

2015 What Your Christian Dad Really Wanted for Father's Day  
By Doug Hamilton

I have a confession to make. Every year around this season is one of the most uncomfortable times for me. As you might know, I did not grow up in the church. I really do not know my father, for my parents were divorced when I was five. From there my siblings and I were blessed to spend one week in the summer every one to three years while growing up. This transitioned into my adult years, for every few years I might see him if I am through his city. It is always uncomfortable because I am with a stranger for that one or two hours. As a result, my adult relationship with my father is comprised of one call a year and three gifts: one for Christmas, one for his birthday and one for Father's Day. It is the last holiday which is the toughest.

Choosing a card for him is tough. This is because none of the cards on the market really summarize our relationship. The cards which are offered say, "You were always there for me" or "You are a great dad!" The card I look for should say, "You were rarely there for us; You beat my mother; You fought child support; You were a drunk." Because of this, buying a card or choosing a gift for him is difficult, but I do it out of civility and in the prospects that I might somehow play a part in leading him to Christ someday. It is really tough for me to choose a gift for him on such a day.

LATE BREAKING NEWS FLASH:

BRYN MAWR, PA – Just in time for Father's Day, a new survey reveals we should show Dad more love on his big day this year! The survey shows more than half of adult children (52%) sometimes feel they take their dads for granted! Why? Because families expect so much from Dad (be the breadwinner, romantic husband, caretaker for children, athletic supporter, handy man), dads aren't as vocal about their needs and accomplishments, and moms seem to get all the attention! And, nearly half of those surveyed (44%) say they have felt dads get slighted on Father's Day partly because they don't expect as much as moms on their special day, so they can get overlooked.

The national survey of 300 men and women was commissioned by Visiting Angels, one of our nation's largest in-home senior care companies with more than 500 offices throughout the country.

Americans spend half as much on gifts for Father's Day than they do on Mother's Day, according to the National Retail Federation. And, the adult children surveyed agree that it can be hard to find a good gift for Dad! So, the survey asked dads what they REALLY want for Father's Day...only 10% say they want a tie – and only 13% say they want those "World's Greatest Dads" gifts! The top three gifts dads say they really want are:

- 1.) quality time with the kids and family
- 2.) gift cards
- 3.) retreat to the man cave and/or a card.

Even though Father's Day ranks six on the list of top spending-holidays in America (behind Mother's Day, Valentine's Day and Easter), this new survey reveals adult children will be giving Dad gifts he wants after all. The top three gifts adult children plan to give Dad this year are:

- 1.) a card
- 2.) quality time with the kids and family
- 3.) gift cards.

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Lesson:

Obviously this is a secular survey reflecting a worldly viewpoint of what dads want for their special day. That brings us to the purpose of the lesson today, "What Your Christian Dad Really Wanted for Father's Day. This is what should matter!

1) Your Christian Dad Wants Your Obedience.

For any father, having a child obey is a great joy. If you have been blessed enough to have children that believe and are not accused of riot or unruly, then you have a great thing. One of the greatest gifts that a child could ever give his father is the gift of obedience.

- Prov 1:8 Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and do not forsake your mother's teaching;
- Prov 6:20-22 My son, observe the commandment of your father, and do not forsake the teaching of your mother; 21 Bind them continually on your heart; Tie them around your neck. 22 When you walk about, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk to you.
- Prov 23:22 Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

Ultimately obedience to the earthly father is connected to obedience to the heavenly Father.

- Col 3:20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.
- Heb 12:9-10 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He {disciplines us} for {our} good, that we may share His holiness.

This is why it is the Fifth Commandment, for it is directly connected to God.

- Exod 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.
- Eph 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), 3 that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.

This is also what our heavenly Father wants from His children

- 1 Pet 1:14-15 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts {which were yours} in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all {your} behavior;
- Heb 5:9 And having been made perfect, He [Jesus] became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

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He does not want us to be grumblers like the children of Israel, but to be content. He wants us to know and act just like we are part of a plan and that He is active in our lives.

2) Your Christian Dad Wants Your Contentment.

- It is not easy being a primary provider of the family, but it must be done. *1 Tim 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.*
- Many times that means sacrifices must be made. *Luke 12:20-21 ...'You fool! This {very} night your soul is required of you; and {now} who will own what you have prepared?' 21 "So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."*
- The last thing your father wants to hear when doing his best is "I want the fancy stuff like all the other kids." *Heb 13:5 Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"*
- Your Christian Dad wants you to be content. *1 Tim 6:8 And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.*

This is also what your heavenly Father wants from His children.

- Matt 6:25-30 "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, {as to} what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, {as to} what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing? 26 "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and {yet} your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? 27 "And which of you by being anxious can add a {single} cubit to his life's span? 28 "And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, 29 yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. 30 "But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is {alive} today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, {will He} not much more {do so for} you, O men of little faith?"

God wants us to trust Him fully as our Father in heaven. The gift of our contentment is one of the greatest gifts that we can give Him.

3) Your Christian Dad Wants Your Salvation.

There is nothing more that a Christian father would want for his children than for them to go to heaven. Any Christian father would and should give anything for their children to be in heaven. *Romans 9:3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed, {separated} from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh...* There is nothing more valuable than a person's soul. *Mark 8:36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?"* Your Christian daddy wants you to be with your heavenly Dad for eternity. He wants what your "Abba Father" desires for your soul.

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God desires us to be saved

- 1 Tim 2:4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

That means believing in Jesus

- John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.
- Acts 10:43 "Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

That means repentance

- 2 Pet 3:9 The Lord is...not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.
- 2 Cor 7:10 For the sorrow that is according to {the will of} God produces a repentance without regret, {leading} to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

That means confession

- Matt 10:32-33 "Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. 33 "But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.
- Rom 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus {as} Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;
- 1 Tim 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

That means baptism

- Acts 2:38 And Peter {said} to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- 1 Pet 3:21-22 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience-- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

That means living a godly life

- Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
- Col 3:3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- Titus 3:5-7 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to {the} hope of eternal life.

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There is no greater gift that you could give your heavenly Father than to make sure you are in heaven on that great Day of Judgment. He loves you so much that He made a plan for you to be with Him for eternity, but will you give Him that gift by taking Him up on the offer.

Closing Story:

Erma Bombeck paints a portrait of a little girl who loved her dad, but wasn't sure what dads do:

One morning, when I was nine, my father didn't get up and go to work. He went to the hospital and died the next day. I hadn't thought that much about him before. He was just someone who left and came home and seemed glad to see everyone at night. He opened the jar of pickles when no one else could. He was the only one in the house who wasn't afraid to go into the basement by himself. He cut himself shaving, but no one kissed it or got excited about it. It was understood when it rained, he got the car and brought it around to the door. When anyone was sick, he went out to get the prescription filled. He took lots of pictures . . . but he was never in them. Whenever I played house, the mother doll had a lot to do. I never knew what to do with the daddy doll, so I had him say, "I'm going off to work now," and threw him under the bed. The funeral was in our living room and a lot of people came and brought all kinds of good food and cakes. We had never had so much company before. I went to my room and felt under the bed for the daddy doll. When I found him, I dusted him off and put him on my bed....I didn't know his leaving would hurt so much (Family -- The Ties that Bind...and Gag! (New York: Fawcett Books, 1988, p. 2).

Conclusion:

Make sure you show your appreciation for your Christian father by giving him the greatest gifts that you can offer, your obedience, your contentment and your presence on that Great Day of Judgment before the throne of your Heavenly Father. That is the gift your earthly father really, really wants. Don't wait until it is too late to show your appreciation.