



Why Did God Send A Boy To Do A Man's Job **"The Importance of a Father's Influence"** **I Samuel 17:55-58**

Harry Chapin's song "Cat's in the Cradle" topped the US Billboard charts in 1974. The song was so popular it was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2011. The official YouTube video has more than 20 million views. The song has touched many people's hearts because it is about a father neglecting his son and the consequences of the neglect.

"Cats In The Cradle" became a worldwide hit song and is based on a poem written by Chapin's wife Sandy. Harry introduced the song at all his concerts by saying, "This is a song my wife wrote to zap me because I wasn't home when our son Josh was born." I was always kind of amused by that because of the fact that we learn life's lessons too late. We don't learn lessons before the fact. We don't have a child born and then have all this wisdom.

The essence of the song is expressed in the last verse of the song:

**"I've long since retired, my son's moved away
I called him up just the other day
I said, "I'd like to see you son, if you don't mind"
He said, "I'd love to, Dad, if I can find the time
You see my new job's a hassle and the kids have the flu
But it's sure nice talking to you, Dad It's been sure nice talking to
you"
And as I hung up the phone it occurred to me He'd grown up just like
me, My boy was just like me."**

Citation: Harry Chapin "Cat's in the Cradle," SongFacts (Accessed 5/14/21); Harry Chapin Lyrics, "Cat's in the Cradle," AZLyrics (Accessed 5/14/21)

On July 16, 1981 Harry Chapin lost his ability to influence his wife and children. Harry Chapin was killed in a tragic car accident he was 38 years old.

Today we are going to discover “The Importance Of A Father’s Influence”

Scripture

When Saul had seen David going out to confront the Philistine, he asked Abner the commander of the army, “Whose son is this youth, Abner?”

“Your Majesty, as surely as you live, I don’t know,” Abner replied.

⁵⁶ The king said, “Find out whose son this young man is!”

⁵⁷ When David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the Philistine’s head still in his hand.

⁵⁸ Saul said to him, “Whose son are you, young man?”

“The son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem,” David answered. CSB

Quote of the Day

“It is far better to influence and develop strong boys and girls than to repair broken men and women.” — Pat Kilby

“Every father should remember— One day his children will follow his example, not his advice.” — Charles Kettering

Long before David was king, he was a boy, a boy who was given opportunities to do amazing things.

David was a young shepherd boy. He killed a lion and a bear while shepherding his father’s sheep.

David comforted King Saul with his musical ability.

David confronted Goliath the champion warrior and defeated him in battle.

Why did God sent a boy to do a man’s job?

His Father’s Influence

Influence— The capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone.

Influence— A force that brings about a change in a person's character and behavior.

From the story of David and Goliath I want to share two observations about a father's influence.

1. Never Underestimate The Potential of your Child/ Children

2. Be Intentional with your Child/ Children

Two Observations About A Father's Influence

Never Underestimate The Potential of your Child/ Children

I Samuel 16:4-13 "Samuel did what the Lord directed and went to Bethlehem. When the elders of the town met him, they trembled and asked, "Do you come in peace?" 5 "In peace," he replied. "I've come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. 6 When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and said, "Certainly the Lord's anointed one is here before him." 7 **But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or his stature because I have rejected him. Humans do not see what the Lord sees, for humans see what is visible, but the Lord sees the heart."** 8 Jesse called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel. "The Lord hasn't chosen this one either," Samuel said. 9 Then Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, "The Lord hasn't chosen this one either." 10 After Jesse presented seven of his sons to him, Samuel told Jesse, "The Lord hasn't chosen any of these." 11 **Samuel asked him, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," he answered, "but right now he's tending the sheep." Samuel told Jesse, "Send for him. We won't sit down to eat until he gets here."** 12 **So Jesse sent for him. He had beautiful eyes and a healthy, handsome appearance. Then the Lord said, "Anoint**

him, for he is the one.” 13 So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully on David from that day forward. Then Samuel set out and went to Ramah. CSB

It is clear in this passage of Scripture that Jesse, David’s father, did not think highly about his youngest son.

