

# Father's Day Message

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Study Given by W. D. Frazee—June 18, 1971

The day after tomorrow is Father's Day, and this evening this message is dedicated to my father. He's been my father for over 65 years, and God bless you, Dad, as you're listening in tonight. I'm glad that I've had the privilege of sharing my father with a lot of other folks; some of them are here tonight. I thought you might be interested in five Bible verses that this good Dad of mine required me to memorize a long, long time ago. Some of you may catch some ideas of why he had me memorize these texts:

"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul" Proverbs 29:15, 17.

"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" Proverbs 13:24.

And my father loved me very much. [Audience laughter]

"Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying" Proverbs 19:18.

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" Proverbs 22:15.

"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell" Proverbs 23:13–14.

This was when I was just a little boy. My father started me learning Bible verses. He required me to memorize these verses, and I had to recite them from time to time. My father loved me very much. He loved me enough that he didn't want me to go to hell. My father has told me in recent years that if he had it to do over again, he wouldn't use the rod quite as much as he did. But he could discount it quite a bit and still leave plenty; I could tell you that. And I have assured him, now that I have gray hairs, that I'm thankful for every time he disciplined me. I'm so glad he is with me still this Father's Day.

I'm so glad I know my Heavenly Father and have fellowship with Him because of the blessings my earthly father brought to me by way of discipline.

Now, this Father's Day, I'd like to have you think a little bit about discipline. The father has been given the commission by God to be the authority in the home; to set the pace in law observance and law enforcement. Sad to say, many fathers and mothers have both been lying down on the job today.

In this last week's *U. S. News and World Report*, I noticed the editorial that read "How to cure a major cause of unrest."

"We have seen on campuses and elsewhere disorderly demonstrations which have been composed primarily of young people. We have wondered why so many of them have recently disregarded discipline. In a number of instances, the answer is to be found in their unhappiness, sense of despair, and frustration, for their long-range objectives, have been uncertain" *U. S. News and World Report*, June 1971.

I thank the Lord that the discipline my father gave me was not just a matter of the rod, although there was sufficient of that. His discipline was designed by the Lord and planned by my father and my mother to prepare me for the final scenes of this earth's history, and to stand alone for God in any circumstance of temptation. That's why I was taught the Bible. That's why when discipline for correction was necessary, it was administered: in love yes, but it was administered.

As this editorial points out that many young people today are frustrated because they lack a purpose in life. Too many parents have not had a fellowship with God themselves. Therefore they haven't been able to communicate that to or share it with their children. I say that every boy and every girl who have Christian parents is greatly blessed. What do you say?

I would challenge you, fathers, as we think of Father's Day to be a real father representing the character of God and enforcing the law of God in your home. Eli failed in this and he lost both of his sons. He died a disappointed and heartbroken man. Aaron failed in this. He saw his two oldest sons stricken by the fire of God because of their tampering with the service of the sanctuary with unholy fire.

On the other hand, the Lord said concerning Abraham, the father of the faithful:

"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him" Genesis 18:19.

It was very much on Abraham's mind what God expected parents to do in the matter of exercising authority and requiring obedience.

I was not naturally a good boy at all. I had the same traits your children have. A lot more than some of them have. I've known a few naturally good children who

have been naturally inclined to obedience, just a few. But in my own experience as I look back at it, if I had not had a firm hand with my father on one side and a firm hand with my mother on the other, I don't know where I would have been. I wouldn't have been in the pulpit; I might have been in the penitentiary. But I thank God for the combination of love and firmness.

Here is a sentence that has been ringing in my ears this evening:

“Beyond the discipline of the home and the school, all have to meet the stern discipline of life” *Education*, page 295.

You know, dear parents, if letting our children skip discipline in the home would mean that they would skip it all the rest of their lives, we might consider it. But no amount of softness in the home, no amount of failure to exercise authority and enforce will make it easier for our children when they go out to meet life. It's just the opposite.

