

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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"Pweese Daddy, I want to pray!"

By John A. Smith

She appeared to be three maybe four years old. Blonde "Shirley Temple-like" curls hung around her rosy cheeks. Her sweet blue eyes twinkled with the innocence and exuberance of youth. All of her family had assembled and heaping plates of Chinese food was in front of them. With great excitement the precious little girl looked at her father, who was stuffing his face with the urgency of a condemned man eating his last meal, and announced, "Pweese, Daddy, I want to pray." Thoughtlessly, he continued to stuff egg rolls in his mouth with seemingly no awareness of his daughter's plea. Once again, she begged, "Pweese, Daddy, I want to pray!" "Won't you bow, Daddy? We need to pray."

With her head bowed and her eyes closed, I heard this pray from the heart an innocent child: "Thank you God for this day. Thank you for our food. Thank you for Mommy and Daddy. Help Daddy learn to pray. In Jesus name Amen"

Her father never stopped eating, never bowed his head and never acknowledged the tender petition of his daughter. How could he appear to be so cold and callused while his daughter prayed? How could any father deny his daughter's plea to pray? I am sure there is more to the story than I will ever know, but I heard enough to burn with indignation toward

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the father and feel compassion for the innocence so callously rejected.

Fathers, we have the God-given responsibility to take the spiritual lead in our family. The wise man of Proverbs repeatedly admonished sons to listen to the instruction of their fathers (Prov. 1:8; 4:1). This demanded that fathers be actively involved in the spiritual training of their children. In the New Testament, fathers are commanded to "not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). God has placed this awesome responsibility squarely on the shoulders of fathers. Fathers are to be spiritual trainers. As Dick Blackford wrote in *For Husbands only*, "We cannot delegate, hesitate, procrastinate, and make excuses, but God will finally hold us responsible. We must meet the challenge. There are some things in life that if we do not do them when we have the opportunity, then the opportunity will be gone forever. Child-rearing cannot be done at our convenience"

We cannot leave our children alone to feed, protect, and educate themselves physically. To an even greater degree, fathers, we cannot abandon our children expecting them to spiritually train themselves. We cannot afford to leave their spiritual education to a god-less world or a secular school system.

If your children are going to learn to pray, you must teach them-- teaching them in word and by example. Children need to hear their fathers praying often and passionately. They need to learn from their father's heart and lips to express thanksgiving and praise in prayer, to petition God for "daily bread," to share daily concerns and cares with the Heavenly Father, and do with respect and intimacy.

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Fathers, do your children hear you pray? Do they hear you pray often? Do they hear you pray with emotion and meaning?

“Pweese, Daddy, I want to pray.” Fathers, will you take the time to teach them to pray?

“Due to the current construction restraints, the light at the end of the tunnel has been turned off until further notice.”

“Save This Nation”

Author Unknown

In the days of the Civil War, a personal friend of Abraham Lincoln was a visitor at the White House. “I had been spending three weeks with Mr. Lincoln as his guest. One night I was restless and could not sleep...from the private room where the president slept, I heard low tones, for the door was partly open. Instinctively I wandered in, and there I saw a sight which I have never forgotten. It was the president kneeling before an open Bible...his back toward me. I shall never forget his prayer: ‘Oh, thou God that heard Solomon in the night when he prayed and cried for wisdom, hear me. I cannot lead these people; I cannot guide the affairs of this nation without thy help...O God, hear me and save this nation.’”

“Righteousness exalts a nation” --- Proverbs 14:34

(This prayer is a prayer that we should pray that our president and political leaders are praying today. SJN)

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Major Lessons From Short Statements

“Though vice may feel nice, virtue won’t hurt you.”

“If you think you are too small to be effective, you have never been to bed with a mosquito.” – (Berry Reese)

“Many people want to serve God, but only as advisors.”

“Great mountains of happiness grow out of little hills of kindness.”

“If alcoholism is a disease, it is a self-imposed one.”