

Anatomy of a Father

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Intro:

- A. The average father is highly frustrated.
 - 1. He's a one armed paper hanger suffering from hives.
 - 2. He is like a victim wondering who he is.
 - 3. It's easy to be a father physically but difficult to be one spiritually.
 - 4. Our society does not help fathers.
 - 5. We have very few directions for help.
 - 6. *Passive Men Wild Women* by Pierre Morell is a book I wish you would read.
 - a. He's a psychiatrist that sees successful men that are passive in the home.
 - b. Passivity drives wives crazy and they go wild.

B. The average father needs help from the word of God.

I. Fathers need to function in two critical areas.

- A. He needs to function in the home first and foremost and at work second.
 - 1. He needs to function with his wife and children.
 - 2. He also needs to function on his job to support the family.
 - 3. As he functions he discovers he is weak and insecure.
 - 4. Thus, he experiences some degree of failure.
 - 5. For the first 11-12 years there is not a difficult problem.
 - 6. In the teenage years the dad's confidence gets tested.

7. Failure at home drives dad to function more at work to improve his self-confidence.
 8. Most men would not identify themselves as fathers.
 9. Most men identify themselves with their work.
 10. Thus he spends more time at work and less time at home.
 11. This produces passivity in the home.
 - a. A student told me his father is a leader in every facet of life except the home.
 - b. We are paying a high price for passive men and wild women.
- B. A teacher asked her children, “What is a father?”
1. Most fathers would like to help out but they just can’t.
 2. My father could have been a Bart Starr but he had to support his family.
- II. What is an effective father?
- A. An effective is an individual with a strong priority system.
1. A call to be a father is not in conflict with his call to be in business or a profession.
 2. A fanatic redoubles his effort after he’s lost sight of his goal.
 3. Priorities exist in four areas.
 - a. Personal and spiritual integrity, dealing with character.
 - i.. What you are is more important than what you do.
 - ii. What you are will determine what you do.
 - iii. Fathers have wives and children looking to them as pace setters.
 - iv. Fathers are models for their family.

v. We cannot give what we do not possess.

b. Marital area.

i. The problem with marriage is people.

ii. The problems of the individual are the problems of the couple.

iii. The symptom of decaying American culture is the breakdown of the marriage.

iv. Marriage costs us something.

v. We succeed in business because we make serious investments.

c. Parental area.

i. If we are not together personally we will fail in marriage, and if we fail in marriage we fail in parenting.

ii. Do you even express love to your spouse in the presence of your teenager?

iii. The greatest thing you can do for your children is to love their mothers.

iv. If your kids grow up in a home where they know their partners love each other you have left a great legacy.

d. Professional area.

i. Productivity is at an all-time low.

ii. People without family values are fragmented and do not produce.

iii. We are a TGIF (Thank God it's Friday) society.

iv. Where do you stand with respect to priorities?

1. Sometimes I decline opportunities to minister in order to be with my kids.

2. Even our Christian community can bend us out of shape.

B. An effective father jealously guards his attitude.

1. Attitude is more important than actions.
2. God often rebuked Israel for their attitude.
3. We can sin in church if we are going through routine.
4. We need to be honest with ourselves and with God.
5. No one has it all together that impressed God but the one struggling yet honest.
6. As a man thinks in his heart so he is.
7. Out of the heart come the issues of life.
8. A grateful heart is good medicine.
9. Does traffic upset you so that you bark at your wife? She will then yell at the kids who will then kick the cat, etc.
10. I have a point of no return where I drop the problems of the day on my way home. At that point all problems go so that I can be pleasant at home.
11. If we don't guard our attitudes we hurt the most important people in our lives.
12. Some businesses and professions will destroy your families if you let them.
13. If we put Christ first in work Christ will honor us.
14. When my father received Christ he changed his priorities and blessed his family.

C. An effective father communicates his love.

1. Fathers do not exasperate your children. (Ephesians 6:4)

- a. Don't provoke by over or under discipline.
- b. Either extreme is harmful.
- c. What we need is a velvet brick; strength and tenderness together.
- d. If I ask you if you love your children you would say yes, but how do they know it?

- i. If you ask your kids what would they say?
 - ii. One father in 20,000 wants to tear his family apart.

2. Three ways to communicate love.

- a. Spend time with your kids.
 - i. The average father spends 37.7 seconds with their kids.
 - ii. Our time with kids needs to be quality time.
 - iii. More unproductive time will only hurt.
 - iv. A man told his son that he gives him one hour every week and two hours every Sunday to be used as the boy wishes.
- b. Be interested in things your kids are interested in.
 - i. A man with no mechanical ability bought an old car for his boys because they like cars and the boys love it.
 - ii. A doctor friend is devastated because his son didn't even go to college but he's a good mechanic.
 - iii. Athletes need to get over it when their kids aren't interested in sports.
- c. Listen carefully.
 - i. Kids need someone to listen to them, even if it's a dog.

ii. Listen to them.

D. An effective father affirms his child in every way. (Colossians 3:21)

1. At seminary our students are sharp but fathers often don't affirm them.
2. Fathers are the most important individuals in developing their children's self-image.

E. An effective father is spiritually dependent.

1. God has not given us a spirit of frustration but of power, and love, and a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)
2. Abraham was commanded to teach his family the way of the Lord. (Genesis 18:19)
3. God never calls us to a task without providing the resources to succeed.