

Dads & Dusty Kids

Psalm 103:11-14

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / June 20, 2021 (Father's Day)

- I. **You need to know that even the writers of the Word of God find words inadequate to describe God's love for His children!**

Psalm 103:11-12 "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us."

David finds words inadequate to describe the love and compassion God has for His children, so he resorts to imagery. But even that can't be pictured by our finite, human minds!

How great is God's love?

Picture the distance between the earth and the sky.

How great is the distance God puts between us and our sins?

Picture the distance between the east and the west.

- II. **You need to remember where words fall short, God calls people like you & me to put His character on display!**

- A. Instead of using mere words, God chose to use His people to help others understand His character.

Matthew 5:16 "In the same way, let your light shine before others, **so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.**"

John 17:20-21 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be in Us, **so that the world may believe that You have sent Me.**"

1 Peter 2:12 "Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, **they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation**".

John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. **By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.**"

- B. God illustrates His character repeatedly with parental examples throughout the Bible.

- a. "I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs..." (Hosea 13:8)
- b. "Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb?..." (Isa. 49:15)
- c. "Do you thus repay the Lord, you foolish and senseless people? Is not He your father, who created you, who made you and established you? ..." (Deut. 32:6)
- d. "It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?... Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? (Heb. 12:7,9)

III. The world is watching, but our kids are staring.

Psalm 103:13 "As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear Him."

A. This isn't an argument from the greater to the lesser. It's not:

"Fathers should show compassion to their kids just like God does."

B. Rather, there's an assumption that godly fathers are compassionate in a way that reflects the mercy and compassion of our Heavenly Father.

"You know how your Dad shows you compassion? That's what God is like."

C. When your kids do something "dusty," your response will be your kids' first impression of how God responds to their shortcomings.

Psalm 103:14 "For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust."

Psalm 78:38-39 "Yet He, being compassionate, atoned for their iniquity and did not destroy them; **He restrained his anger often** and did not stir up all His wrath. He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes and comes not again."

Questions for Personal Reflection and/or Community Group Discussion:

1. For what reason(s) are you grateful for your Dad?
2. What's one of your favorite word-pictures in the Bible used to depict the love God has for us?
3. How do you feel about the fact God calls us to put His character on display for a lost & dying world?
4. Who in your life do you think is most impacted by the example you set?
5. What is one specific character trait of Jesus you'll strive to better reflect in the days ahead? How will you do it?