



Father's Day Best Dad Ever

Pastor Ted Cunningham

Today is Father's Day. Do you realize that Father's Day, according to data that we've received and research and what we're told... I do have friends that back this up with their churches. It's one of the lowest attended Sundays of the year. It's definitely more low attendance than Mother's Day. One of the reasons for that, I think, is on Mother's Day, we tend to honor Mom. There's a song Tim McGraw and Faith Hill have about that. There are a lot of cuss words in that new song by Tim McGraw and Faith Hill. My kids are like, "Dad, you can't say those words when you sing the song" and I'm like, "Well, it's about your mom; yes, I can. And it's about respecting your mother and respect the heck out of her." And all God's people said... Amen. Keep it clean though. Let's edit it as we sing that song.

We gush over mom, but on Father's Day, sometimes we don't gush over Dad or honor Dad; we bust his chops instead. Does anybody know what I'm talking about? We don't want Mom to leave going, "Blessed am I; I had these children. Everybody was wonderful today," while Dad leaves going, "I am the worst of sinners. I am a wretch, I am a worm." We want to make sure Dad... Yeah, we are going to talk about your responsibility today, but we want you to leave here inspired, encouraged, and honored, esteemed as highly valuable.

You were given a ticket on the way in. We want to give away lunch for Dad and a few of his closest or favorite family members. We couldn't buy all of your children food, but we want to give you the food truck experience. You received a ticket on the way in and we love to do raffles to make the Catholics feel welcome... right? This and bingo; we're all about it.

Here we go. Someone told me a couple of weeks ago that I was picking on denominations too much and I'm like, "It ain't gonna to get any better; I'm just telling you that." Here we go! 5775215. Is it here or over at the chapel? We have a winner at the Chapel; that's what we are assuming. You have to be present to win.

I had a great time last night. Amy's grandfather just relocated down here from Minnesota. He's 92 years old, a World War II veteran. We put him in a great assisted living home here. I'm super impressed with this place. It's called Rose House. There are 24 rooms and they're all full. I think they have like five males and 19 females. Brad Paisley has a song about that too. I was singing it last night. There were five guys who gathered around tables as families and all the other residence were there. They were asked to share fishing stories. They wanted each table to share a fishing story and they had a bunch of them for Amy's grandpa, but my favorite about Amy's dad...

I took him, Amy's other grandfather who has passed away, and her uncle fly fishing at Taneycomo years and years ago. If you don't know anything about fly fishing, you put on your waders and at first, they look like footie pajamas because you've just basically got socks, Neoprene socks. And then you put on big sturdy boots because Taneycomo is rough and jagged and slippery and you've got to really think through it.

We all went down there and we're fishing. We're catching good fish and I had to really be a guide for all of these family members. I was setting stuff up and teaching them how to cast and I was running back and forth. The whole time... Denny, Amy's dad, kind of had it down, but every few seconds, I would hear him going, "Ouch..." I'd look down the creek at him and any time he moved, he was in pain. I wondered what was going on. We fished for like 30 to 40 minutes and then we decided to move. The whole time we were moving, Denny was in pain and really making a big deal out of it. I looked down at his feet; he didn't put the boots on. I told him, "We're going to be putting you in the Rose House sooner than you think." He was walking around Taneycomo in his socks.

We shared all these great stories and I loved to hear all the other stories because I believe when you get around men in their 90s, you need to talk less and let them do all of the talking. That's what we believe about senior adults. There was a 95-year-old guy that started telling stories. He kind of got off subject a couple of times. I didn't really know where he was going or if we were ever going to land. Anybody know what I'm talking about? The whole thing lasted 45 minutes. We ate Bar-b-que, told the stories, and like great synchronized swimmers, all five of the old guys pushed away from the table, said to their families, "Thanks for coming; see you later" and they headed back to their rooms. I'm thinking, *I can't wait for this. I can't wait to be 90, if the Lord allows me to live to 90, to be able to tell my family, "Thanks for coming; we'll see you."* Let's sing it altogether. "What a day that will be when my family they shall leave..." It's a great song. It was so great.

