



Kingdom Living – Listening to God

Date: Sunday 18th June 2007

Speakers: Elaine Webster, Jeff Stamps

Key Verses: Matthew 1:18-25

Summary

Almost any man can father a child but there is so much more to the important role of being dad in a child's life. Studies show that if a strong male role model is affectionate, supportive, and involved, he can contribute greatly to your child's ability to learn and reason, to their language and social development. Children with strong male role models are more likely to develop a strong sense of well-being self-esteem, and authenticity.

We never think about the impact Joseph had on Jesus. The Bible doesn't say a lot about Joseph but we have a few clues from what it does say:

Joseph listened to God and did what God said – he married Mary even though he wasn't the father of Mary's child. (have everyone hold up the cards they have coloured of Mary & Joseph)

Mary & Joseph dedicated Jesus to God just as the parents did on Sunday.

Joseph taught Jesus to be a carpenter and raised Jesus as his own son.

So what does all that mean for us today. Well Joseph wasn't Jesus' real father he had adopted Him. God was Jesus father. Some of us will have dads who are with us here today. Some of us will have step dads, some of us may have been fostered or adopted. And some of us may have spiritual dads – men who have helped us get to know God better.

As a church we are called to help raise the children of the church so if you're dad isn't around then there may be families who help out your family or people who act a bit like your grandparents in the church. A friend of mine was kind of adopted by a family when she studied for her degree that couple felt like her second mum and dad. So dads and male role models can come in all shapes and sizes and at all different times of our lives. That's one of the great things about being part of God's family we get more than one dad; our dad in heaven, our dad on Earth and other people in the church who can help us in our lives.

Questions for small groups

1. Share a time when your dad or an older man has done something special for you.
2. Why do we sometimes find it difficult to relate to God as our Father?
3. How does our culture see men? Does it fit with how God sees them?

To ponder or pray about this week...

Spend time reading the story of Joseph in Matthew 1:18-25.

Think about how you and your small group/community could support single-parent, adoptive, fostering or other more vulnerable families in your local context. Ask God what He might be calling you to do!