

How do you find a spiritual father? (Part 2)

- All right, howdy guys, Pastor Mark here, with the Real Men Sermon Series on First Timothy Good Fight. And actually the first sermon is so long, it's basically a talk, I sat in the chair. You get what you pay for, it's free. Sat in the chair and start a verbal processing. So the first talk is a full introduction to First Timothy and his relationship with Paul. The second one is Find a Father. It's the first of 12 commands in First Timothy, and it's talking about either honoring the father you have or finding the spiritual father that you need. And what happens is if you have a father wound, meaning you don't understand the fatherhood of God, and you've got a wound that's not forgiven and healed from an earthly father or father figure, it results in something that I will call an orphan spirit. And again, I get into this in the sermon series, in the book, Pray Like Jesus With My Daughter. But an orphan spirit, it causes even grown men, even successful men, even strong men, to have a sense of bewildering insecurity, an orphan spirit. They always feel out, not in. They always feel excluded, not included. They always feel rejected, not accepted. There's something in them that's unhealed. And Jesus said when he was returning to heaven, he said, I'm not gonna leave you as orphans. I'm gonna send the Holy Spirit. And so what the Holy Spirit does, and again, I'll just hit this briefly, but if you wanna study it, Galatians 4:6-7, and Romans 8:14-16, if you're a thought leader, you're a nerd dude, check out Galatians 4:6-7, also written by Paul, and Romans 8:14-16, also written by Paul. And he says that, that we're made sons of God by the Holy Spirit and that the Holy Spirit comes to a man and gives him a new heart by which he cries out Abba Father. And what it says in that context, it takes you from a slave mentality to a son mentality. It literally is a renewing of your mind. A slave is never accepted. A son is always accepted. A slave has no rights. A son has rights. A slave has no inheritance. A son has an inheritance. A slave is never really loved. A son is always loved. And a slave works for their approval. A son works from their approval. This is really important. This is the heart of the fatherhood of God. And that is that if you belong to the Lord Jesus, you have received the spirit of son-ship, by which you cry Abba Father. And for too many men, they're works oriented, not grace oriented. They work for the father's approval, not from the father's approval. These are the guys that just crush it at work. They crush it in business, they crush it in sports, they crush it in the military, and then they come home, and they get crushed with their wife and kids. They win everywhere and they lose at home. Why? Because they're thinking more in terms of performance and works, not grace and relationships. This describes most men with a father wound and an orphan spirit, and they're always feeling like they need to prove themselves and then they push everyone to prove, and to prove themselves to be approved. The flip of this is the relationship with God the Father, and Jesus Christ, the son of God. I'll give you an example. Jesus didn't work for the Father's approval at the finish line. He worked from the father's approval at the starting line. So at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Jesus is baptized and the whole Trinity is present. The Holy Spirit descends on the son of God like a dove. And God the Father speaks from heaven. And he says, this is my son in whom I am well pleased. At that point, Jesus hadn't cast out a demon, done a miracle, preached a sermon. He was just at the beginning. And so the, the spirit of son-ship is not at the end, if you make it, it's the beginning to ensure that you make it to the end. The spirit of son-ship changes everything. All the work you do, all the things you endure is not so that you will be loved, but because you are. Not so that you will be accepted, but because you are. Not so that you'll be approved, but because you are.