Today, Dad, I hope... You may be a man a few words, but I hope if your children are wise, they will ask you for some stories. I hope they ask more questions than talk about their technology. How about we all make this commitment today. Don't ask Siri one question; ask Dad, ask Grandpa because they know stuff. He may not have it at his fingertips like Siri does, but we need to be honoring Dad today. And here's where we are going to start with this big idea:

The perfect father is not you.

I love Matthew 5: 48. After we are given this great text and command to love. As followers of Jesus, we are to be supreme leaders when it comes to love. Jesus said this: ***"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."*** In the church today, I know it's almost become cliché. We start our conversations with "I'm not perfect, I'm broken, I'm sinful." Yes, we know that. However, this doesn't mean we lower the bar. It doesn't mean we don't pursue the heavenly Father who is perfect. The idea behind this text is not perfection as much as it is completeness that you and I would be pursuing a relationship with the heavenly Father.

I think a key idea, a key point out of this text is simply this: **God does not lower the bar to accommodate our sinfulness.** We have to understand that. Jesus died for our sinfulness. We are declared righteous

when we place faith alone in Christ alone. He died to take care of the penalty of our sin. We are being freed from the power of our sin. One day, because of Jesus, we're going to be freed from the very presence of sin. But it doesn't mean we lower the bar.

I think that's what happens in liberal theology, which you won't experience around our church. We think the best way to get to God is to make man sound a little bit better and make God sound a little bit less. That is just not true. We don't do that around here. As a dad, I'm shooting for the bar because isn't this what we are doing with our kids? I'm trying to teach my kids that they can do more than they are doing; pursue more. In the church, we call this discipleship. We have other words for it like maturity.

Right now, with my 12-year-old son, I'm on this big kick called "Do hard things." I realized I was kind of crushing his spirit at moments with this, so I started saying "You can do hard things." You can do more than you think. So, I sent him out... I had a stump in the yard I wanted him to take down. Did the stump have to be removed? No, but I just wanted him to do something hard.

I said, "Go out and take that stump down." I'll show you a picture of it. I didn't have to have it removed; I actually kind of liked it. I thought one day, if I got into carving with chain saws, I'd make something out of it.

He comes back in after about 30 minutes and goes, "Dad, the stump is petrified. It ain't coming down."

I'm like, "Son, you can do hard things."

"It's going to take forever."

"I've got all the time in the world."

How many of you would rather see your kid taking an ax to a tree than playing a video game? Yes, get your kids an ax for Christmas! Send them out to any neighbor's trees you're tired of.

Then I go out and I say, "It's not petrified! Do you know how many bugs have been in this tree? This tree is ready to go down."

He was using the wrong tool. He was using a log splitter that was as dull as could possibly be. There is no edge on this. Does anybody know what this is? You put this on a log and then you hit it with a sledge hammer. He wacked that thing up and down, up and down, up and down.

I told him he had the wrong tool and he said, "Dad, will you please just go get the chainsaw?"

I'm like, "Well, that would come down quick, that would come down easy. We have to do hard things around here. Let's not lower the bar; let's not make this easy."

He looks at me like *You know what? You've always taught me to work smarter, not harder.* "Well that's when you were six. Now that you're twelve, I don't care what information you got, you're going to work harder."

This is all around us. We go to the RecPlex to work out. My wife likes getting on that machine and going. I like walking laps. Me and my senior adult friends at the RecPlex. There is a lady there... This lady so inspires me. I've not yet gotten to know her and I need to. I would say she's early to mid-70s and she's had a stroke. The right side of her body... Her hand is synched up and she drags her right leg around that track. I looked at my son and pointed to that lady and I go, "Do hard things. This should inspire us." Let me tell you what really inspires me. This lady is there before we get on the track and she's still there with her little clicker after we leave. You can do hard things.

