

Fatherhood Matters!

By Serge Jerome

Admittedly or not, American society is emphatically fragmented. At its very core fatherhood stirs a variety of views and preferences. Some are appalled by it, offended by it, and others dismiss it. There are those who feel we should fight for fatherhood. Looking at the other spectrum, there are the neutralists, they neither oppose nor support it. Regardless, of where you stand on the issue, fatherhood is crucially important and plays a vital role in the family and society.

As we recognize Black History month for all the achievements of our historical black figures, it is also important to bring awareness to some of the modern heroes which are fathers – especially men of color.

As a fervent church leader and having the opportunity of seeing the benefits of a father in the home, I strongly support fatherhood. In my congregation the following views are paramount: a father must place his family above ministry; by spiritual design, a father must love his family and demonstrate righteousness; a father must provide and protect his family; a father is priceless and valuable; and a father is by no means replaceable. Mahatma Gandhi says, “If God is not a personal being for me like my father, He is infinitely more.”

A church going father makes a lasting impact on his children and family. Research by Werner Haug and Phillipe Warner reveals the following: “if a father does not go to church, no matter how faithful his wife’s devotions, only one child in 50 will become a regular worshipper. If a father does go regularly, regardless of the practice of the mother, between two-thirds and three-quarters of their children will become churchgoers (regular and irregular). If a father goes but irregularly to church, regardless of his wife’s devotion, between a half and two-thirds of their offspring will find themselves coming to church regularly or occasionally.”

I have to say fatherhood does unmask our areas of weakness, vulnerability, and our lack of tolerance towards our wives. This is because being a father demands “sacrifice” (not to be confused with duty). As demonstrated by our Savior, who so loved us that He gave us His Only Begotten Son for our salvation and exaltation (John 3:16). Jesus said, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). The sacrifice comes from inexplicable love, satisfaction, and joy; at its very core, this is why fathers support their children and families.

Fathers have an influential and aspirational role in the lives of their children and families, it behooves all ministries to encourage men in their endeavors to be present and effective fathers in their households.

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