

Staff Work

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A Father's Heart

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A Father's Heart

Abstract

"This journey is not meant to be walked alone, but together—in covenant community."

Posting about growing in faith from *In All Things* - an online journal for critical reflection on faith, culture, art, and every ordinary-yet-graced square inch of God's creation.

<http://inallthings.org/a-fathers-heart/>

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Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service](#) at Dordt College.

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Daily Scripture Texts

[Psalm 119:129-139](#)

[1 Kings 1:38-48](#)

[1 Corinthians 4:14-20](#)

I pulled into the garage after work and was greeted by my daughter Adalee who has made a habit of running upstairs to greet me at the door as soon as she hears the garage open. She says hi and quickly runs away, but I'll take it. I'm sure she'll always be this excited to see me, right?

"How's daddy's girl?" naturally falls out of my mouth and I cannot help but laugh as I remember my dad asking the same question to my sister. I am starting to sound a lot like my dad these days (and a lot more often than I would like to admit), but you know what, I think I like it.

In *The Message*, Eugene Peterson paraphrases 1 Corinthians 4:14-15, "I'm writing as a father to you, my children. I love you and want you to grow up well, not spoiled. There are a lot of people around who can't wait to tell you what you've done wrong, but **there aren't many fathers willing to take the time and effort to help you grow up.**"

I am lucky in the *two-parents-who-loved-me* kind of way. Two parents who devoted a good part of their lives to making sure that I would understand what it means to live an empowered life as Paul writes. They made certain I would not grow up spoiled; instead, they forged my understanding of what is important and clung to what is not only good, but right. My parent's legacy is one of faith passed down through the generations—one I too plan to pass down.

My parents understood the psalmist:

Your statutes are wonderful;
therefore I obey them.

¹³⁰ The unfolding of your words gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple.

Here *simple* might be understood as ordinary people passing on a heritage of taking the Bible at face value.

Erica and I are parents to Adalee and awaiting the arrival of child number two come late August. I want this child to grow up well, but not spoiled. I want him or her to relish a life of ordinary obedience as they walk in covenant with those willing to take the time to help them grow up.

Who are you walking alongside? For you, this could mean mentoring a child that is not your own family or discipling one walking through a confusing time. The greatest story we have to share is a redemptive narrative of hope that shines light in the darkest places. This journey is not meant to be walked alone, but together—in covenant community. Lord willing, Erica and I will learn to share this truth with our children and you will share this truth with those under and around your care. Following my dad's example as he followed his father's, my prayer today is that we will take the time and effort to help someone grow up as one of the ordinary ones who understands the wonderful statutes of God.