

Passing On The Blessing

Intro: Today is Father's Day, the day we set aside to recognize, honor, and say thank you to our father's. So, to all the fathers here this morning, we say thank you. Thank you for your loving contribution to our lives.

Film clip: A Very Special Daddy

As noted in this film clip, Daddy's are very special. Children need a Father to love, encourage, direct, and discipline them as they grow and develop. The role of Dad is nothing short of a supernatural task. One of the most important tasks we face as Fathers is to let our children know that we love and accept them unconditionally. This is what Gary Smalley and John Trent describe as passing the blessing on to our children.

In their widely popular book, *The Blessing*, Smalley and Trent present five elements that comprise the family blessing. Quote: "A family blessing begins with *meaningful touch*; it contains *a spoken message, attaching high value to the one being blessed; picturing a special future for the one being blessed; and an active commitment [on the part of the parents] to help fulfill the blessing.*"

Smalley derives his model for *The Blessing* from the Old Testament account of Isaac bestowing the blessing on his son Esau in Genesis 27. Of course, as you all know, the blessing was intended for Isaac's oldest son, Esau. However, Jacob, and his mother Rebecca, deceived Isaac, so he pronounced the blessing on Jacob and not Esau, as he had intended. Look with me first of all at Isaac's Blessing on Jacob in Genesis 27.

I. Isaac's Blessing On Jacob (Genesis 27)

As you may recall, Isaac and Rebekah had twin sons, Esau and Jacob. Esau was a big, burly outdoorsman, who loved hunting and fishing. Jacob was more of a homebody, who spent a lot of time with his mother. From the outset we have a tragic picture of a family divided.

We pick up the story in the 27th chapter of Genesis. Isaac has grown old and decides it is time to pass on the blessing to his oldest son, Esau.

A Jewish father's blessing was a formal delegation of the father's authority and leadership to his oldest son. And since the oldest son was assuming the

leadership responsibilities of the family, he also received a double portion of his father's possessions.

A. The blessing promised to Esau (vv. 1-4)

In Genesis 27, verses 1-4 the aged and nearly blind Isaac calls for Esau, and tells him: "I am now an old man and don't know the day of my death." **Isaac was 137 years old at this time, and he lived another 37 years.** "Now then, get your weapons your quiver and bow and go out to the open country to hunt some wild game for me. Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die."

B. The blessing stolen by Rebekah and Jacob's deception (vv. 5-26)

As soon as Esau leaves, Rebekah, his mother, who had been listening to Isaac's instructions, seizes the opportunity to secure the blessing for Jacob. She quickly prepares some tasty food and tells Jacob to put on Esau's best clothes. To help fool blind old Isaac, she puts goatskins on Jacob's hands and arms to make them feel hairy. Rebekah sent Jacob in with the food to ask for Isaac's blessing.

We read in **verse 18**, Then Jacob came to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" **19** And Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your first-born; I have done as you told me. Get up, please, sit and eat of my game, that you may bless me." Isaac was suspicious because Jacob's voice didn't sound like Esau's. So he asked, **v. 20** "How did you find it so quickly, my son?" Jacob replied, "The Lord your God gave me success." Isaac still wasn't convinced, so he asked Jacob to "Please come close, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not." **22** So Jacob came close to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "**The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.**" **23** And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. **24** And he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" And he said, "I am." **25** So he said, "Bring it to me, and I will eat of my son's game, that I may bless you." And he brought it to him, and he ate; he also brought him wine and he drank.

C. The blessing bestowed by Isaac (vv. 27-29)

After he ate, Isaac instructed Jacob to come close and kiss him (v. 26). When

Isaac kissed him, and caught the smell of his clothes, he blessed him, vv. 27-29

- 27 ‘Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the LORD has blessed.
- 28 Now may God give you of the dew of heaven,
And of the fatness of the earth,
And an abundance of grain and new wine;
- 29 May peoples serve you,
And nations bow down to you;
Be master of your brothers,
And may your mother’s sons bow down to you.
Cursed be those who curse you,
And blessed be those who bless you.”

