

Fatherhood: The precious, complex decisions that make a great person

I consider it a blessing that our nation marks one Sunday a year to honor fathers.

I knew my father was a good man, but I had to be a father myself before I valued all he was to me.

He was very quiet. He never made small talk. He tried to teach me to throw a baseball and a football, but my coordination made those impossible tasks. We had better luck with fishing and golfing, but his greatest contribution to my life was encouraging me to study and get as much schooling as possible. He only finished the eighth grade and always felt the handicap of not having education to advance his career.

My dad was a hard worker. He helped me get through college. He was 75 before he was a believer. I really only got to know the heart of my father after he retired and had traveled for two decades. He lived in a retirement center near me, and we had meals together and talked about life.

The births of my three children were among the happiest events of my life. They all gave me endless joy throughout their childhoods. All three look as if they were stamped out of the same mold, but the differences in their personalities were an education for me. All three were strong enough to challenge my patience and my judgment. They helped me grow socially as I saw them face life and change. They enlarged my world by introducing me to new books, new people and new spiritual depths.

Although I have always considered myself a person of faith, having children expanded and enlarged my faith. All three children were born by caesarian sections, which forced me to trust in God's guidance for the doctors caring for my wife. In those days, fathers did not touch their babies until they were going home from the hospital.

For seven days with each child I watched, admired and wept over their new life, depending on God to guide doctors and nurses.

My children helped me learn how to have fun and enjoy the simple things. Then they became adolescents. Learning when to direct, when to advise and when to step back taught me how complex each human being is and how precious decisions are in making a great person.

The stage of dating and marriage was the stage where I learned the most. The friends my children brought into my life caused culture shock. I found it hard to remain neutral. Some of them I wanted to keep as friends even after my child moved on. Some confused me. I am thankful my children were wise and understood what they needed and wanted. My sons-in-law (Phil Roe and Patrick Brown) and daughter-in-law (Karen) are amazing, godly people that I love almost as much as the children born to us.

The best part of being a father is that it leads to being a grandfather. That is the greatest truth about family. My eight grandchildren range in age from 13 to 32, and they are the most precious lives I can imagine. Some of the most joyous times of my life have been spent with them. The memories from baseball games, soccer matches, high school graduations, college graduations and international trips are treasures that enlighten my life every day.

Many of you were earning a living for the family while your wife worked at home and devoted most of her time to the children.

Even more of you shared parenting duties while your wife worked and improved the financial strength of the family.

Many fathers devote most of their time to rearing and training children. Fathers have great opportunities and responsibility to help their children become faithful, loving, serving people. Being a father encourages dependence on God. The complexities of guiding physical, social and spiritual growth are too much for mere men. We need God and his guidance every day.

- Bailey McBride—*The Christian Chronicle*, June 12, 2017

PRAYER LIST

- **Pauline Alvarez** (recovering from surgery)
- **Lauren Babb** (health)
- **Aaron Banks**
- **John Beiler** (health)
- **James Bohannon** (Rex Boggs's cousin—health)
- **Jim Carpenter** (Cody Chrismon's great uncle—health)
- **Dawn Clarke**
- **Betty Cox** (Brent Barnick's sister—Texan nursing home)
- **Dixie** (Debbie Faires's mother—Alzheimer's)
- **Jake Faires** (Air Force, deployed to Jordan)
- **Steven Faires, and Lexi**
- **Leon Giesecke** (Jan Moerbe's father—throat cancer)
- **Nelle Hahn** (health)
- **Josh Horn** (Jacob White's cousin—health)
- **Debbie Jalufka**
- **Kevin, Victoria and Kyla Johnson**
- **Norman Pennock** (Debbie Fougerat's step-father, health)
- **Ada Powell** (Sharron Mason's sister—health)
- **T.J. Reid** (Nelle Hahn's brother—health)
- **Jean Rice** (Rex Boggs's cousin—health)
- **Adrienne Zingrich** (Susan Barnick's cousin—cancer)

If you have any announcements or prayer requests you wish to have included in the bulletin or to sign up for weekly e-mail updates, please contact Victoria Johnson: 325-518-9205, victoria@gonzaleschurchofchrist.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Watermelon on The Square

We continue serving FREE watermelon **this Friday, June 23**, at Confederate Square in downtown Gonzales during the Main Street Summer Concert Series, which runs every Friday evening in June. **The event runs 6-10 p.m.** If you are able, please arrive early to help with setup. Parking is also easier to find earlier in the evening. This week's concert features D.J. Richter and Texas.

Fellowship Meal

Everyone is invited to join us **TODAY** for our monthly fellowship meal in the annex immediately following morning worship.

Singing at The Heights

Please join us **TODAY at 3:30 p.m.** at The Heights of Gonzales for our monthly singing and fellowship.

Wednesday Evening Meal & Bible Study

Please join us **at 5:15 p.m. this Wednesday** for dinner in the annex. **This week's entrée is fajitas.** Anyone who is able is asked to bring sides to share, but please do not let that prevent you from joining us. Classes for all ages follow at 6 p.m.

Volunteers Needed: Wednesday Night Meals

Volunteers are needed to prepare the entrée for meals on Wednesday evenings. To help, please sign up in the foyer. **If you signed up to prepare a meal, please send Victoria your menu by Wednesday the week before.**

Volunteers Needed: Communion Prep

Volunteers are needed to prepare communion in the coming months. This task takes very little time and is a great service to the congregation. Please sign up on the large bulletin board in the foyer.

Wedding Invitation

Dawn Clarke and Daniel Almaraz invite you to their wedding on **Saturday, July 1, at 2 p.m.** at the building. A reception will follow at the VFW Hall. Please see the invitation on the large bulletin board in the foyer for more details.

Host Family Needed

We are in need of a family to host our 5th-Sunday Fellowship next month (July 30). Please contact Kevin or Victoria Johnson if you are willing to host this event.

Sunday Night Small Group

There is a small group that meets in the annex each Sunday evening from 6-7 p.m. The Lord's Supper is available.

Tuesday Morning Men's Prayer Breakfast

All men are invited to the annex each Tuesday morning at **6:20 a.m.** for a time of breakfast, prayer and fellowship.

Mark Your Calendars:

July

- 16—Men's Meeting
- 23—Singing at The Heights
- 30—5th Sunday Fellowship



"What do the angels say to God when He sneezes?"