

# The Bulletin

## Meeks St. Church of Christ

1201 Meeks St. Corinth, Ms. 38834

Phone – (662) 808-7777

Visit Our Website at:  
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### **“A Father’s Gift”**

By Jefferson David Tant

Fathers are often clueless about gift-giving for their children. That’s Mom’s job. But when we think of gifts, we usually think of material gifts—toys for toddlers, clothes, games, and sports equipment for teens. Or maybe the ultimate gift for a teen—a car!

Many who are reading these words are prosperous by the world’s standards. You may not rank with Bill Gates or Ted Turner, but you are blessed with material prosperity unheard of by most of the world, or even in our own nation a few generations ago. And what do we do with our prosperity? We buy things for our children as good parents do — smartphones, computers, designer clothes.



May I suggest that there are far greater gifts that a father can give his children — a far greater legacy than lands and houses and things?

### **A father can give his children a place of refuge**

*“In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, And his children will have refuge”* (Proverbs 14:26).  
As our heavenly Father gives us refuge, so should our earthly fathers.

Children look to their parents for safety and refuge when frightened or faced with uncertainty. But what greater refuge could a godly father give than safety from the assaults of Satan and the world? That refuge comes from a father who has great respect for God, our heavenly Father.

This respect is seen in daily living as well as in “Sunday-go-to-meetin” clothes. A father who is indifferent, lukewarm, or not even a believer can give little in the way of solid refuge.

### **Direction in life**

*“Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it”* (Proverbs 22:6).

This training involves many aspects, including the way of righteousness. Too many times fathers are more concerned about careers and earning power than spiritual matters. Many years ago a young man came from Florida to enter Georgia Tech in Atlanta on a golfing scholarship. Although his parents were members of the church, Bill had never been baptized. After being with us for a time, Bill was baptized into Christ. It was then that his father wrote me expressing concern that his son’s being a Christian would detract him from more important things. Hmmm. Does getting a “hole-in-one” on the golf course open the gateway to heaven?

Fathers, what is your focus for your children? To be great athletes; to be successful in business; to have treasures on earth? Or would it be to lay up treasures in heaven? *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”* (Matthew 6:19-21).

### **Unconditional love**

*“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”* (Romans 5:8).

Many children feel they are on a performance basis. The cleaner the bedroom, the better the grades, the more they are loved. Even if they only “feel” this, they will never be secure.

This is really hard for some fathers, especially the sports-minded. They may consciously, or subconsciously, give preference to the gifted child. With so many pressures and uncertainties our children face, they don’t need unnecessary pressures at home. Children should be encouraged to do their best, but love and acceptance should not be based on beauty, intelligence, or ability.

Our Heavenly Father is our model for giving unconditional love. He loved Israel when Israel was unlovely. In the parable of the talents, the two-talent man received the same praise as the five talent servant. When the prodigal son was gone, the father never stopped loving him. When the son returned, it is obvious that the father’s love was unconditional. This does not mean there are no consequences when a child disobeys, but what great security a child has when a mistake is made, yet is still loved. This also has spiritual implications, for the concept small children have of their Heavenly Father is often drawn from their relationship with their earthly father.

## Love for their mother

*“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her”* (Ephesians 5:25). One of the greatest gifts a father can give is to let his children see him loving their mother. Many teens have a fear of not being loved, and not being able to give love. Often this is because they have never seen love demonstrated.

Love is more than a lab or lecture course. We recognize that love is really defined more by showing what love does, as in I Corinthians 13.

Children learn to love by seeing models, and the basic model is through seeing their father love their mother and vice versa. Without this model, how does a daughter learn to evaluate the love some young man professes toward her, to distinguish between lust and love? “Well, if you truly love me, you will treat me like my father treats my mother.” And the son can see that love honors the woman, rather than treating her like a sex object.

One reason we have problems with dysfunctional children involved in sexual promiscuity, violence, and drug abuse is that they come from dysfunctional families. When God told husbands to love their wives (a) as Christ loved the church and (b) as they love themselves, he was providing not only for their own relationship but also for the security of their children.

And to show he was serious about husbands honoring their wives, he emphasized the matter in I Peter 3:7: *“You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.”* That should get a husband’s attention! God is so serious about this that he threatens to not hear the prayers of a man who will not honor his wife.