Again, back to the Apostle Paul, one of the most productive mere mortals in the history of the world. And it's all by grace and the grace of God and the spirit of son-ship causes us to be fruitful and to get things done. And there is works that are from the flesh, and then there is fruit that is from the spirit, and it's a life of fruitfulness. I'll give you an example, when each of my sons were born, I held them for the first time, and our firstborn was a son. And I prayed basically the same thing over them, blessing and approval and favor. And I said, God, you are my father. I'm your son. And now I am a father. This is my son. For a man, this is one of the most transforming experiences in our life, is when we hold our children, including our son. And I said, as you have loved me, Holy Spirit helped me to love them. As you have approved of me, help me to approve of them. As you've been patient with me, help me to be patient with them. As you have instructed me, please help me to instruct them. As you have corrected me, please help me to correct them. As you have protected me, please help me to protect them. I want to mirror, to reflect my Heavenly Father to my earthly children. And in that occasion, my sons. And I want them to know that I am pleased with them and I am for them, and I am there for them every day of their life. And so what I used to do when my boys were little, I would get down on eye level and look them in the eye, because as a man, you don't wanna speak down to your son. You wanna speak at your son and you wanna pull him up. And that's what a father does. He takes a boy and he makes him a man. He pulls him up into the fullness of who he can be, and he sees the strengths that are misdirected and he redirects them, to bring out the best in that young man. But I would get down at eye level and I would look at my sons and I would ask the question, who am I? And they would say, you're my dad, you're my father. I'd say, who are you? And they'd say, well, I'm your son. And I would always ask, how does your father feel about you? How do I feel about you? And they'd always look and I'd say, look me in the eye. And they would say something like, you love me. You're for me. I can depend on you. I can trust you. And I would always ask, of every single human being on the Earth, who is the first person in line who wants good for you and is there for you and is there to help you and bless you? And they would always say, my dad. And if at any point they didn't say that, we needed to work on our relationship, then I would teach them something or I would correct them, or there would be consequences for behavior. But I would always want to connect before I would instruct or correct. And I wanted my heart to literally just be open to my sons that they could literally see, their father's heart is for them. The result is I love being a dad. And being a dad has taught me more about my Father in heaven than anything else in my life. Once I had my sons, I was like, ah, now I'm learning a lot about my Father in heaven. And so if you're a father, you're in a unique blessed position. And if you're a son that has a godly father, you are living a miracle. Hardly any men have a good dad. And if you have a good dad or good grandpa or uncle or father figure, adoptive dad, just thank 'em, bless 'em, honor 'em, no man is perfect. But if you had a decent one, what a blessing. And the question is though, what if you don't have a good dad? What if you don't have any dad? Well, we'll talk about that in a moment. But what we see here are three things, that he says that the Heavenly Father gives. And as men, we don't want to just receive these things, we want to give them. God doesn't give gifts to us, just for us. He gives gifts through us to share with others. Number one is grace. Grace is getting what you don't deserve. This is generosity. This is presence and teaching and time and patience. Are you a grace centered man with especially your sons, grandsons or younger men that you're spiritually

fathering? It has to be grace. Men grow healthy in an environment of grace, in an environment of works, performance, law, and religion. Men do not grow up to be healthy, because they're non-relational. They care about the results, not the relationship. They care about the performance, not the person. If you wanna raise a human being and not just a productive machine or animal, they're gonna need an environment of grace. Number two, he uses the word mercy. Grace is giving what they don't deserve. Mercy is withholding what they do deserve, withholding what they do deserve. Meaning, maybe you're gonna pay for something that was their fault. Maybe you're gonna help fix something that they messed up or broke. Maybe you could drop the hammer on them, but they're already convicted and they've already owned it. And they, dad, I screwed up. Here's what I did. Great. I'm not gonna put law on you. I'm gonna put grace on you. I'm gonna give mercy to you and I'm gonna help you, so you don't deal with the consequences. And I'll say this to you. Well then this brings peace. That's the third thing that he mentions is peace. And