

When American Fathers Lose Their [Spiritual] Strength ... They Are Good for Nothing!

BY Dr. Henry Harbuck—AEGA President

THE SCRIPTURE SAYS . . .

13 - Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. (Matthew 5:13 – King James Version)

13 - “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt has lost its *saltiness* (worth—strength), how will the [salty] taste *and quality of the salt* be restored [again to its full strength]? *Then*, it becomes worthless—tasteless and good for nothing, except to be thrown out and trampled under the feet of *people* (literal reading—*men*). (Matthew 5:13 -- New Millennia In-Depth Bible)



The school teacher said “Here’s a watch. What is it for?” The children answered, “To tell the time.” “Well,” said the teacher, “suppose my watch does not tell the time. What is it good for?” They answered “Good for nothing, sir!”

Then the teacher took a pencil. He said, “What is this pencil for?” “To write with, sir,” they replied. The teacher said, “Suppose the pencil will not make a mark. What is it good for?” The children answered, “Good for nothing, sir!”

Finally the teacher asked, “What is the primary purpose of man?” The children replied, “To glorify God.” “But suppose a man does not glorify God,” the teacher said. “What then, is he good for?” And the children replied, “Good for nothing, sir!”

The United States of America has drifted far from its founding principles where fathers played a significant role in both the home and the church. Today there are few homes where fathers teach their children to reverence God. Even worse, too many youngsters are reared by a single female parent, growing into adulthood without the faintest idea of what a father really is. America will never again be great unless its fathers return to their rightful place of responsibility. Only then will individual and national respect be regained, and the greatness of past years recaptured as, once again, fathers become prominent figures within the family unit.

Churches today are filled with embittered people who grew up in homes without a father, or one in which the ‘father figure’ was cruel, harsh, and unfair. A godly father will instruct his children in the ways of the Lord (Deut. 6:6-7). Yet only a personal relationship with the living Christ can transform a wayward man who ignores his God-ordained duties into one guided by the Spirit.

Many people in our society – including those living in Christian homes – believe the father’s role is only to

provide financial income. This perception emerged during the 1940's when mothers encouraged their daughters to "marry a man who can make you a good living." No doubt this was because during World War II many American women, out of necessity, were forced to work in factories. After the war, women sought to once again become housewives and stay-at-home mothers.

During the 1950's men began to feel their obligation was to ensure their children were involved in some kind of sport. This view has prevailed until today, where America has substituted the love of sports for the love of Christ. In fact, most parents and children today are possessed by 'sports mania.' Promoters of TV sports media, magazines, and memorabilia are multi-billionaires. Yet our heavenly Father is weeping, because while His children are at the games cheering their team to win, His house (church) is empty, vacant, and sad. And for those who do attend God's house of worship, are they not continually looking for something sensational to excite them? For these so-called worshippers, church is *boring* – something only to be *endured* until lunch time comes on Sunday. Service to God and a love for His Word or is at the bottom of their list. Nevertheless, they continue to attend because, after all, "*church is a good tradition*" and if they did not do so, "*what would the neighbors think?*"

However, men play an integral role in providing love and stability for their children beyond that of just 'bringing home the bacon.' Youngsters need to be loved unconditionally by a Christian father – learning to see Christ through their father's example. Paul the apostle said, "Imitate (or copy) me, just as I also imitate Christ" (I Corinthians 11:1). When a father genuinely imitates Christ, his wife and children will want to imitate him. What a tragedy it is that many fathers today in America are "good for nothing." Having lost their way and their strength, they are *worthless* (See *New Millennium In-Depth Bible* - Matt. 5:13—"Worthless and good for nothing").

As Father's Day approaches, may we all remember our fathers – those who gave us life. Likewise, let us pray for those fathers who are "good for nothing" that their hearts may be touched by the Holy Spirit and they may return to the way of life before it is too late. And last, may we fervently intercede for those homes in which there are no fathers to support and guide little children as they face life's challenges.

NOTE: The story reprinted in this article was selected from the Book "Spurgeon At His Best"—compiled by Tom Carter; Copyrighted 1988 and published by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan -USA

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