Dad, you and I are called... Before we get to instructing our kids, be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. Here's where it all starts this morning. Yes, the perfect father is not you, but **Earthly fathers are called to pursue the heavenly Father.**

Deuteronomy 6 is a text we love to use around here and we bring it out on special days like this such as baby dedication, Mother's Day, Father's Day. It reminds us of where the discipleship journey in the home begins. It doesn't begin with the child's spiritual journey; it begins with the parents' spiritual journey.

The scripture says this in Deuteronomy 6: ***4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.*** There are four truths in this verse. There is a God, there is only one God, he is the Lord, he is our Lord. ***5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*** Now watch this. This is the parents' responsibility. ***6 These commandments...*** What commandments? Love the Lord you God, know that there is only one God and he is the Lord and he is your Lord. ***...that I give you today are to be on your hearts.***

It begins with your spiritual journey in the home. You are 100% responsible to not live with "I'm sinful, I'm broken, I'm never going to..." No, you are to be striving, to be pursuing, to be moving forward in your relationship with the Lord because your relationship with the Lord is going to be impressed upon the hearts of your children.

Ethan, who just dedicated his daughter, will share with you now. [video plays]

My name is Ethan and me and my wife, Ally, have been going to Woodland Hills for about two and a half years now. This Sunday, we get to dedicate our first daughter, Ruthy. We get to dedicate her and not only that, but we get to do it on Father's Day. That's pretty awesome.

First Father's Day for me, but also a very tough one. In February of this year, something very unexpected happened for me and my family. My dad went to the doctor and they did some test on his heart. The doctors found that he needed to have a quadruple bypass. After the surgery, there were some complications with his heart.

My dad passed away on February 17, 2017. My world was shaken. I had looked up to my dad my whole life and he was gone. The man that showed me how to love my family and taught me how to be a man was no longer there to give me advice. One of the most favorite people to tell my stories to and listen to his stories, I wasn't going to hear his words anymore.

My dad was a recovering alcoholic. He struggled for years with alcohol abuse, but with a complete surrender to Jesus, he was sober for eight years leading up his death. This joy that I began to feel as I got to know that when he went into heaven, he no longer felt that brokenness, he no longer felt any pain, any sorrow. He truly understood and felt the love of Jesus Christ.

The amazing part of this story is the peace that consumed me and my family in this unbelievably troubling time... I was overwhelmed with the love of Jesus Christ. I was even a little confused at times. I would feel sad about my father's death, but on the flip side of that, so much joy in imaging him running through the gates of heaven.

My relationship with Jesus has grown so much in this time. It had to. I had to run to him. During this time, my wife, Ally, was six months pregnant with Ruthy and as I began to process the feelings and emotions of my dad's death, I was saddened at the fact that he wasn't going to be able to meet Ruthy. Ruthy was number ten for my mom and dad; ten grandkids and so, I've watched my dad interact with my nieces and nephews and I loved that and I wanted so bad for him to meet my daughter and be her granddad.

I love to share the story of my dad's death with people because it's a great opportunity to share the love of Jesus Christ and the peace that overwhelmed me through this tough situation. This Father's Day is going to be a tough one. It's one without my dad. But what a gift that I get to dedicate my daughter on Father's Day and know that even though my dad is not there, his love for Jesus will 100% effect my little girl's life, and death cannot take that away.

I never doubted that my dad loved me. He always showed me that in his actions. Whether it was providing for me or telling me that he loved me or just caring for me, and that's definitely something that I will take into my daughter's life. She'll never feel unloved by me. She'll always know that I'll be there for her and provide for her and take care of her.

Help me thank Ethan. So, what he shares is perfect. It's the earthly dad's responsibility... As the earthly dad pursues the heavenly Father, the perfect Father in that relationship, that he would be pointing his children to the heavenly Father.

We continue reading in Deuteronomy 6. ***Z Impress them on your children.*** There is a God, there's only one God, he is the Lord, he is our Lord. We will love the Lord. ***Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.***

When you go over to the Book of Proverbs, I love this. Twenty-one times in Proverbs, the earthly father is mentioned. Six of those twenty-one times it's talking about Dad's responsibility of instructing his children.