what peace is, it's peace with God. It's the peace of God, and then it's peace with others. And you're looking at a whole generation that is struggling with mental health, suicidal ideation, gender dysphoria, and confusion. It's all the result of not having a healthy, godly relationship with the Father in heaven and a father on Earth, through which grace, mercy, and peace come. That's why you're seeing people that are broken, traumatized, and afflicted. Now, in saying all of that, the question is, are you a man of grace, are you a man of mercy? And is there peace? And peace is really a relational concept with God and with others. And if there's a lot of conflict around you, if there's fear of you, if others are always trying to earn your love, which isn't love, then you've gotta re-hardwire yourself. And you gotta go to your father and say, teach me about grace, teach me about mercy, teach me about peace. So that those can be the realities in my relationships, starting with my own family, my wife and my kids. Elijah Book, it's coming out, super excited, been working on this for a long time. And this is probably the most controversial, culturally relevant, insightful, prophetic, Holy Spirit meets demonic, mind diaper kind of content, I've ever prepared. I'll give you the subtitle. It's too long to even remember. It's a study of Elijah's sex, gender, ancient paganism masquerading as progressive Christianity, victims of nothing, woke politics, the transgender, Jezebel spirit that castrates men, and the passive Ahab, soft bloke, Christian, beta male spirit leading the conga line to shield, carrying a rainbow flag. If I haven't offended you yet, get the book, I'm gonna give it my best shot. Here's where it started. I was getting ready to teach a series from First and Second Kings on the life of an ancient prophet, Elijah, and sat down and over the course of, I don't even remember, a day or two, I just was praying and verbal processing and seeing things and taking almost three decades of Bible teaching. And before it was all said and done, I accidentally wrote a book. I think it's the most incredible thing I've ever written. I was learning things while writing it. The Holy Spirit was involved in a supernatural way that I don't fully understand. My wife, Grace, kept coming over. We were supposed to be on break, it was after Christmas. She's like, are you all right? I said, yeah, I'm just in a weird zone. A Rain Man meets a haunted house, meets demons, meets Holy Spirit, meets Old Testament, kind of lane and we're just gonna give it away. I know nobody's gonna publish it, because you know, it's not safe for the whole family. In fact, don't let your kids read it. They'll be up all night. But it is an insight. And the principle behind the book, it's in conjunction with the sermon series that I'm doing, which thank you for helping get the word out. It's the most popular sermon series I've ever done,

is that we have new days, but we have old demons. And that what we're seeing today with corrupt government, men who are like Ahab, they're passive and cowardly and soft and weak and woke. And women who are like Jezebel, domineering, overbearing, controlling, sexual, manipulative, dangerous, and violent, but still say that they're the victims. We're also seeing in our day, transgenderism, castration of men. Jezebel, we were told, was surrounded by her eunuchs. And so I got into a deep dive study and what I was able to do, is connect 3,000 years ago with today. And what we're seeing is different people, but the same activities and the same beliefs, because working behind the scenes are the same demons. So what we're gonna do in the book, we're not gonna just look at the life of Elijah, we're gonna look through it into our present. We're gonna assume that the Bible is not old, that it's eternal. And because it's timeless, it's always timely. And what we're going to do, is we're gonna peel back the demonic veil on what's really happening in Western culture. And the whole prayer and goal is that you would become like Elijah, filled with the Holy Spirit, that you would know how to take a stand and to take the shots and call the shots for the kingdom of God, that you'd be able to wisely lead your life and lead your family. And if you're a ministry leader, lead your ministry into the purposes of God. You can find everything at realfaith.com, daily devotions, the sermons, the Real Men Talks, and also the study guide. And now the Elijah full book. It's coming in around 60,000 words. Or you can text the word fire to 99383. That's again, text the word fire in 99383. I'm not getting paid for this. I wrote it. I'm proud of it. I'm giving it away. Any gift you want to give goes into Real Faith Ministry, helps me get Bible teaching out. Honestly, I just want to get this message out. I think it's a prophetic word for pathetic days. And I was gonna say this too, maybe it's the Holy Spirit that brings this to mind. When you're raising up a young man, there's a big difference between sins and mistakes. And a father needs to know the difference. Religious men don't, but relational men do. Grace-centered, merciful men