

The Family Friend



A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

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He Knew Before

I remember the day so well. It was the weekend before my twentieth birthday, and I was home from college for my Army Reserve weekend. I didn't leave Freed-Hardeman until late that afternoon, and got home around 9 PM.

I walked into the house, and mom had supper waiting for me on the table. I sat down to eat, and dad came in and sat down across from me. He spread out the newspaper and asked me how things were going at school. We waded through the school stuff ... about my classes, etc. ... and I fidgeted through it all. I had something to tell him that was far more important than how my English Lit. class was going. But I wasn't sure how to bring it up.

But he knew. He always knew. And so, without missing a beat, he looked at me with a silly grin and asked, "Well, what's her name?" To this day I don't know how he knew that I had met that someone special. But he knew before I had gotten through the door.

I hadn't asked him to go with me in a long time, but this was different, so I asked. "Hey Dad, I'm going over to the mall, and I was wondering if you would like to go with me." He looked up at me (he was sitting on the couch reading the paper ... seems like he was always reading the paper!) and said, "Let's go!" We got in my old Vega and drove across town to the mall.

Normally, we parked on the side of the mall closest to Sears, but not today. I wasn't going to Sears. No sooner had we walked in the mall than Dad looked at me and said, "Where is it?" "Where's what?" I asked. "The jewelry store." To this day I don't know how he knew I was going to buy Judi's engagement ring, but he did. And a couple of weeks later when I asked permission to drive to Tennessee to give it to her, he said, "I'm surprised you didn't try to go a couple of weeks ago!" He knew before. He always knew before.



Dads have that uncanny ability to know, don't they? In a way, it is similar to our Heavenly Father. Try this. On a separate sheet of paper, take as much time as you need to write down everything that God doesn't know about you. Every secret ... everything. Didn't make too many marks, did you? The fact is, and we all know it, God knows everything about us. He knows about that time you lied to your parents and they never found out. He also knows about that Sunday you skipped worship because you said you were ill, but really just didn't want to go. He knows about all of it. For our part, we go to him in prayer, and ask forgiveness. But He knows what we are going to talk about. And He knows what we are going to confess. But he goes along with us because he knows we need to tell him. He knows before, just like our dads.

So to our Heavenly Father, and our earthly fathers, we thank you with all of our love! Have a great and godly week!
Love, Roger

**-Roger Utter
Rutherford, Tennessee**

When is It Too Late to Play Catch-up?

I am typing these words after returning home from attending our oldest grandson's high school graduation. That experience has caused me to do some thinking about how some people wait until it is way too late to play catch-up in something that is extremely important.

There may be some areas in our lives when it is possible, at least to some extent, to play catch-up. If one fails to save and invest money at a young age, it might be possible to, at least to some extent, play catch-up by saving and investing larger sums later in life. If a student fails to begin a term paper or study for an exam early in a school term, he or she may try to play catch-up later in the term. (I think most of us are familiar with the word "cram.") Sometimes that works and, as some of us have found out from experience, sometimes it does not. Maybe a person's health can even improve by changes made in diet, exercise, etc.

In all of these areas and many more, there may be opportunities to make up for lost opportunities with increased investments of various resources. While we know that we would be well-advised to make a conscientious, consistent effort all along, we might be able to salvage something worthwhile with a late "surge" of effort.

However, it seems to me

that there is one area in our lives in which there is sort of a "built-in law of diminishing returns." I am thinking specifically of the ability and opportunities that parents have to instill in their children a love for the Lord, His church, and His will for their lives.

All too often, parents are busy with their own careers, hobbies, and other interests to take the time to teach *and model* Christian principles to their small children. As those children begin to grow, the parents try to make sure that those precious souls get to all of the school activities, sports activities, and social activities possible. Interestingly (and sadly) enough, there never seems to be enough time or interest in family devotionals, regular attendance, and participation in worship services and Bible classes, church youth activities, service projects, etc.

During those precious few years in which children are at home, parents may have a sneaking feeling that his/her influence on them may be slowly but continually decreasing. I have a sneaking feeling that they may be right.

One of these days, that child will probably have a diploma (or more than one). He or she may also have a marriage license and a regular job. There may also be some birth certificates for their children.

Sometime in the midst of diplomas, certificates, and paychecks, these parents may realize that their children and now their grandchildren have no interest in spiritual matters. They may also realize something else. ***It is now too late to play catch-up.*** —Jim Faughn

That Dad of Mine

"He's slowing down" as some folks say,

With the burden of years,
from day to day;

His brow bears many a
furrowed line.

He's growing old—that dad
of mine.

His shoulders droop, and
his step is slow,

And his hair is white—as
white as snow;

But his blue eyes sparkle
with friendly light,

And his smile is warm and
his heart is right.

He's old? Oh, yes! But only
in years,

For his spirit soars as the
sunset nears;

And blest I've been, and
wealth I've had

In knowing a man like my
own dad.

And proud am I, to stand by
him,

As he stood by me when
the way was dim;

I've found him **worthy** and
just and **fine**,

And a prince of a man—that
dad of mine.

-Adam N. Reiter
Sword of the Lord