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FATHER'S DAY EDITION: A FATHER'S JOURNEY OF FAITH, FAILURE AND GRACE

PRAYER SPOTLIGHT

FATHER'S DAY PRAYER

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FATHER'S DAY EDITION: A FATHER'S JOURNEY OF FAITH, FAILURE AND GRACE

Introduction: I will never forget the moment I became a father—twice over. First, when Ryan was born, and then Ethan 5 years later. I cradled them in my arms for the first time, so small, so fragile, so precious. I can still remember the curve of their smiles, the grip of their tiny fingers, the sound of their breath against my chest. I held them fiercely, as if my love alone could shield them from life's storms.

NEXT WEEK'S SERMON
 22 JUNE 2025
 Freedom of Grace
 Galatians 5:1-6
 Preacher
Dr. Peter Ng




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In those moments, I was overwhelmed by joy—because they were gifts from God—and terror, because as a man from a broken family, I had no idea how to raise them well. For many years of their lives, I fumbled in the dark, relying on my own strength. But God, in HIS mercy, met me in my brokenness and rewrote my story—not just as a father, but as HIS child.

The Weight of Self-Reliance

Before Christ, my parenting was marked by performance-driven love. I pushed my sons to excel in academics, sports, everything, tying their worth to achievements I could boast about. Blind to my own chains, I passed on anger, selfish ambition, and a hunger for worldly validation. Ryan, my eldest, bore the brunt of this. By his teen years, resentment festered between us. We argued constantly; some days, the chasm between us felt wider than the Grand Canyon. Similarly, Ethan, my youngest, suffered from the weight of my self-reliance. I, too, demanded control over his path. I was often upset and manifested my displeasure in harsh words when he did not bow to my demands—never pausing to consider the fear or insecurity driving my need to dominate. In my quest to mould them into what I thought was best, I forgot the most important truth: I never realized that my role was to point both of them to God.

Grace Breaks Through

Salvation didn't instantly fix my parenting. Sanctification was slow, like dawn breaking after a long night. One day, **Colossians 3:12-13** reminded me: "Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other and forgive." Prayerfully, I learned to listen instead of react, to pray instead of pressure, to love without conditions. The hardest lesson? Repentance in humility. Years later, I came before Ryan and asked forgiveness for my broken parenting. With Ethan, I redeem my brokenness by reflecting Christ to him better in his teenage years—by being patient, loving without controlling, releasing judgment, and surrendering my expectations.

Change didn't come easily. Old habits die hard, and some days I faltered. But grace met me in the mess. Both my children's guarded hearts began to soften and trust. The walls I had built through selfish ambition crumbled, brick by brick, as I leaned into the Father's love. God, in HIS grace, began to heal what I had shattered.





Redeemed Joy

Through Scripture, I learned my children were undeserved gifts from God. Fatherhood, redeemed by Christ Jesus, became my greatest joy. Their laughter washes away my weariness; their hugs feel like glimpses of heaven. God taught me they were never given to me as projects to perfect, but souls to steward—entrusted to me for a season, but belonging to Him forever and ever.

Wisdom for Fellow Fathers

To every father reading this: You will fail. But Christ never will. Here is what I have learned:

1. **Pray relentlessly**—for their hearts, their futures, and your own humility. Prayer moves heaven on their behalf.
2. **Love unconditionally**—not based on achievements, but because they bear God's image. Even if they stray, love them as Christ loves you.
3. **Lead with humility**—apologize when you're wrong. Let them see you cling to the Cross.
4. **Release them to God**—they are HIS before they are yours.

Am I a perfect father now? Absolutely not, but I am a redeemed father—one who still wrestles with pride, still forgets to listen, still needs daily mercies. Yet in Christ, I am no longer enslaved to the old ways. HIS Spirit reshapes my heart, teaching me to father not from fear or control, but from the freedom of being fully known and fully loved.