Some of you served in the United States army during World War II. You know that when you were given your basic training, the Federal Government did not say, “Well, poor fellows. They'll go soon in the jungles or the deserts overseas. Let's give them a nice, happy time while they're here.” No. The soldiers during their basic training were drilled, and then they were sent out in all sorts of difficult situations. They had to go through snake-infested jungles. Why? Because they might be going through such situations overseas. They had to maneuver in deserts. Why? They might be headed for North Africa and desert warfare there. And as a part of their training, thousands of those soldiers, before they ever went overseas were required to go through simulated battles in which they had to crawl on their stomachs through the woods, underneath barbed wire, and with streams of live bullets from machine guns splayed just over their heads. So a soldier that got panicky and got up to run caught those bullets, and that was the end.

Well, you say that is terrible. It *is* terrible, friend. War is terrible, but it was mercy to many because such methods of training saved the lives of hundreds when they got into the real battles overseas.

Oh my dear friends, our boys and girls are going into the last great battle, and it's no make-believe. It's a war to the death. And how good God is to tell us how to get our children ready. The combination of firmness and love will cause them to walk in the path of obedience, obedience to all ten of the commandments, and to love the way of obedience.

But now back to this statement I read:

“Beyond the discipline of the home and the school, all have to meet the stern discipline of life” *Ibid.*

Does life have discipline? Does it? Now answer this for yourself: Would you like to get into a situation where you didn't have so much of it? The stern discipline of life: most people today are trying to get away from the discipline of life. They are

trying to find experiences where they don't have to meet discipline, but there's no way to avoid it. But if you and I will learn what the *purpose* of discipline is, and relate ourselves to it aright, every experience in life can be a lifting experience. Every experience in life can draw us closer to God, nearer to Heaven, and enable us to more successfully meet the opportunities and privileges of life.

What is discipline anyway? It comes from the same word we get the word 'disciple' from. What's a disciple? Well, I looked it up in the dictionary: It is one who accepts and follows a teacher or a doctor. Every disciple has a master just as a student has a teacher. So a disciple is one who accepts and follows a leader or a teacher.

Jesus, of course, is the great teacher. He called Peter and John, and Matthew and Thomas and the others, and they became His what? He and his disciples disciplined them. Now, He never gave them a whipping with a rod. They were too old for that; they were grown men. But He certainly *reproved* them from time to time. And I want to tell you, my dear friends, while I alluded a few moments ago to the many whippings I got from my father and mother when I was growing up, there's been many a time since I have been a grown man that I would far rather take a whipping than to meet some of the situations and problems that I've had to meet as an adult. The disciplining doesn't all *stop* with the child. Not at all. And Jesus disciplined His disciples. He reproved them; He counseled them.

"Jesus reproved His disciples, and He warned and cautioned them; but John and Peter and their brethren did not leave Him. Notwithstanding the reproofs, they chose to be with Jesus" *Education*, page 91.

Could they have left? Now I want to ask you something: If you'd been with Jesus and He had reproved you, would you have stayed with Him?

"Oh," you say, "Sure, I'd stay with Jesus."

Would you? He's still in the business, for it is written in the message to the Laodiceans:

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" Revelation 3:19.

"And the Saviour did not, because of their errors, withdraw from them. He takes men as they are, with all their faults and weaknesses, and trains them for His service, if they will be disciplined and taught by Him" *Education*, page 91.

Oh, I'm so glad for that, friends. If I didn't believe that, I'd lose heart about myself and a lot of the people I work with. I'm glad I can talk to any man and say, "My friend, right where you are, Jesus will take you on as a disciple and start disciplining you if you'll let Him. It doesn't make any difference how many failures you've made or how big they are, Jesus will take you as you are and make you His

disciple and start teaching you and counseling you and using the experiences of life to educate you.

“He takes men as they are, with all their faults and weaknesses, and trains them for His service, if they will be disciplined and taught by Him” *Ibid*.

That’s the book, *Education*, page 91. I commend that chapter to you.

