



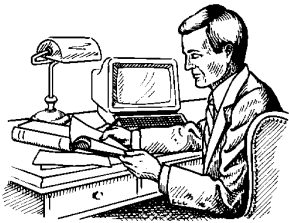
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From Where I Sit . . .

“A Father’s Influence”

If I asked, “**What are commonly the most powerful influences in people's lives?**” we could suggest many possibilities. Our suggestions would depend on two things: **How we look at life** and **What we define as powerful influences**.

For those who define life in terms of **fun and pleasure**, their suggestions for powerful influences focus on things they believe produce fun and pleasure. For those who define life in terms of **success**, their suggestions for powerful influences focus on their symbols of success. For those who define life in terms of **security**, their suggestions for powerful influences focus on what they believe provides security. For those who define life in terms of **relationship**, their suggestions for powerful influences focus on influential relationships.

We need to ask a second question: “What SHOULD BE people's most powerful influences in life?” This is not the same question. Things that **are** the most powerful influences in a person's life frequently are not the things that **should be** the most powerful influences in a person's life.

This week we honor Fathers on their special day which we call Father's Day. Too often, this is just the traditional time to fulfill an obligation. It may or may not be a time to express deeply felt love and appreciation. I would like to make an observation: **A father should be one of the most powerful, positive influences in each person's life.** Unfortunately, in far too many situations, a father is one of the most powerful negative influences in many people's lives.

The Bible is extremely realistic in dealing with the lives of people in the Old and New Testaments. Sins and weaknesses were not glossed over but rather described in glaring details. Some even find them offensive though it's far better to learn from God's straightforward revelation how ugly sin really is. We should not be surprised to learn that some of God's most faithful servants are exposed on the home front as manifesting some weakness that warped the lives of their children. Noah, Eli, Samuel, David quickly come to my mind as fathers who were very influential in the Biblical narrative, but who did not hold up as very good role models for their sons on the home front. Noah's drunken behavior and exposure of himself affected a son and generations born to that line of his family. Eli and Samuel were so dedicated to serving God and His people, but failed with his own sons so that Israel was moved to seek after a secular king like the other nations (**1 Samuel 8:2-5**). King David had a very divided family and suffered many failures with his sons.

We fathers need to understand the power of a father's influence. 1 Thess. 2:11 “As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children”. Is it just coincidental that the Holy Spirit guided Paul to use the imagery of fatherhood to convey the relationship he had with the Thessalonians? We know that it's not coincidence, but rather a most fitting depiction of how a good father deals with the children in his home – “Exhorted, Comforted, and Charged” them.

. . . . Terry Broome