

FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GODLY FATHER

Genesis 22:1, "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am."

There is probably no human being that can have more affect on a household than the man, the father in the house. The entire house, usually, will take on his personality and to some degree follow in his steps. Even though there are cases where the wife and children will 'break the mold' so to speak, more times than not, the man of the house will get attention from those in the household. With this in mind, it should make every father fear what his actions might cause.

The Lord, in His word, gives us much instruction concerning our walk of life. The Lord not only gives us clear and concise exhortation, but also gives us examples of godly men and women who went through the same troubles we face every day. With this thought in mind, I would like to direct the thoughts of the reader to a man named Abraham. Abraham, whose name means the father of multitudes, gives us a wonderful example of a godly father. In Genesis chapter 22 we learn of at least five characteristics of a godly father, which are:

(1) Abraham was obedient to the will and commands of God (Gen 22:1, "Behold, here I am"). In order for a person to take one step in obedience to God, they must first have the Perfect Father, the Lord of Glory, in them. Abraham, by his walk of faith, gives evidence that God is in him. In Genesis 22:1, by Abraham's willingness to obey God, he also shows forth a spirit of humility concerning the commands of God. If the head of the household is not willing to hear and obey God, the children will be raised with an ungodly example of rebellion. In 1 Samuel 15:23 we learn that "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft". I've never talked to a man who desired to be an example of witchcraft in his household, but if we are rebellious to God's commands, we are leaving an example just as sinful.

(2) Abraham was a living example of second chances in repentance. Abraham was not a perfect man. He made mistakes in his life. But he was a man who experienced God's mercy to give him another chance at a life of fellowship. In Genesis 13:3, we find Abraham, even after traveling to Egypt, being blessed by the mercy of God with another chance at where he had been. This is a valuable lesson for the youth. Abraham was a living example that a mistake 'is not the end of the road'. How we, as fathers, need to teach this to our children every day. God is merciful, and gives us another chance at obedience.

(3) Abraham was an example of diligence (Gen 22:3, "rose up early"). When the Lord called unto Abraham, he didn't say, 'wait a minute Lord and I will get to it'. Abraham rose up early to serve God. Diligence is important in multiple contexts. Whether it's our service in the Church, school work or the workplace, we all need to be taught what it means to be diligent. Slothfulness is dangerous and has destroyed the reputation of many, both young and old. Let us all be as Paul would say in Colossians 3:23, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;..."

(4) Abraham was willing to listen to his son when he called (Gen 22:7, "Here am I, my son.") Our Father in heaven has given us a precious example of being One who listens to His children. In Psalms 34:15 we read that His "ears are open unto their cry." If God the Father has given us this example, we should follow. If the fathers are not willing to listen and spend time with their sons and daughters, someone in this world will. And they will more than likely give the children worldly instruction to follow.

(5) Abraham manifested a trust in God (Gen 22:8, "My son, God will provide...") When the head of the household exhibits a calm trusting spirit in the Lord, it will lend itself to peace in the house. I love the fact that we read of no argument from Isaac or even from his mother in this verse. Isaac was at

peace, as his father Abraham was at peace, trusting in the provision of the Lord. How we as parents can glean from this example in our efforts to "train up" our children "in the way" that they should go (Proverbs 22:6).

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