Now notice: Jesus is in the same business of making disciples and educating them today as He did back there. Aren’t you glad? Do you want to get in on it? Are you sure? Take a look at those disciples. In your imagination, see that Man walking along the road from Jerusalem, up through Samaria to Galilee. He’s not riding in a chariot. He’s not even riding a donkey. He’s walking all the way. Dozens and scores of miles. Who were those men with Him? Well, those were His disciples—Andrew, Peter, James and John. They are all walking. And when it comes time to sleep, they may sleep under the trees. We’re told, concerning Jesus, the homeless wonder, reproach and penury His daily lot. He lived to minister to the needs and lighten the loads of men.

Did you ever hear about the word ‘security’? That’s what the disciples *didn't* have from any human standpoint or measure. All they had was the word of Jesus when He called them from their ordinary vocations. Matthew from his tax collecting. Peter and John from their fishing. He said, “Come with Me.” He didn't guarantee them any salary. They were to share His hardships. They did share His hardships and were sometimes hungry and often weary.

Why did they keep with Him? Well friends, they loved Him, and He loved them. And they *wanted*—don’t miss it—what He was giving them. Now it’s true that they got sullen and morose, and discouraged sometimes, and sometimes seemed rather stupid. But nevertheless, deep in their hearts, Jesus saw that they wanted to be with Him and *learn* what He was teaching them.

My dear friend, no matter how slow you are, no matter how stupid you are, no matter how stubborn you are, if you’ll let Jesus know that you want Him to stick with you, He’ll stick with you. Yes, He will. And glorious can be the result.

Jesus took those men and trained them in such a way that when He had finished His work and given them His Spirit on the day of Pentecost, they turned the world upside down in less than 40 years. Every creature under Heaven heard the Gospel message. They did it without the benefit of TV, radio, printing press, and so on. They did it by walking or on some slow-sailing vessel. They reached the ends of the earth, and they did it under persecution and sacrifice. Where had they learned it? Being disciples of Jesus.

My point is, He trained them in the school of service, of sacrifice, of suffering. Do you want to train with Him? What is it you are looking for? A comfortable, convenient, easy situation? Oh, my friends, do we really know what being a disciple of Jesus means?

“The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master” Luke 6:40.

The first two words here are ‘the disciple’; that’s what we’re studying—the student, the pupil, the one who is following the Master.

“The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master” Luke 6:40.

Notice what the margin says on that last line. How is the disciple to have this experience of training? The margin says everyone shall be perfected as his master. Do you want to be perfected?

How did Jesus become perfected? He never sinned, but He developed a character *in His humanity*, and He did it to show you and me how to do it. Just as you and I cannot skip the disciple if we want to be perfected, He didn't skip it.

“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him” Hebrews 5:8–9.

So when we see blood on the trail that we are walking, remember Whose feet were pierced by the thorns and left that blood—the feet of Jesus. Jesus does not ask us to enter into any experience of suffering or trial or discipline that He has not already endured.

If we realize how close His coming is and how near the trials of the last days are, do you know what we’d pray? We would pray that God would help us to learn our lessons *fast*.

Some years ago, a master of music had a reputation for being very stern and very difficult. There was a young boy who had such a love for music that he went to this man and urged him to be his teacher. So this master took him on.

But when this boy would sit at the piano and play in the lesson, if he hit the wrong key, the master would take a ruler and hit him on the knuckles. The boy cried because it hurt. But he kept coming back to that man. Why? He wanted to learn to play the piano. He knew that man knew *how*. He knew he could learn from the master.

God pity us for missing our opportunities. God pity us for feeling sorry for ourselves when men or circumstances seem a bit hard on us. The message I bring you on this Father's Day meditation is to be glad if God in His mercy puts you with men or with circumstances that give you some discipline.

God does it because you need it. That's why God gave me the father he gave me; He knew I needed it. If you are having discipline, it's because you *need* it. The best way to get over it as soon as possible is to learn your lessons as soon as possible. There is no other way.