The example of a godly man

*“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord”* (Ephesians 6:4).

In our culture, mothers often have greater spiritual influence in the home. It is not “macho” for men to be overly religious. Perhaps this is not unique to the 21st Century. Maybe Paul felt the need to address fathers in particular in the church at Ephesus. Did you ever wonder why this was addressed to “fathers” and not “fathers and mothers?” This is only speculation, but is it that God knew fathers needed special encouragement to fulfill the responsibility of being spiritual in the home?

## Knowledge of the Word of God

We certainly get the impression that God wants parents actively involved in teaching their children. Fathers, don’t leave this vital matter up to the preacher or the Bible class teachers. They do what they can, but they cannot take the place of a father or mother who daily emphasizes God’s Word. Two or three hours a week should not be the whole instruction a child gets. Deuteronomy 6 teaches that Biblical instruction should be a part of everyday life.

We are careful to vaccinate our children against all sorts of diseases. Are we also concerned about protection against the disease of sin — an eternally fatal disease? *“Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You”* (Psalms 119:11).

A father would think himself derelict if he didn’t see that his children were protected against polio or smallpox. But fathers, it is of much greater importance that you do not neglect your children’s spiritual health. If your children are small, do you read Bible stories to them? If they are older, are Bible principles a topic of conversation at the dinner table, or as you ride together in the car? If not, you are missing some golden opportunities.

What greater legacy or inheritance could a father leave his children?

**News and Notes:** Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Clois Wright, Linda Hunt, Mollie Harris, David Taylor, Randy Beaty, Sam Johnson, Sherry Doles, Danny Cottrell, Mrs. Jennie Daniel (Dan and Lynlie's neighbor), J F Dancer, Earl Mitchell, and Jamie Fields (Brandi's brother).

**Those Who Serve:**

**Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:**

<b>Opening Prayer:</b>	Paul Johnson
<b>Preaching:</b>	Brian Meade
<b>Sermon #1:</b>	<i>"WWJD— What Would Jesus Do?"</i>
<b><u>Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:</u></b>	Jerry Kennemur
	1 Corinthians (Mike Willis)
	<i>Page #33, Question #10, d.</i>

**Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:**

<b>Announcements:</b>	Paul Johnson
<b>Opening Prayer &amp; Scripture Reading:</b>	Nathan Meade
	<i>Proverbs 20:7</i>
<b>Song Leader:</b>	Lee Busby
<b>Lord's Supper:</b>	Jerry Kennemur
<b>Assisting:</b>	— —
<b>Preaching:</b>	Brian Meade
<b>Sermon #2:</b>	<i>"The Influence of a Godly Father"</i>
<b>Closing Prayer:</b>	Tim Harris Jr.

**Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.**

**June 23rd:**

<b>Auditorium Bible Class:</b>	Paul Busby
	The Book of Proverbs (Mike Willis)
	<i>Page #38, Question #6</i>
<b>Invitation:</b>	Paul Johnson
<b>Song Leader:</b>	Brian Meade
<b>Closing Prayer:</b>	Nathan Meade

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**And Our Facebook Page.**

For sermon videos, articles, and announcements.

# **“WWJD— What Would Jesus Do?”**

Lesson Text: **Luke 6:40; 1 Cor. 2:16; Philippians 2:5; 1 Peter 2:21.**

## **I. Live & Make Decisions Based On God’s Word—Matthew 4:4.**

1. Did Jesus point men to the Scriptures as authority to act? **Luke 10:25-28.**  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. What about our decisions? Our entertainment: What movies, television shows? How we dress: modestly or immodestly? Moral questions: Abortion, lying, cursing, stealing, & hating your brother? Do we really live by the Scriptures?
3. How Does **Colossians 3:17** and WWJD fit together? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## **II. Handle Temptation With God’s Help— Matthew 4:4; 4:7; 4:10.**

1. When Tempted, do we constantly ask WWJD? \_\_\_\_\_. Should we?
2. What does God’s help look like? **1 Corinthians 10:13** \_\_\_\_\_.  
In **Psalm 119:11** \_\_\_\_\_; **James 5:16** \_\_\_\_\_.
3. How does **John 3:20-21** fit? \_\_\_\_\_.