do. Your boys, if you're raising sons or grandsons, or maybe you're mentoring and raising young men, they're gonna make mistakes because they're human. And the way that guys learn to do things is by doing them wrong and then figuring out how to do them right. And so especially when you're raising up sons or spiritual sons, they're gonna screw up and make mistakes. The first question is, was it a sin or a mistake? You know, raising my sons, first time I put 'em on a bike that crashed it. First time they tried to hit a curve ball, they missed it. First time they tried to drive a nail, they missed it. You know, I mean, it's just, they're gonna make mistakes. And boys need to have grace, mercy, and peace to where you're not always dropping the law and performance and expectations and perfection on them, so that they have an environment of grace to take risks. Because what happens is, if you create an environment of fear, men don't take risks 'cause they're afraid of failure. Well, I would say this, if men never take risks, they're not men. God made men to take risks, which means men are going to fail, and then they're gonna learn from it, and then they're gonna overcome it, and they're gonna do better and they're gonna mature. And that's just the process of manhood. Now, if a guy commits a sin, that's one thing, and you discipline for that because those are God's laws. But if they make a mistake, you don't drop the hammer on them just because they've inconvenienced to you. I'll give you an example. I won't say which son, but one of my sons is learning to work on vehicles. So you know how you learn how to work on a vehicle? By making mistakes. So he recently made a mistake. He went to clean out the engine compartment and somehow took the battery terminals off and crossed them and fried his whole

electrical system, and fried his battery, fried his alternator, fried it all out. And he is like, called me, he is like, dad, I'm stranded. I was cleaning it out, you know, at the car wash, and I screwed up, I didn't mean to, I made a mistake and I fried my electrical system. Okay, I'll come pick you up, son. You sure did fry your electrical system. He's like, I'm sorry I screwed up. He owned it and it was a mistake. It was not a sin. It's the first time, you know, he's working on an old vehicle, he's learning. So we had it towed and I got it fixed. And he's like, dad, you're gonna pay for all that? I was like, yeah. He's like, why? I said, well, my father is gracious and sometimes that's giving, my father is merciful and my father brings me peace, not hell, and I said, son, you're a good kid, and you're trying to be responsible and learn how to work on your own vehicles and maybe flip some vehicles and generate some extra revenue. And he actually did flip a vehicle and make some money. So he started, I said, but dude, you've never done this. So you're gonna make mistakes. And there's a difference between committing a sin and making a mistake. And I don't know why I feel inclined to share that with you. Some of you, you got disciplined for your dad because you made a mistake. Well, you shouldn't. And your Heavenly Father lets you be human. And that's a relationship of grace. That's a relationship of mercy. And that's a relationship of peace. You can take risks, you can try things, you can screw up. Your father loves and forgives you and helps you. And if it's a sin, that's different. But if it's humanity, you learn through trial and error. There's a whole generation raised in the church that doesn't understand this. Part of it is 'cuz they're over mothered. They're under fathered, and they have a perfectionistic religious mother, rather than a grace centered, you know, father who says, you know I was a boy once, I know what it's like. Let me tag in here, raise this kid, not without the mother, but step into a primary position. Because if a guy is over mothered for too long, he'll always be a boy, he'll never be a man. It takes a man to raise a man. Only a man can raise a man. That's why in addition to the Heavenly Father, we all need an earthly father. And so five times, including here in the New Testament, Paul calls Timothy, my son, my son. They're not biological, but they're spiritual. Paul is a father figure. Timothy is a spiritual son. In addition to physical fathers, we have father figures and spiritual fathers. This can be a pastor, a coach, a mentor, an uncle, a grandfather, just somebody who's ahead of you, loves the Lord, is filled with the spirit, knows the word, and is for you and helping pull you up and pull you forward. And so that's exactly what we see here, is spiritual fathering. And I would say this is now a cultural crisis, more needed than ever. Good godly, healthy, spiritual fathers. We're lacking fathers from beginning to end. And when you get less fathers, you get more government. And my answer is always, we need more fathers and less government. Your government doesn't need to raise you. Your father should. Your government doesn't need to protect you. Your father should. Your government doesn't need to discipline you. Your father should. Your government shouldn't have to educate you on how to be a man, your father should. And at the end of the Old Testament in Malachi, it's this prophecy about a cursed nation. It says that when Jesus comes, the son of God, that he would turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to the fathers, otherwise the nation is cursed. We're now living in a cursed nation. I don't know what nation you're in, but my nation of America, it's cursed. And how do I know it's cursed? Well, fathers don't have a heart for their children. They want to abort them, they want to abandon them, they want to neglect them, they want to ignore them, and they want to use and abuse them. In addition, children do not have a heart for their fathers. You have bitterness toward

