

## JUNE NEWSLETTER

***Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.*** (Proverbs 31:23)

The Pastoral Reflection for June, the month we celebrate Father's Day, is going to focus on the Fathers in our lives and all the fathers in our congregation. The role and the importance of the fathers in our homes, in our church, and in our society is crucial and fundamental.

There are many sermons about the woman depicted in Proverbs 31, as a great model of what a wife should be (Godly, diligent, virtuous, faithful, etc.). Rarely or almost never, do we hear a sermon about what the husband of that woman must be. What kind of husband and father is he for his family? He is most definitely not a person who stands silently in the background. He offers her a great deal of freedom in order for his wife to make important decisions about home and family, - he gives a lot of respect and encouragement for his wife. I have no doubt that they work together as a team. Husbands and wives complement one another's weaknesses, and this is God's way to bless both of them.

The challenge is always before us - how to practically be a godly man, a good husband, a great father? The Old Testament has a few references to God introducing himself as a Father (around 14 times, and mostly being portrayed as a Creator and as the Father for Israel). The New Testament is very generous. There are about 250 references about God as a Father within the New Testament. Jesus, God incarnate, lives and talks about His relationship with the heavenly Father. The gospel depicts (especially in the gospel of John) that there is a very special and unique relationship between the Son of God and His Father (John 5:19-20; 10:30; 14:8-11).

The sacred privilege and high calling of fatherhood was given to me for more than 43 years. God, in His wisdom, created earthly fathers to reflect His divine fatherhood. Our Father in heaven, through Jesus Christ, became a Father to all His children. We recognize the profound impact of fathers in our lives—whether as fathers ourselves or as children. We rejoice in those who gave us life and those we nurture as God delights in His Son, Jesus Christ. And for those who are not yet fathers, the Bible calls all believers who lead others into a relationship with Christ, spiritual fathers, (1 Thess. 2:11–12), who have the blessing to see divine grace manifest in the lives of those around them. We faithfully pursue our high calling, relying on God's grace for His glory and the eternal happiness of our children.

A godly father has dreams, not the kind in your sleep, but the waking ones, except, they were not his own, they are for his kids. He has goals, not the selfish kind, the selfless ones. Instead of punishing his children, he protects his children, and instead of mindless

pondering, he pursues them in conversation. Instead of walking in his own path, he provides one for them. He always brings them to the family altar and underlines the double-edged question: what is God working in your life, and how do you hear God's voice ?

On this special day, we come together to honor and celebrate the fathers and father figures in our lives. Father's Day is not just a time to express our gratitude for the love and sacrifices of our earthly fathers, but also an opportunity to reflect on the ultimate example of fatherhood provided by our Heavenly Father and His relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ.

Today, we lift up our fathers in prayer, asking God to bless them with strength, wisdom, and courage. We also remember those who may find this day difficult—those who have lost their fathers, fathers who have lost their children, and those experiencing strained relationships. May God's peace and comfort surround them.

To all the fathers in our congregation: thank you for your dedication, love, and sacrifice. Your role is vital, and your efforts are deeply appreciated. May you continue to draw from the endless love of God and His infinite wisdom as you love and guide your families in faith and in following our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by personal example.

Ovidiu D Druhora