So, fathers, love your children boldly. Love until your knees ache from prayer and your heart overflows with grace. And when you stumble (as you will), let them see you run back to Jesus. For this is the Gospel of our home: We love because HE first loved us (1 John 4:19). May you lead your families not with perfection, but with faith—trusting the perfect Father who holds us all.

Blessed Father's Day!



By Brandon Wong

"In HIS Arms: Fatherhood, Failure, and Faith"

How many of you have experienced sending your kids to Primary School, Secondary School, and College all on the same day? Well, I have. My three kids range in age from 7 to 20. Fatherhood has been a unique experience for me. Throughout the past 20 years, I have learned many important lessons in fatherhood. Although most of them have slipped my mind, these three have stood out:

1) Putting Family First is Futile

Being raised in a closely-knit family (including extended family), I grew up believing that family is everything to me. After I got married and had kids, I always put my family first—above material things, personal achievement, self-satisfaction, and, most of all, God. I devoted all my heart, mind, and strength to taking care of my family.

After 20 years of toiling, I find myself getting nowhere. I still have occasional arguments with my wife, my kids still misbehave at times, and my parents still complain that I don't care enough about them. In short, I don't feel any sense of accomplishment at all.

Why is this so? After failing so many times, I have finally accepted the fact that I don't have the power to protect my family alone, no matter how hard I try. Fortunately, I also realize that God wants to protect them too.

I am reminded of John 19:26-27. When Jesus was hanging on the cross, one of HIS last actions was to ask Apostle John to take care of HIS mother. Even our Lord Himself cared deeply for HIS family. From this, I know that God wants me to take care of my family too—and HE will help me do so.

However, God also instructs us in Matthew 6:33: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." This verse encourages us to prioritize our relationship with God, trusting that HE will provide for our needs.



2) Fathers Can Stumble Their Children

It is indeed “very easy” to raise my children as Christians. I always tell them to be kind to others, to be patient, and to put God first. However, when I value them based on their earthly accomplishments, or when I lash out at them after a bad day at work—or worse, treat my own parents harshly—I am sending my kids the wrong message. Ultimately, what starts out as good intention can end miserably.



John Piper says that the mistake most Christians make is that we always seek to build our characters first—we want to have all the traits of a good Christian. In doing so, we forget to seek God first. It is only when we seek God and submit to Him that our hearts can be slowly transformed by His love. Gradually, our children will follow in our footsteps.

3) Parenthood is a Microscope for Viewing God’s Love Toward Us

When I first went to Primary One, I couldn’t stay still in class. I missed my family dearly. Coincidentally, my father was a teacher in the same school, and I could see the staff room clearly from the window of my classroom, though separated by a distance of 100 meters. Every time my dad finished his class and sat at his desk, that was the signal for me to run out—from my classroom into the staff room and into my father’s loving arms.

This continued for some time until one day, the loving arms of my father brought me to the headmaster’s office. I felt so disappointed with him. I couldn’t understand why he would “betray” me—until I became a father. Then, I began to realize how painful that action must have been for him.

Similarly, when God lets bad things happen to us—either as a consequence of our own actions or due to temptation by the devil—HE is the one who endures the most pain. HE does it for our good. All the lessons we learn in life build us up in our walk with God. They help us become the people God intends us to be.

In closing, fatherhood is indeed a blessing from God. It is a pathway for us to experience our Creator more intimately. Likewise, it is also the means by which we radiate God’s love to our family and to society.



By John Lim



FATHER'S DAY PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven,

On this Father's Day, we thank You for Your great love shown to us in the death and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ.
We praise you that by your Holy Spirit, we can call You 'Father'.

We thank You this day for all fathers, grandfathers and godfathers.
We pray that each will come to know Jesus as Saviour and Lord.
By Your grace, may they hunger for your word, grow in faith and desire to make Christ known.
Give each one courage and love, energy and perseverance
as they serve their families, churches and communities.

And, heavenly Father, we pray today for those who mourn.
Children who mourn the loss of their fathers by death or separation;
fathers who mourn their children.
In the midst of their grief, may each find comfort
and true hope in Your fatherly care.

We ask these things through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.