



## I. Happy Father's Day!

### A. Or 'Unhappy Fatherless Day'!

\*google "fatherlessness in America" and look at the statistics of what's being called an "epidemic of fatherlessness"...

1. **The Census Bureau tells us that 1 out of every 3 children in America are living in biological "father-absent homes". (That's 24 million children)**

(And millions more live in homes where father is physically present but emotionally and spiritually absent)

a. Studies show that the lack of functioning fathers is behind the increase in poverty, poor health, incarceration and crime rates, teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse and childhood obesity.

### "There is a "Father Factor" in Our Nation's Worst Social Problems"

- **Father absence is at the root of the increasing gender confusion among American teenage boys (BOOK: "ABSENT FATHERS/LOST SONS")**
- **Racial tension in places like Ferguson, MO and, Baltimore, MD sees 100's of angry young black people looting stores and torching police cars...but what should we expect when less than 1 in 5 African American children reach age 17 with both parents in the home?**

2. We're running out of father figures. We need some role models; in our homes and also in our churches!

3. Because much of the blame goes to our lack of obedience to the Great Commission; we are not making disciples. We've dodged the responsibility to preach that...

**B. The Essence Of Discipleship Is Role Modeling (Father's Job)**

1. Jesus came to reveal the heart of the Father God; He didn't just tell them about the Father; He modeled the Father, and said "Follow Me".

2. The Apostle Paul ministered to his churches as a Father.

**I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers;**

**1 Corinthians 4:14-15**

a. A Father FIRST JOB is as spiritual role model for his family:

b. The Apostle Paul told his churches:

**I urge you therefore, imitate me.**

**1 Corinthians 4:17 NASB**

**WE NEED FATHERS TODAY WHO WILL SAY TO THEIR FAMILIES:**

**Be followers of me, just as I also am of Christ.**

**1 Corinthians 11:1**

3. If our families and churches are to be saved, there must be role models; fathers worth following!

4. So let's take some time to look at the ultimate "father" role model...

**C. The Greatest "Father" In The Bible: Abraham**

1. The 3 great religions of the world call Abraham "father": he is honored by Muslims, Christians and Jews.

2. The first man to be called "Hebrew"; the father of the nation of Israel.

3. But he is even more than that for NT believers; God calls him...

**"...that he (Abraham) might be the father of all them that believe...who also also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham...**

**Romans 4:11-12 KJV**

4. God Himself calls Abraham the “father” of Jew and Gentile; of all those who will walk in the steps of his faith.

5. **This means we can use THE DISCIPLESHIP OF ABRAHAM TO RE-IMAGINE OUR OWN CALLING IN CHRIST.**

a. We can look at how Abraham followed God and see how we are to follow Jesus.

**D. The Story Begins In Genesis 12**

1. The man is “Abram”; he is 75 years old; he is a Babylonian; he lives in a nation of moon worshippers.

2. He has no spiritual qualifications at all. Like us, he is the most unlikely candidate for salvation. But suddenly...God calls him!

**Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, and from your relatives, and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you;**

**Genesis 12:1 NASB**

3. Notice, God takes the initiative! God chooses him and speaks to him!

4. All discipleship begins with A CALL!

a. “Go forth”...God won’t leave you where He finds you..

b. “From your country”-God is going to separate you from your old life and everything familiar to you.

c. “And from your father’s house...”

c. “To the land I will show you-God’s call to discipleship will SEPARATE you FROM everything familiar and take you INTO the unknown!

5. A 1000 years later, Jesus does the same things with His disciples:

**And going on...He saw two other brothers, James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. And they immediately left the boat and their father, and followed Him.**

**Matthew 4:21-22 NASB**

a. Notice the similarity: to follow God, Abraham had to leave his father's house; to follow Jesus, the disciples had to leave their father's boat...  
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

**PERSONAL TESTIMONY: THE ONE GREATEST THING YOU HAVE TO HAVE IF YOU'RE GOING TO FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST IS A WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE-TO BE SEPARATED FROM ANYTHING, EVEN THE DEAREST THING, THAT WOULD KEEP YOU FROM FOLLOWING THE LORD.**

6. Don't think of this after the flesh. God is not saying to follow him you have to leave your family! It's a spiritual message that to follow Him you have to prefer Him above the things you hold most dear!

**"If you want to be my disciple, you must hate everyone else by comparison—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple.**

**Luke 14:26-27 NASB**

- a. Our parents weren't thrilled with our calling
- b. Our children weren't thrilled about going to church

7. God's call is radical and calls for hard choices; but the hardest thing is what I call "going without knowing".

### **E. Re-Imagining Our Christian Life: Going Without Knowing**

**By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.**

**Hebrews 11:8 NASB**

1. Abraham is a model of FAITH.

**We walk by faith, not by sight.**

**2 Corinthians 5:7**

a. The world says, I'll believe it when I see it. But God says if you don't believe it you'll never see it.

2. There is no faith without risk.

**"Faith is spelled R-I-S-K!"**

**John Wimber**

a. "No risk it no biscuit."

3. God didn't tell Abraham all that awaited him; He just said "Go forth"; Jesus didn't tell His disciples what was ahead of them; He just said "Follow me"; and it's the same with us.

**To follow Jesus means "GOING WITHOUT KNOWING"**

4. Faith requires OBEDIENCE. Easy believism requires nothing...saving faith requires the FAITH of our father Abraham; the faith of the fishermen; faith that follows God no matter what.

## **II. Changing Gears**

### **A. Prophetic Application**

1. As a Pastor and a spiritual father, I'm going to run the risk of talking about the last days.

2. I don't pretend to understand all the mysteries in the end-time prophecies of Daniel 12, where he talks about a time of GREAT TROUBLE, but it sounds a lot like NOW...

**Daniel, seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge will be increased.**

**Daniel 12:4**

a. In 12:4, he says "Many will run to and fro"-life is **HECTIC-moving fast!**

b. "Knowledge will be increased"-we are now in the "information age"

**HUMAN KNOWLEDGE IS NOW DOUBLING EVERY 12 MONTHS AND SOON WILL BE DOUBLING EVERY 12 HOURS!**

**3. And what has all this busyness and knowledge given us???**

- The world is in chaos
- The church is so caught up in the world we're not making disciples
- MY QUESTION: Could God use a chaotic world to bring the church back to its true calling?

4. Think about this: **THE #1 DISTINCTION OF THE MODERN WORLD IS CHANGE AND UNCERTAINTY!**

a. There is no more "normal"-because what's normal is constantly being changed.

b. There's no more "certainty"-the life maps of previous generations don't work anymore.

5. COULD GOD BE BRINGING THE WORLD TO A PLACE WHERE HIS CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP WILL BE OUR ONLY HOPE?

**'IT COSTS TO FOLLOW JESUS. IT COSTS MORE NOT TO.'**

THE 'CRAZY FAITH' OF OUR FATHER ABRAHAM MAY WIN THE DAY AFTER ALL!

6. When all this information and knowledge brings us to CHAOS...perhaps we'll see the 3<sup>rd</sup> thing Daniel prophesied:

**Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked (LAWLESS) shall do wickedly (LAWLESSLY): and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.**

**Daniel 12:10**

## **B. Conclusion:**

1. Jesus had one plan for world transformation: Discipleship of nations

**DISCIPLE**

**Be One. Make One.**

2. We haven't done it; but let's not kick ourselves!

3. I can still imagine a world transformed by the Gospel of Christ. Not because of my faith in us...but my faith in God! That the Father's model in Abraham and Jesus' model in the disciples is working in us...and will work in the world.

## **C. Altar Call And Communion**