What I love about it is eleven of the twenty-one times it's discussed how a child should be adhering to, listening to, spending time with, walking with the instructions that his father passed onto him.

For example, in Proverbs 4 – this is dad's responsibility. **1 Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction...** About six times you get this tone, this big idea. ...***pay attention and gain understanding.*** "Listen to what I am saying to you."

Ephesians 6: 4 tells us the heart behind this and what we have to be careful of. It's the warning we have as fathers. ***Fathers, do not exasperate...*** Don't provoke ***your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.***

For those of you who love research and love to see what the stats say about all this, here's are two numbers for you. If dad in the home is passionately pursuing a relationship with Jesus, if he is involved in his church and involved in his community, research collected tells us that the child has a 75% more likelihood to follow suit. If it's not Dad and just Mom, it drops to 15%. Dad, you and I have a responsibility in the home. We have a responsibility to make sure, first and foremost, that a love for the Lord and a chasing after the heavenly Father is a desire of our heart each and every day. And then to spend our days pointing our children to that.

Now let's kind of turn the pager here. And you're like, "You said you wouldn't bust the chops of Dad or Grandpa." That's true, but how many want me to bust the chops of your sons and daughters? Okay, here we go. The eleven of the twenty-one time it sounds something like this: ***A man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father...*** Proverbs 29: 3

You can buy your dad as many gifts as you want, get him as many ties as you can think of, buy him as many "buy two get one free" shirts from whatever place you find it. You can buy him a brand-new Orvis fly fishing rod and reel, okay? Battenkill number 3. You could do something like that and it will not compare... It won't even come close to comparing to the joy he will feel when his children heed his instructions.

I'm not just talking about the immediate. I used Gary Thomas' illustration for years with my kids. "The reason I need you to respond to command the very first time... When I give you a warning or tell you to do something..." It's just so common today for our kids. We say, "Hey, don't do that," and they say, "Why? Give me a good reason." "Because that's a car coming that direction, traveling at about 40 miles per hour. You're two feet away from being killed. If you need a drawn-out explanation... The problem is I don't have time to explain all that to you. You have to know that as your dad, I have your best interest in mind."

Gary said he shared that with his kids. The reason he didn't give warning is because when a kid did get hit by a car... He said, "This is why we don't have warnings. Just listen to me."

I've been thinking about the Mike and Mandy series that we just came out of. Some of you in your twenties, do you want to bring joy to Dad today? Tell him of a lesson he taught you that you're listening to, that you're applying to your life. That will bring joy. I can save you twenty bucks. I still think you

should buy your dad a meal because your dad paid for a lot of meals, but today, Dad doesn't buy anything. You're like, "He makes more money than I do." That's not the point. Show him you know how to be responsible. Show him you know how to provide. Show him you can give gifts. Let him know you are learning.

I think it's one of the greatest ways I honor Ronald Lee Cunningham. He taught me much. He taught me how to have integrity. I would watch him in a store. This thing wouldn't scan on the new scanners that they had out in the stores. The lady was like "Oh, I'll just give it to you," and my dad was like, "No, I'm paying for that. That's not a decision your employer has given you: the opportunity to just give me free stuff." I saw that growing up and it impresses upon a child's heart. I don't use Turbo Tax; I fill out my taxes long form with a Bic pen... blue. Why? I watched my dad do that for years. I have a passion and a love for country music. Where did I get that? It was riding in the back window of my dad's Plymouth, Volare, 1974, listening to "US 99 Chicago Country."

I met a young man this week. One of the greatest attributes of the millennial generation... A young man walked up to me and said, "Thanks for the Mike and Mandy series. I just want you to know that my girlfriend and I were living in sin."

I don't get a lot of people that just come right up and there it is. I said, "Wow, thanks for sharing that."

He goes, "But, we broke the relationship off. We're still living together, trying to decide if we should move out."

I think you could probably speak on my behalf on this one. "YES! You should."

