

First Light

As men and fathers, we take seriously the role of protector and leader. I know in my own life I have taken a lot of time to plan out vacations and family outings that I wanted to be meaningful and remembered. These activities can be wonderful family bonding and teaching opportunities, but I don't want us to overlook the chance for little bite-size moments that can be meaningful and life-changing.

Training and teaching our children are often a daunting task, and especially when we realize they watch us all the time. I'm a grandfather now and somehow it seems much easier than I recall raising their mother or dad.

We are reminded in Ephesians 6:4, Fathers do not exasperate your children, instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. When I first hear the words training and instructing, I think of well-ordered class time, group discussions with set lesson plans.

It can be difficult balancing our work, managing our marriage, and training our children, but we need to be reminded that sometimes training and instructing children could be as simple as stopping and asking God for help.

The following is a letter sent by an adult son to his father.

The Smurf didn't mean much, but I'll never forget losing it. It was a small blue figurine that I probably got as a treat of the week at the new McDonalds in town. Somehow, I was playing with it by the big tree in front of the gymnasium. People were all around us. It must have been homecoming or lectureships and in the excitement of events, I misplaced it. The two of us spent some time looking for the toy and you decided to stop.

We were right next to the tree. I thought you were going to tell me it was time to stop looking; that we would never find it in the grass. Instead, you said we should pray and ask God to help us find the toy. You prayed right there, and it wasn't long before I had my toy back. I think that moment helped me understand more than just the fact that God was real but that he also cares about the little things in our lives.

--- Doug Cox