The word translated **“youngest”** in verse 11 comes from the Hebrew word **“Qatan”** meaning the youngest, the smallest, the weakest, unimportant and insignificant— Some scholars suggest that Jesse treated David as the “runt.”

The word **“runt”** is a disparaging term referring to a person who is small in stature, weak, disrespected and insignificant.

Jesse did not realize the potential in his youngest son.

Jesse did not realize— Kids grow up and do amazing things!

Jesse did not realize— **The “runt” of the family would become a competent and trusted shepherd, a valiant warrior, a skilled musician, a prolific song writer (75 Psalms are attributed to David), the greatest and most significant king in Israel’s history, and most importantly a man after God’s own heart.**

Psalm 127:3 says that children are a heritage (a treasured gift) from the LORD.

Sometimes these **“treasured gifts”** from the LORD dangle on our nerves as if they were bouncing from a bungee cord.

A father passed by his son's bedroom and was astonished to see the bed nicely made up and everything neat and tidy. Then he saw an envelope propped up on the pillow. It was addressed, "Dad." With the worst premonition, he opened the envelope and read the letter with trembling hands: Dear Dad, It is with great regret and sorrow that I'm writing you. I

had to elope with my new girlfriend because I wanted to avoid a scene with you and Mom. I've been finding real passion with Joan, and she is so nice. I knew you would not approve of her because of all her piercings, tattoos, tight motorcycle clothes, and the fact that she is much older than I am. It's not just her passion, Dad. She really *gets* me. Joan says that we are going to be very happy. She owns a trailer in the woods and has a stack of firewood—just enough for the whole winter. We share a dream of having many children. Please don't worry, Dad. I'm 15 and I know how to take care of myself. I'm sure we'll be back to visit someday so you can get to know your grandchildren. Your son, Chad

P.S. Dad, none of the above is true. I'm over at Tommy's house. I just wanted to remind you that there are worse things in life than the report card that's in my desk drawer. I love you! Call when it is safe for me to come home. Citation: *Charles Kimball, Allen, Texas.*

When we are frustrated with our children— don't forget they have great potential.

When we become impatient with our children— don't forget they have great potential.

Ephesians 6:4 says, "Fathers, don't stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord." CSB

Six principles to practice when we become frustrated and impatient with our children:

Practice Patience—

Proverbs 15:1-2 "A gentle answer turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up wrath. 2 The tongue of the wise makes knowledge attractive, but the mouth of fools blurts out foolishness." CSB

Practice Wisdom—

Proverbs 15:18 "A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but one slow to anger calms strife." CSB

Practice Respect—

Proverbs 15:4 “The tongue that heals is a tree of life, but a devious tongue breaks the spirit.” CSB

Practice Discipline—

Proverbs 15:10 “Discipline is harsh for the one who leaves the path; the one who hates correction will die.” CSB

Proverbs 15:32 “Anyone who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever listens to correction acquires good sense.” CSB

Practice Forgiveness—

Ephesians 4:31-32 “Let all bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander be removed from you, along with all malice. 32 And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ.” CSB

Practice Love—

Psalms 103:8-13 “The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love. ⁹He will not always accuse us or be angry forever. ¹⁰He has not dealt with us as our sins deserve or repaid us according to our iniquities. ¹¹For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his faithful love toward those who fear him. ¹²As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. ¹³**As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.**” CSB

Two Observations About A Father’s Influence: Never underestimate the potential of your child/ children:

Be Intentional with your Child/ Children

I Samuel 17:58 When David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul with the Philistine's head still in his hand. ⁵⁸ Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" "The son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem," David answered. CSB

When young David marched out to meet Goliath in Battle— It was no accident.

David had been prepared for this moment.

Parents we must prepare our children for their future and the moments they will experience in their life.

Preparing children for their future and the moments they will face is an intentional and constant exercise.

Preparing Children for their future requires:

Spending time with our children

Psalm 39:4-5 "Lord, make me aware of my end and the number of my days so that I will know how short-lived I am. ⁵ In fact, you have made my days just inches long, and my life span is as nothing to you. Yes, every human being stands as only a vapor." CSB

As parents we need to understand our life is short and we need to be wise with our time.

Time is precious— Time is limited we do not get our time back!

