

The Case for Fathers – A Call to R.E.A.L. Men

Fathers matter. (*John 8:12-47*)

Our ‘case’ is in the context of a well-formed and effective legal argument, which is made up of 5 essential elements: Facts, Issues, Rules, Analysis and a Conclusion.

I. Facts and Fathers

Facts are the evidentiary elements involved in the investigation of a matter.

There is no mystery of fact surrounding the importance of fatherhood.

Edwin Louis Cole taught that fathers give us stability, backbone, a sense of identity, and strength of character.

Theologically, we understand that God, the first Father and progenitor of mankind, birthed man in His own image, creating him in ‘the image and likeness of God.’

- So every man has the capacity for positive, God inspired, fatherhood.
(*Genesis 1:27*)

Modern research confirms the importance of fathers:

- Father involvement is a key family protective factor that is crucial to children’s healthy development.
 - *The role of father in child development*, Lamb, 2000.
- Numerous studies suggest a link between greater father involvement and child-positive health, mental health, socioemotional, academic, and behavioral outcomes.
 - *Meta-analysis on the roles of fathers in parenting: are they unique?*, Jeynes, 2016.
 - *Father’s involvement and children’s developmental outcomes: a systematic review of literature*, Sarkadi et. al, 2008.
- Positive father-child relationships have been linked to reduced internalizing and externalizing behavior problems in children and adolescents.
 - *Father involvement and behavior problems among preadolescents at risk of maltreatment*, Yoon et. al, 2018.

- A greater quantity of father involvement at age 7 predicted decreased levels of emotional and behavioral problems at age 16.
 - *The role of father involvement in children's later mental health, Fluori and Buchanan, 2003.*
- Among African American adolescents, spending more time with fathers has been associated with lower levels of depression and substance abuse.
 - *Effects of family structure, family process, and family involvement on psychosocial outcomes among African American adolescents, Salem et. al, 1998.*

II. Issues with Fatherlessness

Issues arise where there are gaps in the facts, contradictory facts or missing facts, such that a coherent rendering of the fact pattern demands that a question or questions be answered to achieve a meaningful resolution.

A man can be absent because he is not present, or because of a lack of presence.

Household

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2023, 17.8 million children, nearly 1 in 4 (25%), live without a biological, step, or adoptive father in the home (living with mother only)... in 1960 the number was 8%.

57.6% of black children, 31.2% of Hispanic children, and 20.7% of white children are living absent their biological fathers.

- Family Structure and Children's Living Arrangements. Current Population Report. U.S. Census Bureau July 1, 2012

Time Spent

White children born in the 1950-1954 period spent only 8% of their childhood with just one parent; black children spent 22%. Of those born in 1980, by one estimate, white children can be expected to spend 31% of their childhood years with one parent, and black children 59%.

- *Life Without Father*. Popenoe, David (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996)

What Americans are saying about Fatherlessness in America?

According to 72.2% of the U.S. population, fatherlessness is the most significant family or social problem facing America.

- National Center for Fathering, Fathering in America Poll, January, 1999.

Is this a new problem?

No. Even centuries ago, Paul observed “For you have many teachers, but few fathers.” (1 Corinthians 4:15)

So then, here is the question: Why does fatherlessness persist in America, when so many Americans agree that it is the most significant family or social problem facing America?

III. The Rule of Fatherhood

Everything that God creates he does so by design: on purpose, in purpose, with purpose, to accomplish His purpose.

God is not like man. God doesn’t deal in accidents, oversights, or overcorrections.

Manhood is synonymous with Christlikeness

- Manhood isn’t synonymous with boyhood
- Manhood isn’t synonymous with womanhood
- Manhood isn’t synonymous with animal behavior

By nature of being a certain thing, it follows that you and I cannot be a host of other things.

Since manhood is synonymous with Christlikeness; manhood as fatherhood is the express nature of God. (Genesis 1:27; Hebrews 1:3; John 1:1; John 3:16)

IV. An Analysis of REAL Men

The realest things are unseen, not seen, invisible, not visible. (Romans 1:20)

Men and fathers face strongholds that must be conquered. (Dr. Clarence Walker)

Godly fathers - Christlike fathers, are REAL Men.

REAL as an acronym implies Responsibility; Empowerment; Affluence; and Legacy.

Fathers as REAL men have the ability to respond rather than react. (*John 3:16*)

- Love is a CHOICE, not a feeling

Fathers as REAL men empower their families. (*John 3:16*)

- Love desires to give even at the expense of self

Fathers as REAL men give abundantly and receive abundantly. (*John 3:16*)

- Giving is planting

Fathers as REAL men leave an investment in people. (*John 3:16*)

- Greatness is a byproduct of what we transfer to others

V. The Conclusion of Fatherhood

Biblical Fatherhood is a solution to Fatherlessness.

- The Hebrew concept of Fatherhood was different from the Greek concept.
 - Assumptions that Affect Our Lives, Dr. Christian Overman

REAL Fathers are Faithful (*Galatians 3:6*)

REAL Fathers are Frank (*1 & 2 Timothy*)

REAL Fathers are Friends (*Acts 9:27*)

REAL Fathers Forgive and ask for Forgiveness (*2 Timothy 4:11*)

REAL Fathers Fast and pray (*2 Corinthians 11:17*)

Fathers are Founders (*Genesis 12:2*) Founders operate under a constitution that determines what comes in and what stays out.

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