## **III. Face Trials With Faith, Hope, & Joy— Hebrews 12:2-3.**

1. Did Jesus rely on His faith, hope, and joy? **Hebrews 5:7** \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Consider these verses— **Colossians 1:23; 2:5-7; 1 Peter 4:13.**

## **IV. Worship The Father Devotedly— Luke 2:49.**

1. Could we ever conceive of Jesus forsaking the assembly when saints are gathered to worship the Father? See **Hebrews 10:25** \_\_\_\_\_.
2. If our Father is the same as Jesus’, shouldn’t we be about our Father’s business? With the same devotion as Jesus had? \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What was the devotion of the early Christians in **Acts 2:42**? \_\_\_\_\_.

## **V. Evangelize All Without Partiality— Luke 19:10.**

1. Why? **John 3:16** \_\_\_\_\_.
2. How does partiality hurt evangelism? \_\_\_\_\_.
3. How was the seed sown in **Luke 8:5-8**? \_\_\_\_\_.

## **VI. Live As To Please The Father— John 8:29.**

1. How does adopting this attitude of Jesus help our spiritual life? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Then, What should be our prayer? *“To do all things that are \_\_\_\_\_”*  
\_\_\_\_\_.
3. According to **2 Corinthians 5:9**, pleasing God should be our \_\_\_\_\_.

# **“The Influence of a Godly Father”**

## **Introduction: Without A Father At All:**

**63%** of youth suicides; **90%** of all homeless and runaway youths; **85%** of all children that exhibit behavioral disorders; **71%** of all high school dropouts; **70%** of juveniles in state-operated institutions; **75%** of adolescent patients in substance abuse centers; **75%** of rapists motivated by displaced anger. (U.S. Department of Justice, children from fatherless homes)

## **Without A Father At Church:**

### **Promise Keeps and Baptist Press Study:**

If a Father does not go to church, even if his wife does....**Only 1 child in 50** will become a regular worshipper.

- When a mother comes to Christ, her family will join her at church only 17% of the time; but when a father comes to Christ, his family joins him 93% of the time.
- There are 113,000,000 men in America over the age of 15– 69,000,000 of these men make no profession of faith in Christ.
- The typical U.S. Congregation draws an adult crowd that’s 61% female, 39% male. This gender gap shows up in all age categories.
- On any given Sunday there are 13 million more adult women than men in America’s churches.
- This Sunday almost 25 percent of married, churchgoing women will worship without their husbands.

## **I. Children Need A Godly Influence In The Home.**

### **A. They Need A Father Who Recognizes & Accepts All Of Fatherhood.**

1. One who is there for his children When Needed.
2. Teaches his children about life’s duties & responsibilities- **Proverbs 1:8-9.**  
— Work hard like the ant- **Proverbs 6:6-11; Ecclesiastes 9:10.**
3. Shows a good example of how to do what’s needed— *“Like Father, Like Son.”*
4. Loves his children and wants the best for them! **Mark 5:22-23.**

### **B. To Help Them Choose To Serve God- Joshua 24:14-15.**

### **C. To Teach And Train Them In The Ways Of God.**

1. **Judges 13:1-14; Proverbs 22:6; Deuteronomy 6:6-9 and 20-25.**
2. Discipline and Instruction- **Ephesians 6:1-4; Hebrews 12:9-13.**

### **D. To Show Them An Example Of What A Christian Is:**

1. A Learner & Follower of Jesus- **2 Timothy 2:15; Ephesians 4:20-32.**
2. A Man Of Worship:
  - Take your kids to worship regularly- **Hebrews 10:25; Acts 2:42-43.**
  - Be A Man of Intercession & Prayer- **Job 1:5.**
3. A Role Model To Know How To Be A Good Husband/Father- **Eph. 5:23-33.**
4. Own Up To Mistakes & Sins! **Proverbs 28:13.**

## **II. The Role Of Father Is A Needed, But Temporary Role.**

### **A. We Must Use The Time We Have With Our Kids Wisely.**

— **Proverbs 3:1; Genesis 2:23-24; Hebrews 11:24-26.**

### **B. Teach your kids while you have opportunity, time, & influence on them!**

### **C. Children need to desire to have & respect a godly father! Proverbs 20:7.**