

## Father's Day 2018

Personal story – we have had so many babies born in our church recently!! Denise and I are thrilled to be leading such a fruitful church! Denise especially loves your babies!!

On Father's day I especially think about the dad's in our church! Dads, in society, have had a tough job. But what I have seen here is our church is for dads to really stand out as great dads!! I see it and hear it regularly – they read books, get advice, go to conferences and listen to podcast. The dads in our church are seriously desiring to do a great job at fathering their next generation! I salute the dads here today!!

In seeking to become stand out dads let me lay a bit of a foundation. What makes us “stand out” people? These thoughts apply to many areas of life and are not exclusively for dads so listen carefully if it is your desire to become a stand out person! To stand out we must understand some basic differences in what cause us to stand out. It's not what you might think.

- Fame is not the same as integrity – don't ever mix them up
- Skill and talent can never make up for a lack of character
- Prominence is not the same as significance
- Your platform today is not necessarily an indication of how developed your character is
- Being well known and praised by others is not necessarily connected to the truth of who you are
- Ability may get you to the top but only character can keep you there
- Your public strengths can often times hide private weaknesses – only you know
- Your public persona can often times mask a deep and broken inner life – tell someone
- Your social media profiles do not necessarily equate to your reality – be careful

Robin Williams one of the world's funny guys committed suicide in August of 2014  
Kate Spade designer and business woman committed suicide only a few weeks ago  
Anthony Bourdain famous TV personality chef committed suicide a day later

These people had talent, fame, wealth and success – they were incredibly well known and publicly successful but inwardly they were tormented and broken. So broken they made an ultimate permanent decision to take their own lives.

**Jim Carrey** once said, *“I think everybody should get rich and famous and do everything they ever dreamed of so they can see that it's not the answer.”*

**Mark 8:36** TPT, the words of Jesus, **“For what use is it to gain all the wealth and power of this world, with everything it could offer you, at the cost of your own life?”**

We really need to stop equating wealth, fame, success and prominence with happiness, inner peace and personal satisfaction. We need to stop equating good looks and body beautiful with inner satisfaction and having a good sense of self confidence. Jesus said “at the cost of your own life – your own inner life.” Where does a man or woman actually prosper? What part of us do we give away when we believe the lie about success and wealth?

**3 John 1:2** says, **“Beloved friend, I pray that you are prospering in every way and that you continually enjoy good health, just as your soul is prospering.”** True and eternal prosperity is the prosperity of soul. Life is not found in the abundance of possessions, wealth or fame. Nothing of celebrity can take the place of the words of Jesus, **Matthew 25: 23** “Well done good and faithful servant.”

- I am talking about truth and reality and inner peace.
- I am talking about being healthy in our emotions and honest in our lives.
- I'm not talking about perfection but a relentless search for excellence.
- I'm talking about a life, warts and all, on a journey to be better.
- I'm talking about having a relationship with a God who knows our every weakness and has seen all our failings and yet He still loves enough to not leave us broken.

As a society we need to stop equating success with character. We need to stop associating prominence with integrity. There is a lot of tension in the world because we are equating talent with substance and wealth with happiness. We're misguided in our search for success rather than significance. We've mislabel the famous and we've sought to emulate them, thinking they have everything. We've misbrand celebrity as credibility and done a disservice to integrity.

I love the Bible. It tells stories that I relate to. It tells stories that are warts and all. The characters in the Bible, fail and succeed, sin and find redemption and falter but then find their footing. I relate to a lot of the failures of the great characters of the Bible. I mean within the first few pages of Genesis Cain killed his sibling Able – now who hasn't thought of that????!!

As **my mother, Betty Brookes**, once commented, "No one in the Bible was perfect except Jesus and they killed Him!"

On this Father's Day many of us as dads can feel a bit inadequate like we've fallen short of the ideal dad! Father's Day is a bit more muted and for some it is forgotten. We receive socks and pants as gifts! Today you get pancakes! It is one of the reasons we make a big deal of father's Day here at Proclaimers. Dads I salute you!

I think societies muted response to Father's Day comes from 3 realities 1) a lack of great father's in our lives and 2) a restless generation trying to compensate for the lack or even absence of strong fathers. 3) Young fathers today struggle with tension of either a difficult father experience or trying to match up to an unrealistic picture of the perfect father.

In the midst of this societal misunderstanding of fathers I find it incredible and amazing that God has decided to reveal Himself as a **Father**.

In Jesus' teaching concerning prayer He directed us in this manner, **Luke 11:2**, TPT "Our heavenly Father, may the glory of your name be **the centre on which our life turns.**" The meaning here is that God's name has been made sacred and magnified as we focus our lives on him.

