

Saving The World Begins At Home

Genesis 18 recounts Abraham's dinner with the Lord and His two heavenly messengers, who were about to be dispatched on their mission to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. As dinner wraps up, God pauses to let Abraham in on the plan.

What prompted God to honor Abraham and bring him into His counsel, not only to confide in him but to engage him in a frank conversation about the future of these cities? Vss. 18-19 hold the answers. God had promised Abraham a future as a great nation that would bless all other nations. Despite his past failure, God said He knew Abraham would lead his home well: *"He will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment."*

Matthew Henry describes how he believes Abraham led his home. "He not only prayed with his family, but he taught them as a man of knowledge, nay, he commanded them as a man in authority ..." Is there a lesson here in Abraham's close encounter with God for fathers whose passion is to see sinners saved from destruction and leave their mark on the world? Absolutely!

First, fathers should know God intimately. Such knowledge only comes by intentional devotion to prayer and Bible study. Second, apart from God, we must make family our spiritual priority. Being a godly father is more than just providing for their physical needs or teaching them the truths of God. We need to teach them to walk in His ways.

This can be a challenge in today's fast-paced and demanding world. Even those of us who preach are tempted to overlook our families as we strive to meet the urgent needs of the fields that are *"already white for harvest"* (John 4:35). Fathers should teach their children to pray and then pray with them. No matter where I am, I try to pray with my children every night before they go to bed. Modern technology, such as Skype, has made this possible even when I am on the road.

Fathers should also study the Bible with their children. At times, this may involve no more than reading the chapter of Proverbs corresponding to that day of the month. Still, my children know their spiritual well-being is my priority. I also look for teaching moments to bring out biblical truths to my children.

Fathers, for our children's sake and for the sake of the world that's heading in the wrong direction, we must first assume our God-given responsibility to

train our own children in the ways of God, lest our effects become extinct with the next generation.

Adapted From Tony Perkins