The answer I always get is "Well, that will cost."

I just looked at him and said, "Do you know doing the right thing always costs."

When I sit down to do my taxes, there is a way that can make me more money and there is a way that can cost me more money. The right way is typically going to mean I spend more. I don't take the extra deduction, I don't cheat numbers.

All throughout your life, not just in this one decision, you're going to have choices to make and those choices will cost you time, money.

No sooner did I have that conversation that I take my wife out on this lovely date on Table Rock Lake. It was just the two of us on the boat. I'm 43 years old and I've never had a traffic fine or violation in my life. Never once.

I got pulled over by the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Love you. Thank you for keeping us safe. I'm still working through the bitterness. I probably should hold this illustration for a couple more weeks so it comes out smoother.

Everything checked out. My horn worked. I had the fire extinguisher. I had ten life jackets for the two of us. But, I didn't have that square, throwable floatation device that no one ever told me I needed. I know it's in that book of regulation that you get, but I haven't read it, to be really honest with you. I own a boat, but I have more of a renter mentality, if you know what I'm talking about. He handed me a \$137.00 fine. I didn't even know he was doing it. We were talking and I thought we were getting along great. He hands me this ticket like it's no big deal.

I found out that asking if you can make a contribution to the trooper fund at that time is not the right time. You can't do that. I wanted one of those little stickers that shows that I support them. Amy goes, "Well, this is a terrible way to end a date." But, I'm laughing because I'm thinking back to the conversation I just had with the guy about how doing the right thing will always cost. My dad taught me that.

And this verse... I want to bring joy to my parents in their old age. I'm 43 years old. I'm 43 and I just got my first ticket... on a lake! Never on a road in 25 years of driving. And I've broken way more laws on the road than I'll ever break on the lake.

But, I had to share that story because my dad would hear that story and he wouldn't have compassion for me at all. Telling my dad that story, he would be like, "You should have had the floatation device. And you should have known that. You should have read that."

I love this verse. It's a great bedtime verse for your small children to start them off early. ***"The eye that mocks a father, that scorns an aged mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures."*** Proverbs 30:17 It's one of my favorite parenting verses. Do you know why? This is a word picture the scripture is giving us and it's a word picture for what? Simply death.

Mocking, scorning an aged mother... We know this about parents. In the moment we get it, but I don't know if we get it long-term. Parenting is a life or death situation. We're talking life and death here. We're talking about moving forward in life. How are you making decisions? Are you chasing, following after the Lord? I just kept thinking about it this week. I think Jesus seemed to talk about the compulsory feeling a parent has in this life and death situation we call parenting. It's compulsory in us to care for our kids, to provide for our kids, and Jesus points it out.

I think it's another great parenting verse in Matthew 7. ***9 "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?"*** No, you're going to provide for your kids.

I don't remember the name of it, but I remember this scene from this movie. It's a boxing movie that takes place back in the depression era. There are two pieces of bologna and a half glass of milk and this family is sitting around the table. Dad, the boxer in the movie, let's his family know he's still full from breakfast. That scene chokes me up because Dad could down that and not even call it an appetizer. But, Dad is saying, "I'm not taking any of this. This is for all of you."

I think that's in every dad in here: the desire to provide. Then Jesus says... This is very important for a parent. It backs up what we started the whole morning with. You're not the perfect father. I'll add to it as Jesus would say, "You're the evil parent. You're sinful."

Jesus goes on to say, **11 "If you, then, though you are evil..."** Write that in your journal. Underline that. When you have a bad day, when you're lying in bed at night going, "Oh, I blew that moment with my kids today," remind yourself that you are wicked. The kids have a tough verse for bedtime, you've got a tough verse for bedtime. But, you're sinful. That doesn't mean you stop pursuing the heavenly Father. It doesn't mean be perfect as your heavenly Father... it doesn't mean you move toward maturity and growth and finding growth areas in your life. Jesus is saying, "You desire to do this for your children and you're sinful." Now watch what he says and I love how it all comes back around. **"...know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"**

I was thinking this week, and I wrote down a few of them. It's just some of the ways my dad has given me good gifts. This is kind of a moment to honor dad and to think how, in subtle and quiet ways, dad provides. Subtle and quiet ways he gives to his children and they don't even know it all of the time. This is inspired by my dad, my wife's dad, and many of you and you're going to relate to a lot of these:

Dad fills up the car with gas when it's not on or near empty, but when he knows in the next day or two it will be and he doesn't want Mom to worry about it or have to get out of the car to fill up the tank.

