**A Fully-Devoted Parent**

**(Mark 1:9-13)**

***Senior Pastor Chris Kam***

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. (Mark 1 :9-13)

# Introduction

We all fear our fathers. Some of our fathers fear their mothers. It is not easy being a father because there are no courses on them. 

Life does come with an instruction book. It’s called the Bible.

There are 5 defining questions about being fathers. They are

* Why is fathering so important?
* If it is so important, why is fathering so neglected?
* What is fathering all about?
* What makes fathering so difficult?
* How can fathering be best accomplished?

We have an amazing role to shape our child's identity. Fathering is not about providing a good education or a good lifestyle. It is about leaving something for your children about who God is. There are no such thing as spiritual grandchildren, only spiritual children. We should bring them from second hand Christians to first hand Christians.

The BIG IDEA.

A child is more likely to see God as his Father if he sees God in his own father.

“We are fathers like God is a father. We are walking object lessons to our children on who God is.” Ken Canfield, author of “The 7 Secrets of Effective Fathers”

Men in DUMC come together for Men Alive. The desire to learn is the only thing you need to be a good father. Pastor Chris went for a marriage course at 20 and a parenting course at 21. You are never too young to learn. Pastor Chris only got married 8 years later.

Parents also need to be sure that their children will be okay when they leave the world. Some parents still treat their fifty-year-old children as if they are fifteen. Your children will be ok if they have God in their life. Release your children to God.

**BIG IDEA**

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We need to remind our young people that character is important. in order to be more Christ-like, we must be like Christ. More is caught than taught. It is not about believing but showing the reality of God. If we are half hearted, our children will be half hearted. As the famous saying goes, “Monkey see Monkey do”

Pastor Chris commended young parents bringing their children to church. It is not easy bringing babies, toddlers and even young children. It is easier to watch at home or leave them with babysitters. Bringing young children to church creates rhythm and routine in them at young. This then will be practised by their children and so on.

The Jewish shema is always recited in Jewish family.

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6: 4-9)

Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him? 8 And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today? Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them. (Deuteronomy 4:6--9)

If it is not in your heart, your children will not follow. If you are not a child to God the Father, your children will not follow God as well. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God is not intergenerational. You have to experience God personally. We cannot give something we do not have. If we expect the church to raise our children in the Lord, we got it all wrong. The church can only assist.

He loves us unconditionally. During BMEW (Baptism and Membership Encounter Weekend), men cry when they discover the Father Heart of God. They reconcile. Even old people at sixty find it difficult to forgive their dead parents. When we become God’s family, Jesus walks with us as our brother. God is our Father.

The three powerful phrases in fathering lies in Mark 1:11

And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” (Mark 1:11)

# You are my Son (Identity)

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right
to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or
a husband’s will, but born of God. (John 1:12-13)

Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings (Psalms 17:8)

You are a child of God. We always want someone to accept us in public for who we are. Asian parents tend to embarrass their children in front of others. “My son is not smart. he made stupid mistakes in is math test.” “My daughter is ugly. Your daughter is more beautiful.” DUMC used to practice proclaiming good results of children who have done well in government exams. Then the elders came to a conclusion that even if our children fail, we must be proud of our children. When Pastor Chris failed his university in his first year, his father wrote a letter to him to encourage him not to give up and keep going.

# D60B998CWhom I love (Acceptance)

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor 5:21, ESV)

Many grow up thinking they can never be good enough for God. We do something for God because God has already loved me. This changes our perception. Instead of going after God’s love, we are compelled by God’s love that we serve Him.

No one can guarantee a calamity-free world. We are at peace knowing God is in control and have the confidence to face the world. It is never too late to renew your love for God. When your children see the intimacy of your relationship

# With whom I am well pleased (Approval / Affirmation)

For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. (2 Corinthians 5:14)

During BMEW, there was an old man who shared that he cannot forgive his father all these years even after his father died. He then made a promise to go to his father’s grave and forgive him. He asked Pastor Chris to hold him accountable. Some of us are have been crippled by absentee fathers. It affects every area of our life. As we get things right with god, we get things right with our family and others.

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?



Sermon summary by Abbey Thangiah.