D. Esau pleads for his Father’s blessing (vv. 30-40)

30 After receiving the blessing from his father, Jacob had no sooner gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, than Esau his brother came in from his hunting. Esau quickly prepared the savory stew his father loved, and brought it in to him. He said to his father, “Let my father arise, and eat of his son’s game, that you may bless me.” 32 And Isaac his father said to him, “Who are you?” And he said, “I am your son, your first-born, Esau.”

33 Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, “Who was he then that hunted game and brought it to me, so that I ate of all of it before you came, and blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed.”

34 When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, “Bless me, even me also, O my father!”

35 And he said, “Your brother came deceitfully, and has taken away your blessing.” 36 Then he said, “Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted/deceived me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing.” And he said, “Have you not reserved a blessing for me?” 37 But Isaac answered and said to Esau, “Behold, I have made him your master, and all his relatives I have given to him as servants; and with grain and new wine I have sustained him. Now as for you then, what can I do, my son?” 38 And Esau said to his father, “Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my

father.” So Esau lifted his voice and wept.

We can feel the anguish in Esau’s desperate cry for his father’s blessing. However, in biblical times, once a blessing was spoken, it was irretrievable.

Smalley concludes that this same painful cry is being echoed today by many broken men and women who never received the family blessing from their parents. Perhaps you would admit that you never received the love, affection, and acceptance from your parents that you needed.

The good news this morning is that you and I can break the cycle of not receiving the blessing from our Fathers. Thanks be to God, who has sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, that we might experience God’s blessing in our lives now and forever more!

II. The Five Elements Comprising The Blessing

Having looked at Isaac’s Blessing on Jacob in Genesis 27, let’s look at the five elements comprising the Blessing. Dr. Smalley is confident that “When these 5 ingredients are present and practiced consistently in our homes, then our children grow up solid, secure, and confident of themselves, and are able to go out into the world and function normally.”

1. Meaningful touch (vv. 22 and 26; Mark 10) The first element of conveying the blessing involves hugging, kissing, and laying affectionate and loving hands on our children. **We read in verse 22** that “Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him.” And in **verse 26** we read “Isaac called for his son to come close to him and kiss him.” Meaningful touch is always associated with bestowing blessing. This conveys love and acceptance.

We read in **Mark 10**, that people were always bringing children to Jesus so that He could bless them. Jesus would set the children upon His knees, and laying His hands on them, He would bless them.” Jesus knew exactly what children need to feel loved and accepted.

Jesus provides a model for you and I to follow in our homes. When children are very small you can’t communicate love to them through words. They don’t understand words. The best way to communicate love and acceptance to little children is through meaningful touch, and holding them close.

Sadly, the only time my father ever showed me any meaningful touch was when he laid his hands on me to administer a little meaningful correction. The second element of blessing involves:

2. ***Spoken words of love and affection (v. 27)*** This would include words of love, affirmation, and acceptance. Listen to Isaac's words as he blesses Jacob in **verse 27** "See, the smell of my son Is like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed." Now, I am fairly certain that your child will not warm up to you for telling them they smell like a field that God has blessed. But to a seasoned hunter like Esau, who Isaac thought he was blessing, this would have been a great compliment. These were sincere words of love and affirmation.

The sad truth is that in many homes, positive words of love, affirmation, and acceptance are seldom heard. Many parents are quick to criticize, condemn, and remind their kids of their failures or shortcomings. Others practice the motto of *silence is golden*. Or they say things like, "*Children are to be seen, and not heard.*" Unfortunately, the only thing that critical and negative words communicate is anger and confusion. The child grows up feeling rejected, and never develops a sense of personal worth and acceptance.

The act of touching, combined with loving words of affirmation is medicine to the soul of a child. The third element of blessing involves speaking words of high value to our children.