About half of you guys do that. The other half of you have a woman looking at your right now.

He gets up in the middle of the night to check on the weather to make sure that his family is safe. He turns off lights. He regularly reminds his family to do that, but they don't listen, they don't pay attention, and half the time he just wants to say, "Turn off the dang lights!"

Sorry, that was more personal.

*He gets you places. He drops you off and picks you up at all hours.
He prays with you and for you.
He knows he's not God; that's why he's constantly pointing you to him.
He can fix anything; just ask him.
He'd rather spend money on Mom and kids than himself.
He stayed.*

Just to mention there that there are some dads in here who wanted to stay, but it wasn't a choice they got to make. We honor you today and we say don't give up the fight for the hearts of your kids. Stay in it.

*He runs out of the store or restaurant in the pouring rain to pull the car around to the front so the family doesn't get wet.
He scares out the monsters from underneath the bed.*

Another personal one here:

He reattaches the chain to that plastic arm in the toilet because no one else can hear the toilet running.

Okay, sorry. I had to get that one out too. I said it was the little things.

He tells lots of jokes and he knows just when a joke is needed.

How many of you had a joke-telling father or grandfather? I think this is my favorite thing about my parents as they get older and about my dad and Amy's dad and her grandpa as they get older. They're not great at telling jokes, but they still do it. My dad has this tendency to lead out with the punch line. Does anybody have a dad like that? They lead out with the punch line and you're like, "Dad, no, no, you just blew the whole thing."

We'll be sitting there and it'll be a moment and he wants to tell a joke. He'll go, "Hey, did you guys hear that Cubs joke?"

"Okay, Dad, listen, the Chicago Cubs is the punch line. You have to establish a solid premise first. Draw us in and then give us the punch line."

I taught that to my dad in the first service and he's like, "I still don't get what you're talking about."

He gently shakes his head in disbelief when his children risk their lives, but he doesn't say anything. Deep down he's proud of them.

He knows how to say, "I'm sorry."

And this one I can say of my dad and I can say of Amy's dad.

He makes unpopular decisions often and stands by them.

We want to help as a church family. We thought about it long and hard this week. I'm really proud of the church for inventing this. Is there a soon-to-be dad in here? You have no kids, but you have a child on the way. Can I just see your hands? David. Brother David. He's having twins. Am I allowed to announce that? I just did. Here and on the internet.

Come on up here David. Welcome David, soon-to-be father of two. This church family is all about getting you ready to be a dad and we want to prepare you for that. So, we invented an exercise machine called the Switch Flex. We want you to set it by your chair at night. Do ten to twenty sets a day. Just quickly turn off the switches. You flip it over and do it again. Let's practice it. That ain't bad; there you go. Now what one move is he forgetting? The arm move. Do the arm move to see if you have the arm move down. All in one swipe. Get them all in one swipe. That's when you're at the end. That's when language that is questionable is coming out of your mouth. So, try the arm move right there.

Yay! He's got it. I'm not just giving you a gag gift, but also \$25.00 to your food truck out there. That will cover your whole family... for now. Congratulation! Two kids on the way.

As we bring it to a close, this is one of my favorite things to do as your pastor. Probably at the top of the list is when I ask you to help with the message. Some of you might be thinking I do that because I don't want to study as much.

If I don't shed any tears on this, it's because they were shed in the week as I was editing and moving them around. About a hundred of you responded to this question: "If you knew this conversation would be your last with your dad, what would you say?"