"If men will endure the necessary discipline, without complaining or fainting by the way, God will teach them hour by hour, and day by day" *The Desire of Ages*, page 251.

If men will do what? Endure the necessary discipline. What will you do when you get rapped on the knuckle? Will you come back for another lesson? Or will you say, "No, sir. Not for me. I'm going to one of these schools where they teach you everything by *fun*."

You can learn some facts and have "fun," but you'll never build character that way. The Son of God learned obedience by the things that He suffered. Who was it that planned out His life? His Father in Heaven. Did His Father love Him? Oh, yes. His Father loved Him. And that Father loves *you* and *me*.

Let us not become soft with the softness of this soft age. What do you say? We're going into battle. We're going into hardship. We're going into trials of all kinds. Oh, that we may have men like Daniel and Joseph and women like Esther and Mary, who can stand for right and not quail or cower. This comes only through discipline.

If you got discipline in your home as a growing child, thank God for it. But whether you did or you didn't, remember that beyond the discipline of the home and the school, all have to meet the stern discipline of life.

Suppose I should tell you about a place where you can go and not have discipline; a place where you can do as you please and have a nice comfortable home. Where you work will be just what you like. You work with people who will be just like you like. Would you like to go?

Oh, yes. That would be Heaven. Did you know that's why you weren't in Heaven yet? Did you know you and I would get spoiled if we were in Heaven? Did you know that's why God turned Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden? It wasn't that He was mad at them. Eden no longer furnished the conditions necessary for the development of their character. And in mercy to them, God put them out where they'd need discipline, discipline, discipline. He said to them:

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" Genesis 3:17-19.

It takes *discipline* to cure us of selfishness and get us ready to live in a world where everyone will just be happy to wait on us all the time. But friends, if you'd let me word it this way: don't dare go there tonight, because you'd spoil it. You won't, of course. Thank God for an experience here in this world where we need discipline.

And I hope on this Father's Day, if your earthly father is still alive, and has even given you a little taste of discipline somewhere along the way from babyhood to

wherever you are now, I hope you'll write him not only some sentimental message. I hope you'll just take him by the hand, or write him, or call him on the telephone and say, "Dad, I thank you for doing what the Bible says and enforcing some discipline." It might almost shock him to hear that but run the risk. Make him know that you appreciate him.

And friends, there's one Father we can all remember this Father's Day. That's our Heavenly Father. When we pray, say:

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in  
heaven" Matthew 6:9-10.

Do we really want His will to be done? If you and I can pray that prayer with an honest, sincere hearts, that prayer is being answered in our lives as far as we're concerned. That means that if God allows us to be put under those who try us, or in association with those who test us, it means that He is answering our prayers so that His will may be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing if, on this Father's Day, we would all make our earthly father's happy? And all of us make our Heavenly Father happy? What do you say?

Shall we do it? Someday soon, we're going to see Him. Won't it be wonderful to climb up on His knee and throw our arms around His neck and feel Him clasp us to His heart? Ah friends, He's a loving Father. And if He ever chastises us, it's because He loves us. His discipline is to train us, mold us, and make us like Himself.

Heavenly Father, Thou from whom all fatherhood derives its name, we thank Thee for Thy Father heart. Thou didst give us life. Thou hast watched over us. Thou hast planned for each of us a special experience unmatched by any other. Oh, we're sorry that we've ever complained about the course of study Thou hast arranged. We're sorry that we've ever murmured because of the discipline of Thy rod. Help us, Lord, to grow up in our appreciation of a father's love, a father's discipline. Help us to be no more children, childish in our seeking to avoid suffering. Help us, like Paul, to long to share with Thee the fellowship of Thy sufferings that we may through eternal ages, know the joy of that close fellowship with Thee in glory.

Bless our earthly father's tonight. Help each father to be the representative of the justice of God mingled with mercy, the love of God blended with discipline. And may each of us as children appreciate our fathers as the gift of Thy love. We thank Thee in Jesus' name, amen.

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