father figures. You have bitterness toward manhood, masculinity, all we hear about is toxic masculinity. Yeah, that is a bit of a problem. But the bigger problem is the lack of masculinity altogether. The answer to unhealthy men is not no men or no masculinity, but stronger, better men who roll those guys over and set the culture to bless women and children. And so we need more men, better men, stronger men, because we are cursed. Now that being said, here's the introduction. Paul is writing to Timothy as a spiritual son. If you're an older guy, my question is, do you have a healthy relationship with God the Father? And if not, how do you need to get to know God as Father? This is probably a deep dive Bible study. This is probably a lot of prayer. This is asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to you, Him as Father and you as son. And I used to tell my boys, whatever you do, you could tell your dad, 'cuz I can't love you anymore. I love you with all I got, and I won't love you any less no matter what you do, because ours is a grace based relationship. And your father is here to help. Do you have a relationship like that with your Heavenly Father? If not, that needs to be your highest priority. I love the fact that Paul starts his letter there. Start with the fatherhood of God. Number two, are you a man, if you're older, who's ready and willing to be a spiritual father? To take some of your time, some of your energy, some of your money to find maybe your sons, your grandsons, your nephews, maybe younger guys at your church, put a hand on them? And the Bible talks a lot about raising up leaders through a laying on of hands, which means you need to be close enough that you do life together and it's relational. And you grab that guy and you're like, hey, if you wanna meet, I'll meet. If you want to come over to dinner at my house and see life with me and my wife and my kids, and ask them questions, you're welcome to. Hey, if you want to come, you know, work for me at the company or intern, I'll teach you the business and pull you up. If you wanna figure out how to buy a house or how to turn a wrench or how to love a woman or how to pay off a debt, I'm here to help. What we need are those father figures. And as well, if you're a younger man, are you willing to have a father figure and to be a son? Are you willing to show up and take notes and shut up and listen and learn and not make excuses and not be an idiot who's just vaping, downloading porn, drinking light beer, and looking for loose women with no, you know, sense of discernment or expectation? If you're a dude that wants to start peering out the sphincter and follow the light into a better future, then you've gotta find a spiritual father, some dude who's ahead of you, who can help you to carve a future. And I'm just telling you, if you will ask those guys, hey, I don't wanna meet all the time. I'm not gonna be a boy, I'm gonna be a man. But when we meet, I'm gonna have some questions, and I need you to ask me hard questions and coach me up and give me some stuff to read and some stuff to do, some homework assignments, some results. Because Paul and Timothy, they're not hanging out every week by, you know, some campfire singing songs on an acoustic guitar, because Paul's busy and Timothy's busy. That's why they write letters and that's why they talk, you know, oftentimes not face to face. And sometimes the dude thinks, well if I'm gonna get a mentor, you know, we're just gonna get a tandem bike and we're gonna ride it every week wearing matching sweatshirts. No, that's your girlfriend or your wife. That's not your spiritual father. It's fine to get a meal with the dude. It's fine to get a cup of coffee, it's fine to go to the gun range, it's fine to go hunting, it's fine to go to the game and talk stuff out. I meet with my sons and I love that. But just know that if you've got a good man, he's probably very busy and you can't waste his time and energy if you really wanna learn from him. All of that to say, I'll close with a sociological study. And what we're gonna get into in the rest of

