

Dad's Day Declarations

The Importance of Fathers

Ephesians 6:4

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Many recent studies have demonstrated the need for a father in the home, imagine that (note appendix). Just what is it about a father that makes him such a significant factor in a family? A look at the Bible will clue us in.

One Half of the Image of God

- Genesis 1:26; 5:1-2
- A child has only half the picture with only one parent present
- A child's view of God centers on their parents

Leadership

- The father is to be the head of the home (Eph. 5:22-22-33)
- Leadership is a very important need in any group (cf. Matt. 9:36)

Strength and Courage

- A man is generally the stronger parent (cf. I Pet. 3:7)
- A child needs the security provided by courage and strength
- Compassionate strength is particularly engaging (Jn. 13:1-17)

A Provider

- Part of the "responsibility" thing (I Tim. 5:8)
- Sacrificing for others is a primary principle of life (Acts 20:35)
- Self-denial begins at home

Wild at Heart

- An adventurous nature lends excitement to a relationship
- Men were made to be adventurous
- Not domesticated, but redirected (Matt. 5:5)

On this Father's Day, let all fathers know they occupy a very important place in God's plan. When we live up to our responsibilities, our families, communities, nations, and world are better places. God bless our fathers!

APPENDIX

According to 72.2 % of the U.S. population, fatherlessness is the most significant family or social problem facing America. --Source: National Center for Fathering, Fathering in America Poll, January, 1999.

An estimated 24.7 million children (36.3%) live absent their biological father. --Source: National Fatherhood Initiative, Father Facts, (3rd Edition): 5.

Children who were part of the "post war generation" could expect to grow up with two biological parents who were married to each other. N Eighty percent did. Today, only about 50% of children will spend their entire childhood in an intact family. --Source: David Poponoe, American Family Decline, 1960-1990: A Review and Appraisal Journal of Marriage and Family 55 (August 1993).

With the increasing number of premarital births and a continuing high divorce rate, the proportion of children living with just one parent rose from 9 percent in 1960 to 28 percent in 1996. Currently, 57.7 percent of all black children, 31.8 percent of all Hispanic children, and 20.9 percent of all white children are living in single-parent homes. --Source: Saluter, Arlen F. Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1994., US Bureau of the Census, Current Population Report. p28-484. Washington, DC: GPO, 1996. US Bureau of the Census. Statistical Abstract of the United States 1997, Washington, DC: GPO, 1997.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services states, "Fatherless children are at a dramatically greater risk of drug and alcohol abuse" --Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. National Center for Health Statistics. Survey on Child Health. Washington, DC, 1993.

Children growing up in single-parent households are at a significantly increased risk for drug abuse as teenagers. --Source: Denton, Rhonda E. and Charlene M. Kampfe. "The relationship Between Family Variables and Adolescent Substance Abuse: A literature Review." Adolescence 114 (1994): 475-495.

Children who live apart from their fathers are 4.3 times more likely to smoke cigarettes as teenagers than children growing up with their fathers in the home. --Source: Stanton, Warren R., Tian P.S. Oci and Phil A. Silva. "Sociodemographic characteristics of Adolescent Smokers." The International Journal of the Addictions 7 (1994): 913-925.

Children in single-parent families are two to three times as likely as children in two-parent families to have emotional and behavioral problems. --Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. National Center for Health Statistics."National Health Interview Survey." Hyattsville, MD, 1988.

Three out of four teenage suicides occur in households where a parent has been absent. --Source: Elshain, Jean Bethke."Family Matters: The Plight of America's Children." The Christian Century (July 1993): 14-21.

In studies involving over 25,000 children using nationally representative data sets, children who lived with only one parent had lower grade point averages, lower college aspirations, poor attendance records, and higher drop out rates than students who lived with both parents. --Source: McLanahan, Sara and Gary Sandefur. Growing up with a Single Parent: What Hurts, What Helps. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994.

Fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school. --Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. National Center for Health Statistics. Survey on Child Health. Washington, DC; GPO, 1993.

School children from divorced families are absent more, and more anxious, hostile, and withdrawn, and are less popular with their peers than those from intact families. --Source: One-Parent Families and Their Children: The School's Most Significant Minority. The Consortium for the Study of School Needs of

Children from One-Parent Families. National Association of elementary School Principals and the Institute for Development of Educational Activities, a division of the Charles f. Kettering Foundation. Arlington, VA 1980.

Children in single parent families are more likely to be in trouble with the law than their peers who grow up with two parents. --Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. National Center for Health Statistics. National Health Interview Survey. Hyattsville, MD, 1988.

Adolescent females between the ages of 15 and 19 years reared in homes without fathers are significantly more likely to engage in premarital sex than adolescent females reared in homes with both a mother and a father. --Source: Billy, John O. G., Karin L. Brewster and William R. Grady. "Contextual Effects on the Sexual Behavior of Adolescent Women." Journal of Marriage and Family 56(1994): 381-404.

A white teenage girl from an advantaged background is five times more likely to become a teen mother if she grows up in a single-mother household than if she grows up in a household with both biological parents. --Source: Whitehead, Barbara Dafoe. "Facing the Challenges of Fragmented Families." The Philanthropy Roundtable 9.1 (1995): 21.

Americans unresolved father problems.

Over half of Americans agree that most people have unresolved problems with their fathers.

Cumulatively, 55.6% agreed with this statement, up from 54.1% in our 1996 poll. More non-whites (70.4%) than whites (56.3%) were in agreement. Interestingly, the generation who has experienced more father absence, 18- to 24-year-olds, displayed the highest level of agreement (67.2%). Income was also a differentiating factor: of the respondents making \$25,000 or less, 70.1% agreed, compared to only 48.0% among those who make more than \$50,000. Source National Center For Fathering 1996