Psalm 90:12 says, "Teach us to number our days carefully so that we develop wisdom in our hearts." CSB

Spending time with our children means spending time with our children.

Money does not replace time with our children

Gifts do not replace time with our children

Excuses and empty promises do not replace time with our children

Ecclesiastes 9:10 “Whatever your hands find to do, do with all your strength, because there is no work, planning, knowledge, or wisdom in Sheol where you are going.” CSB

Preparing Children for the future requires:

Teaching our children

Deuteronomy 6:1-9 “This is the command—the statutes and ordinances—the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you, so that you may follow them in the land you are about to enter and possess. 2 Do this so that you may fear the Lord your God all the days of your life by keeping all his statutes and commands I am giving you, your son, and your grandson, and so that you may have a long life. 3 Listen, Israel, and be careful to follow them, so that you may prosper and multiply greatly, because the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has promised you a land flowing with milk and honey. 4 **“Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one., 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.** 6 These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. 7 Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead., 9 Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates.” CSB

Parents— The greatest and most significant thing we will ever do is teach our children to follow God by grace through faith in Jesus Christ!

Parents— We must practice what we preach. Our children will follow our example more than they will follow our words.

Parents don't teach your children to become "cool, or popular or to fit in."
Teach them to follow Jesus, to be humble, to be a servant, to be respectful, obedient, hard working and disciplined.

I tried be cool once and it didn't work like I expected it to— I wanted to be cool like Tony!

Teach them to love God and others!

Preparing Children for the future requires:

Training our children

I Corinthian 12:4-7 "Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit.
5 There are different ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are different activities, but the same God works all of them in each person. 7 A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good:"
CSB

As parents we have the responsibility to train our children to influence their world for Jesus Christ and advance His kingdom on the earth.

As parents we have the responsibility to train our children according to their gifts and abilities.

David was trained to be **a competent and trusted shepherd**

David was trained to be **a skilled musician**

David became **a prolific song writer and worshiper**

David was trained to be **a skilled and valiant warrior**

David became the greatest and most significant king in Israel's history
David was a man after God's own heart.

Jeremiah 29:11-14 “For I know the plans I have for you”—this is the Lord’s declaration—“plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. 12 You will call to me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you”—this is the Lord’s declaration . . .”
CSB

Preparing Children for the future requires:

Trusting our children

Proverbs 22:6 “Start a youth out on his way; even when he grows old he will not depart from it.” CSB

There will come a time when we must let our children go.

Our children will become a version of what we have taught them to become.

Trusting our children means giving them responsibility.

Trusting our children means giving them expectations.

Trusting our children means giving them accountability

Trusting our children means giving them room to make mistakes, room to grow, room to learn, room to become competent and room to own their faith.

As I bring the message to a close Erma Bombeck shared an illustration regarding the reality of letting our children grow up into adulthood: The task of raising kids is rather like trying to fly a kite on a day when the wind doesn’t blow. Mom and Dad run down the road pulling the cute little device at the end of a string. It bounces along the ground and shows no inclination of getting off the ground. Eventually and with much effort they manage to lift it 15 feet in the air, but great danger suddenly looms. The kite dives toward electrical lines and

twirls near trees. It is a scary moment. Will they ever get it safely on its way? Then, unexpectedly, a gust of wind catches the kite, and it sails upward. Mom and Dad feed out line as rapidly as they can.

The kite begins pulling the string, making it difficult to hold on. Inevitably, they reach the end of their line. What should they do now? The kite is demanding more freedom. It wants to go higher. Dad stands on his tiptoes and raises his hand to accommodate the tug. The line is now grasped tenuously between his index finger and thumb, held upward toward the sky. Then the moment of release comes. The string slips through his fingers, and the kite soars majestically into God's beautiful sky.

Mom and Dad stand gazing at their precious "baby" who is now gleaming in the sun, a mere pinpoint of color on the horizon. They are proud of what they've done—but sad to realize their job is finished. It was a labor of love. But where did the years go? Citation: James Dobson, *Focus on the Family*, from [http://www.uexpress.com/ups/advice/do/\(9-26-99\)](http://www.uexpress.com/ups/advice/do/(9-26-99))