In our quest to become stand out fathers, mothers, children, employees, students and friends there are 2 things to consider.

1. **Priorities:** Your priority in life is to love God and serve God. Jesus made this command so clear in **Matthew 12: 30 – 31 TPT**, "You are to love the Lord your God, with every passion of your heart, with all the energy of your being, with every thought that is within you, and with all your strength. This is the great and supreme commandment. And the second is this: 'You must love your neighbour in the same way you love yourself.' You will never find a greater commandment than these."

But when we address the subject of priorities God is not our first priority!! God is much too important to be just our first priority. Go back to the scripture; "...**love the Lord with all the energy of your**

**being.**” If God is the #1 on our priority list, that means there are a bunch of other things on the list that have the power to compete with Him.

God wants more than just the top line of your priority list. He wants the whole list. He doesn’t want to be sequestered to a single part of your life. He wants to be the substance of every part, the logic behind every choice you make. Whether you’re singing a worship song or taking a nap, playing with your kids or taking them to school. God wants His kingdom to be your ultimate goal.

As Paul says in **1 Corinthians 10:31**: “So whether you eat or drink or **whatever you do**, do it all for the glory of God.” God wants you and He wants to be the energy of our entire life. God desires you to serve Him with every passion of your heart. Whether it’s coffee or worship, food or friendship, your family or your business – he wants to be the centre of it all.

**2. Integrity: Proverbs 20:7**, “The lovers of God will walk in integrity, and their children are fortunate to have godly parents as their examples.”

When I look at the definition of **integrity**, it’s defined as a **“the consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations, and outcomes. In ethics, integrity is regarded as the honesty and truthfulness or accuracy of one’s actions.”**

Let me call out the key words in this definition that are often missed. Consistency, honesty, and truthfulness or accuracy of one’s actions. In scripture integrity is referred to a lot.

**Proverbs 11:3** says TPT, “Integrity will lead you to success and happiness, but treachery will destroy your dreams.”

**Proverbs 20:28** TPT says, “Good leadership is built on love and truth, for kindness and integrity are what keep leaders in their position of trust.”

Sometimes we fail in this area. I know it’s a painful experience when other see our lack of integrity or when we fail the integrity test. Our fall can cause us to stand out in 2 different ways though. Our fall can confirm a lack of integrity and others will judge us. Or our fall can show a humble and willing spirit.

Here’s some advice; 1) be willing to admit your failure 2) be willing to apologise to let those who suffered from your lack of integrity 3) ask what you must do to put it right 4) by God’s grace make a determination to not repeat this failure and 5) Seek God for strength and grace to live the Jesus life.

Being willing to apologise is an important point. It brings humility, it shows us wart and all, it reveals our humanity and it shows were still on a journey to be like Jesus! An apology mixed with repentance is a soul stirring event, it reveals our desire to be transparent and honest in our inner life, our heart and soul. Our kid’s will find it easier to respect us and love us if they see were not perfect but willing to work on it.

Being willing to apologise has a great impact on others and serves as an example for the future. Your children will be impacted to walk with integrity when you acknowledge your failings to them. This make you a stand out in a society where everyone spends too much time covering their back sides unwilling to apologise or say sorry.

You’re never too big to apologise. A sincere apology releases you from the burden of being infallible, and the chain reaction that results can be truly inspirational to those you may have hurt or disappointed.

An apology demonstrates that your relationship with others is more important than you being right. You release the injured party from pain and give them the opportunity to forgive you. Your apology can reverse the tide of hurt and anger, smoothing the path for healing in a relationship, helping your relationship to grow to new levels.

**Ephesians 6: 4 TPT** says, “Fathers, don’t exasperate your children, but raise them up with loving discipline and counsel that brings the revelation of our Lord.” Your life will reveal God to your children and to a wider audience as God builds your platform.

For some reason preacher love 3 points! I am not too sure why – but today I have only the 2 points for your consideration. If I were to ask myself what are the 2 things I want you to do today when you leave this event... here they are!

Love God with every passion of your heart, with all the energy of your being, and consistently and truthfully live out the principles of God’s word.

**Love God and live out God.**

Stop the false priority lists and love God with all the energy of your being.  
You’re not perfect but God is and He loves you and is willing to work with you.

Success and failure are two elusive commodities when you don’t know God. But having Jesus in your life makes sense of it all. When He is allowed free access to your life He will work within you to achieve your successes and cover your failures. With God failures are the teaching moments to success. Live with God at the centre on which our life turns.