There were three types of responses. The first one was the ones responding, "I would sit down with my dad and I would say this. And I'm going to make sure I do this." The second one was "I lost my dad and I didn't get a last conversation and here's what I would say if I had it to do all over again." Then the third one was those who said, "I was blessed to have a last conversation with my dad and here's what I told him." The one that got me the most because it was in so many answers was when they said this: "I would simply tell my dad 'I forgive you.'"

If I can just say this as your pastor to all the dads and grandfathers in here, you're not too far gone and it's not too late for you to be a great dad. We believe that here. And to add to that, he's not too far gone and it's not too late for you to forgive your dad.

Here are some of the other answers:

Julie said, "Last year, on Father's Day, I told my dad everything I was grateful for in him and how much of me was him. One month later, he died suddenly. I am so grateful I had that conversation."

Steve Willoughby, who has cracked us up for years on the radio and still does even in his posts simply put, "I would tell my dad 'I know I'm your favorite. Thank you for everything. I love you.'"

Christi said, "I would say, 'Daddy, tell me your stories again.'"

Louanne said, "You did a good job, Dad. Thank you."

John said, "Tell me everything you know."

Audrey said, "I didn't know, but I was absolutely blessed by our last conversation. It was the night the Cardinals won the 2006 World Series. That's how we always bonded... baseball, softball for his little girl. I was celebrating with friends, but I had to call my dad. He asked me what I was doing. I said, 'Celebrating, of course, Dad.' I snuck away to get to a quiet room and we talked for over an hour about playing catch in the back yard, Mom often yelling at him for letting me get hurt. But, it was my own fault for not keeping my eye on the ball. The fantastic time we had traveling. The laughs and the tears. Only days later he had a massive heart attack. I thank God for that amazing conversation. Amazing.

Sonya said, "Thank you for passing along your work ethic, Dad. I've never seen anyone work as hard as you, even at age 83. I love you. Thank you for giving me a great life."

The differences between men and women a little bit here: Clay said, "I would say very little and would listen."

Wendy said, "I wouldn't stop talking."

Kristin said, "Having already said goodbye for now to my dad, I'm thankful that Dad and I stayed caught up before the end came. But, even at the end, he couldn't stop telling me how much he loved me and how proud he was of me. It's funny how so little else matters. I am just so thankful I had him for my dad."

With that, we say Happy Father's Day to all the dads and to all the grandpas in here today.

Father, it is in the name of Jesus that we thank you for Dad and we thank you for Grandpa in here. I hope they never take lightly their responsibility, even when the kids leave home. And to understand they are pursuing the heavenly Father and pointing us to him at whatever age still matters and that they would take what matters and make it matter more.

I pray for many great conversations around the table today and that children and grandchildren would ask Grandpa to tell them another story, ask dad to tell them another story and then they would speak words of high value over their Dads and Grandpas, esteeming them as highly valuable. May Dad feel that today.

I'm feeling for the dad right now, Father, who doesn't get to spend as much time with his kids as he would like. Messages like this can be very difficult. I pray that he is comforted right now by you, that he understands his responsibility before you, that whatever time he gets with his children, he makes the most of it. Not just to play and have fun, but that it is intentional in all of the activities that they do.

No matter what the season of life is in here, I pray that we would realize always a Dad, always a grandpa. These kids, these grandchildren, they are watching, they are listening, and we know they are going to repeat what they've seen and what they've heard. I ask for every Dad in the place.

I pray for children right now who are not following the instruction that their parents gave to them, their instruction in training them in righteousness and training them in you. I pray that today the Holy Spirit would be calling sons and daughters by name that they would confess their sins before you, that they would repent, that they would change what they think about themselves, and change what they think about you.

For many that would be placing faith alone in Christ alone today, I pray they would be sharing with Dad "I am now going to follow what you taught me." May this be a day for many that can say that.

Thank you for all that put these mornings together and for everyone who got up through the rain and for the ones that traveled from other states to be here today. We're grateful. It's in the name of Jesus that everyone agreed and said... Amen.