

This Father's Day, Bestow Your Blessing

Periodically I read about a crisis in fathering. For example, one study found only 20% of the fathers surveyed felt that they had a close emotional relationship with either their father or their sons. Twenty percent! That means four out of five fathers are emotionally distant from either their dad or son.

One downside to this is that so many other fathers really don't know how to show their love very well. This inability to show love well can be seen as the lack of a blessing – to a son or daughter. And while sons usually feel this most acutely, daughters can too. And when a child, especially a son, doesn't get a blessing, there can be only one reason. And the reason for the lack of a blessing is – a curse.

But I believe the spiritually mature father must bestow a blessing on his children and children he cares for. How to give a blessing? A colleague writes of five steps:

1. Meaningful touch. Not accidental, but a “laying on of hands.”
2. Spoken, unmistakable appreciation. No pro forma, not vague, but specific.
3. Let them know you place a high value on them. This has more to do with your serious, appreciative attitude than anything else.
4. Picture an excellent future for the one you are blessing and let them know it.
5. Making an active commitment to help them achieve that future.

I have seen men and women engage in this behavior of blessing. And people who do it a lot seem to be setting an example for the rest of us.

If you are a father, or a father figure to someone, I challenge you to spend part of your Father's Day this year bestowing a blessing on someone you know.

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