the book, is how for older men to father and younger men to get pulled up as sons, and to become men of God who fight a good fight. That's in chapter 6 of First Timothy. But if you give the sciences and the social sciences enough time, eventually they catch up with the Bible. And that's recently happened. There was an Australian study recently published, 830 pairs of father son relationships. Lemme say this, Australia is completely gone culturally, it's completely woke, it's liberal, it's socialistic, it's got tall poppy syndrome where they cut down any man who's strong and an alpha and a leader. It's a generation further gone than even the bright blue dots in the United States of America. And so when they come to a logical conclusion, you know it's a miracle. They looked at men ages 15 to 20 in relationship with their fathers, and they asked them 22 questions. And then they tried to ascertain if you have a dad who's in your life, is that better or worse for you? Now we already know. We already know this because Bradford Wilcox, the leading sociologist on faith, family, fatherhood at the University of Virginia, he's got a center for fatherhood, and he's written the best research on fatherhood. If you want to get to know more about this, if you're that thought leader, Bradford Wilcox is the dude you want to find. But what they determined was, yeah, a dad makes everything better for a dude. So a dude needs a dad. That's the big idea. Of course, at the beginning of the study, 'cuz it's this woke, progressive, liberal ideation, they warn us about toxic masculinity. They start by using words like entitlement, dominance, and abusive behaviors, which okay, yeah, there's thugs and jerks and bullies. Right now in my home state of Arizona, most of 'em are cartel leaders running the border as we have an Ahab beta male with dementia in the White House who's an absolute absentee father for a whole nation that needs fathering. Anyways, here's what, if you read after they bury it in all of the progressive, woke ideology, here's what they say, quote, our results reveal moderate positive associations between fathers and sons, adherence to masculine ideology. The pattern holds for an overall measure of masculinity as well as for each of its sub-scales. Father's religiosity amplified the magnitude of the intergenerational correlation. These findings suggest that interventions aimed at encouraging the development of the healthy masculinities among young men should engage their paternal figures. Dudes are better with a good father or father figure. Goes on to say they have better work ethic, better social status, better emotional health, better independence and self-reliance, better risk taking. They're more likely to be heterosexual, they make more money, they lead, and in life they win. Ta-da. God is true. All of the educators with more degrees in Fahrenheit, educated beyond their intelligence, they're a bunch of false prophets. The evidence is undeniable. A good father makes a big difference. And it goes on to say the most positively impactful men are religious fathers, the Bible guys, the dude of dudes, the guys who understand that Jesus is tough and tender, that God is their father and they're following, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, their big brother, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the power of son-ship. If you're one of those dudes, I wanna bless you, I wanna honor you, I want to encourage you, keep going. Don't let all the negative narratives and culture and media and every television show, and every cartoon and every kid's movie where dad is an idiot, don't let it dissuade you. You matter, your marriage matters, your kids matter, your business matters, your life matters. Your past matters. Your present matters. Your future matters. Your kids matter, your grandkids matter, your great-grandkids matter. Your life matters. Your legacy matters. You're a freaking legacy maker, that's who you are, gentlemen. That's who God made you to be. God made you to be a freaking legacy maker and he brought you on this Earth to make a good kind

of trouble and to be a man and to do what's right and to have the conflicts. That's exactly who Paul is. That's exactly what Paul says. That's exactly what Paul does. And he grabs a young guy named Timothy, who's got a mom and a grandma but no dad. And together, those two guys, they go give the devil some hell. And that's what we want. We want a generation of men with a father's heart, who are like the son of God, fathering spiritually or physically, young men to be like sons, raised up to carry the fight into the next generation. Welcome to First Timothy. That's lesson one. We'll see you next week for lesson two. Pastor Mark here is saying, thank you for giving me the honor of helping you to learn God's word. In a world filled with bad news, you need some good news, in a world filled with lies, you need some truth. And so as I like to say, it's all about Jesus. We open the Bible and we help people learn about Jesus Christ. And I just want to say, if you would help me get the word of God out, it would mean the world to me. You can go to realfaith.com, mountain of Bible teaching. I mean, we're coming up on three decades of Bible teaching and/or if you just go to 99383 and text the word unfiltered, again, that's 99383, unfiltered. We'll send you a link that'll open up literally thousands and thousands and thousands of pieces of free Bible teaching.