3. ***Speaking words of high value (v. 28)***

Look at Isaac's words of blessing in verse 28:

28 "May God give you of the dew of heaven, And of the fatness of the earth, And an abundance of grain and new wine."

Isaac calls on God to provide rain, and an abundance of crops and new wine.

As parents, we need to speak words of high value and honor to our children. We need to bless our children by letting them know they are loved, irreplaceable, and special to us. Their value is not based on who they are, or on how they perform, but on the fact that they have been created in the image of God. We need to let our kids know that they are so valuable that God sent His own Son into our world to die for our sins on the cross. When your child comes to

you, pay attention to them. Give them your undivided attention by laying aside the newspaper or turning off your computer, radio or TV. Make eye contact and really listen to what they are saying. This conveys value!

The fourth element in pronouncing a blessing on your child involves speaking about your child's future as being filled with potential and promise.

4. *Pronouncing a special future for the child (v. 29)*

In verse 29 Isaac says to Jacob “May peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you; Be master of your brothers, And may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be those who curse you, And blessed be those who bless you.” These words rehears the blessing God pronounced on Isaac's father Abraham in Genesis 12:3-4

While none of us knows what the future holds for our children, we can remind them that following God in obedience will result in blessings.

Smalley and Trent tell the story of a young Jewish mother named Sidel. She was walking down the street pushing a stroller containing her infant twins. As she rounded a corner she ran into her neighbor, Sarah. “*My what beautiful children,*” Sarah cooed. “*What are their names?*” Pointing to each child, Sarah replied, “*This is Bennie, the doctor, and Reuben, the lawyer.*” This woman believed that her children had a special future before them, and she spoke of it often.

Now, let me caution you here. Don't make the mistake that some parents make of trying to get their child to become what they want them to be, instead of helping them to discover what God has created them to be. Our responsibility as parents is “To train up our child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6). We need to pray and ask God to help us discover what our child is interested in. We need to explore possible careers together, and then guide our children along.

The fifth element of the blessing involves: *An active commitment* on the part of the parent to love their child no matter what, and to help them realize God's will for their life

5. *An active commitment on the part of the parent to love their child no matter what, and to help them realize God's will for their life.*

Parents need to let their children know that they love them, and that they will never leave them, nor forsake them. What is more, we need to do everything in our power to help our children succeed. Do you show unlimited love and forgiveness to your children? Do you daily demonstrate your love for them? Do you tell them that you love them, and you are thankful for them? Do you make them feel loved?

Did you know that fathers spends less than eight minutes per day with their children (that includes meals and watching TV.). The number one thing kids want is our time and attention. We must actively commit our time and energy to loving and nurturing our children.

Conclusion: Fathers and mothers, would you ask God this morning to help you to love your children with an unconditional and everlasting love? God wants us to reach our children for Christ. The only way we can do that is to model Christ in our homes. God loves us my friends. Love is part of His nature as a Father. He loves us with an unconditional and eternal love.

May God help us to begin practicing the blessing in our homes by using meaningful touch, speaking positive words of blessing to our children, assuring them of their high value, speaking about your child's future as being filled with potential and promise, and most importantly, by actively committing ourselves to helping them realize God's will for their life.

God speaks positive words of blessing to us. 2 Corinthians 5:21—*“God the Father sent His Son to become sin for us, so that we could become the righteousness of God through faith in Him.”*

Just as our heavenly Father gave the greatest gift He could give in sending His Son Jesus Christ to die for the sins of the world (John 3:16); the most important gift that we earthly fathers can give to our children is our love. This means getting to know them and being involved in their lives so they also get to know you. It means spending time with your children and making the most of the time you spend with them. Speak positive words of love, and blessing to your children. Share God's Word, and pray with your kids.

Closing Prayer:

Closing song: Kenny Rogers Handprints with Father's Day Powerpoint