

FATHER'S DAY RETREAT





SHARING WISDOM & TRUTH

GETTING STARTED

Find a comfortable place in your home or even outdoors for this retreat. Take a few minutes to think about your father and other men who have been wise and guiding figures in your life. You might want to light a candle in memory of wisdom figures who have passed away.

Now, settle into the moment...

 Close your eyes and breathe deeply

 Recognize that God is with you

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank you for our fathers. They gave us life and continue to give us the wisdom to live our lives. By their examples of love, we know ourselves. By their examples of faith, we know you better. Invigorate our fathers with the love and respect of their children so that they may be encouraged, inspired, and greatly blessed. Amen.

READING: [Proverbs 23:22-25](#)

Listen to your father who begot you,
do not despise your mother when she is old.
Buy truth and do not sell:
wisdom, instruction, understanding!

The father of a just person will exult greatly;
whoever begets a wise son rejoice in him.
Let your father and mother rejoice;
Let her who bore you exult.

THOUGHTS ON THE READING

Mark Twain once said, "When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years." It always seems that when we are children (or not so much children) of a certain age, we think we know it all. We believe we have all the answers. And our parents just don't get it. It's so easy to become dismissive and turn away from sources of real wisdom, opting instead to rely on our own resources. Yet, if we pay attention, we may be fortunate enough to see that though our fathers grew up in a different time with different options, they have the wisdom to know how certain situations will progress. Having been through, or at least seen, most everything that we go through, they can provide advice, warning, instruction, and insight that can help us make better decisions in our lives. The wisdom that fathers give can help us to know who we are and what we are able to do. It can help distinguish between things that are good for us and things that will harm us.

The parental pride moment in the Proverbs scripture happens today when we translate tried and true wisdom from Dad, Mom, and others into our current reality. When we're teaching old wisdom in new ways by lives that are characterized by love and justice, our fathers are proud. And we further a legacy that we pass on to our families and to the world.




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REFLECTING ON THE READING

Take a few moments to think about (or even write down) your responses to the following. If you do this retreat with your father, share your reflections with one another.

-  *For daughters and sons – What wisdom and truths about your life has your father passed on to you? How has your father's example given you the strength to deal with the realities of life?*
-  *For fathers – What wisdom and truths have your children shared with you that enable you to live better in today's world? What challenges do your children face in today's world that will show off their strength, character, and talents?*
-  *For new fathers – Name three truths you hope to teach your children. How has this new role of father helped you to better appreciate your own father?*

PRAYING FOR THE COMMUNITY

God, we give thanks today for our fathers and for all they have done to share wisdom and truth. We especially remember fathers who struggle to maintain their families, single fathers, and fathers who bravely face social injustice for the sake of their families – that from their sacrifice come children capable of changing the world. We remember fathers who have lost children through death – that they may receive the consolation that gives peace and hope. We remember fathers who have died – that their legacy of wisdom and love may be a sturdy rock upon which we proudly stand. We also pray for fathers who are imprisoned, fathers who suffer from addictions or abuse, and fathers who have left or harmed their families – that the mercy and love of God may guide and strengthen their hearts and minds to repair what has been broken.

Add your own: God, we remember fathers who...

MAKE A COMMITMENT TO SHARE WISDOM

Using your reflection responses as a guide, make a personal commitment to share the wisdom you have learned from your father or another wisdom figure in your life.

Ideas: send an e-mail or personal note to a friend or family member who could use some of the same fatherly advice you've received. Incorporate this commitment into your role as someone's [godparent](#). Serve as a mentor, tutor, confirmation sponsor, or other volunteer who works with young children and teenagers.

CONCLUSION

God of all fathers, in your wisdom and love you have made all things. As we honor our fathers this Father's Day, help us to live a father's example. May our minds and hearts become stronger in the wisdom and love that we share. Help us to promote truth, value necessary instruction, and foster mutual understanding as we go through life. And may a spirit of greater respect strengthen us all. Amen.