU?'
    - (E) God: tell them 'I AM WHO I AM' sent you; they will listen to you but Pharaoh will not
    - (F) Moses: they will deny that You, God, have sent me
    - (G) God then gives to Moses the signs of the rod-snake and of the leprous hand
    - (H) Moses: I am not eloquent
    - (I) God: I made your mouth, you can do it!
    - (J) Moses: no I can't
    - (K) God: That's it, Moses! I have already summoned your brother Aaron ... he will be your spokesman!
  - e. yes, our God is patient! ... but firm!
3. I have observed with some admiration and envy
  - a. one dad and mom in the way they discipline
  - b. each independently and in the same fashion
  - c. carefully explaining, without anger or impatience

- d. what is wrong and what the child should be doing
- e. patiently waiting to see that the child understands and is willing to make the necessary changes; a painstaking effort
- f. patient ... but firm

4. As this verse says, discipline is a painful process

- a. for us humans both to the one giving and the one receiving
- b. but as God patiently continues His corrective work
- c. so will a caring father
  - (A) gently correcting, leading, guiding, being an example
  - (B) not looking for the quick fix, the overnight change
  - (C) but the gradual maturing of a young life
  - (D) into a wise womanhood or manhood

d. "Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart (Proverbs 22:6 NAS)

e. this is a lifetime process with lifetime, even eternal, results

G. Conclusion: A Dad's Prayer

1. Dear Lord, <sup>-(4)}</sup>.

a. Thank you for this child that I call mine; not my possession but my sacred charge. Teach me patience and humility so that the best I know may flow in its being. Let me always remember, parental love is my natural instinct but my child's love must ever be deserved and earned;

(A) That for love I must give love, That for understanding I must give understanding,

(B) That for respect, I must give respect;

(C) That as I was the giver of life, so must I be the giver always.

b. Help me to share my child with life and not to clutch at it for my own sake. Give courage to do my share to make this world a better place for all children and my own.

2. I trust that each and every one of us who are father's here this morning will make that prayer our own as we prayerfully sing our closing hymn, 'I would be true'

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

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|------|---|
| ASV  | American Standard Version of 1901   |
| AV   | Authorized (King James) Version   |
| NAS  | New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation   |
| NIV  | New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society                                     |
| NKJV | New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers  |
| NLT  | 1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust  |
| PHIL | New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips  |
| RSV  | Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. |
| WEY  | The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth  |

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, [www.holwick.com](http://www.holwick.com). Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick's database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. From a message by Rev. Jerry Falwell, 'Needed: Politically Incorrect Fathers' – Kerux sermons #8401
3. From a message by Dr. Dave M. Hartson, 'I Know My Father Cares' - Kerux sermons #16499. I have borrowed considerably from the outline and thoughts of Dr. Hartson in this sermon!
4. Fredericksburg Bible Illustrator Supplements – Kerux illustrations #9095