

A Message for Parents

As we look forward to Mother's Day and Father's Day

It's not easy being a parent, I've heard so many people say. And it seems to get harder every year. Our kids are involved in so much, and we are racing to keep up with their demands and our own needs. Let me share a few words of support and love for all of you, and the job you are trying to do. There is nothing more important than parenting!

The stresses and demands all around us may have prevented us from our most important calling. Our job, school and academic pressures, sports and other extra-curriculars are important to us and our kids. But I'm afraid we're letting these things distract us from the most important interactions between parent and child - that of spiritual role model.

For help with this advice, I turn to Martin Luther. In Luther's "Small Catechism," in his explanation of the 4th Commandment, Luther wrote, "We are to fear and love God, so that we neither despise nor anger our parents and others in authority, but instead honor, serve, obey, love, and respect them." These words direct us to respect and honor our parents, teachers, police, judges, etc. - because God has given them to us to raise us and teach us. So, on Mother's Day or Father's Day, the least we can do is thank our parents for all they are doing or have done.

But, in other places, Luther wrote about parents' responsibilities to their kids. Martin and Katie took this very seriously as they parented six children. What Luther said is that the #1 responsibility we as parents have is to teach our kid the Christian faith and model the living out of that faith for them.

The Luthers spent lots of time with their kids, reading from and explaining the Bible, in prayer, in meal grace, in devotions, and more. I fear we parents may have let all the other major roles we have keep us from this primary role.

This is my Mother's Day and Father's Day prayer for you this year:

"Lord, let me show my child the importance of worship and praise, prayer and discipleship. Let me be present with my child on Sunday as often as possible. Let me model a way of life that shows my child that God is at the center of our lives. Lord, help me to do this, maybe not perfectly, but as well as I can." Amen

~Pastor David M. Deal