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My Dad Is A Giver

Thursday, June 16, 2011 | Written by Jennifer Santiago

My dad loves his girls. My dad is a team player. My dad thinks we're beautiful.

My dad comes from a meager upbringing and began earning his own wages by the age of ten. Contributing to the family gave him a great sense of pride. He often saved up to buy his sisters clothes and surprised them with their favorite cereal. He worked hard and developed an extraordinary work ethic. He later learned his trade as a carpenter, eventually received his license as building contractor and building inspector, and became a reputable homebuilder in a golf and country club community.

I have watched my dad give of his time, energy, abilities, and resources. From helping on numerous building projects for those in need, to pulling weeds for an elderly widow, to opening his home to people with nowhere to go. The idea of a "No Soliciting" sign would never occur to him. When kids come by the house to sell stuff, he buys the entire box of whatever they happen to be selling. When the vacuum cleaner salesperson comes knocking, my dad buys the vacuum because *he is just trying to earn a living*. At a restaurant, Dad pays the bill no matter what and he is sure to take good care of the wait staff. Dad has given vehicles to people who have needed a ride. I am certain he has given the shirt off his back at some point. This generosity has continued throughout his life.

In the *Sermon on the Mount*, Jesus taught, "Whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away." My dad is the epitome of this verse. Growing up and still to this day, Dad leaves money in hidden places for us to find, in our bag or as a marker in our Bible. Every year he goes to great lengths to create a unique handcrafted gift for each of his girls. By these acts, it magnifies my Heavenly Father. "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!" (Matthew 7:11).

My dad being the father of four daughters managed to give each daughter her fair share of love and attention. We all had our time on his lap. Each received her late night talk, her early morning fishing adventure, and each experienced her turn behind the wheel for driving lessons. When we found ourselves in trouble and deserving of punishment, Dad offered grace, sometimes a look was all it took.

Loving his girls gives him great purpose in life. He considers providing for his girls among his most worthy accomplishments. Even now, when he introduces us to someone “my” always precedes the name. He is proud of us and proud to be our daddy. Through my dad’s love for us and acts of kindness towards others, it has shed flesh to Paul as he exhorted the Ephesians, “Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

Though my dad did not have any boys there was work to be done and work we did. He enlisted us all in physical labor. We quickly learned how to run lawn mowers, wood splitters, power drills, and other tools. Truth be told, some of the girls were better with the ax than others but that did not mean the job of gathering the kindling into buckets was any less important. A warm cozy evening by the fire with hot chocolate was our reward after a day in the forest chopping our firewood. As we remember it, everyone had a part and it was a great joy to see the fruit of our labors. “We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

In spite of the fact that my dad taught us how to work with our hands, he also made us feel like ladies. We all knew he thought we were beautiful. Not a day has gone by that Dad has not told each of us upon greeting and departing that we are beautiful. He has never missed the opportunity to open doors for us, guiding us through with his hand. When we were younger, he always saved a slow dance for each of us at the school dance. Our dad’s love is abundant in giving...unconditional. He allows us to take part in the Father’s work and provides the tools to accomplish it. He calls us beautiful. We all feel special. I believe with all my heart that I am his favorite. I know my sisters feel the same way.

My dad is no saint and neither are his daughters. Our heavenly Father looks upon his flawed children and says, “You are lovely! You are comely!” He sees His children through the eyes of Christ: the finished work of a spotless lamb. The blood of Christ is what covers us. When remembering my dad this Father’s Day, I choose to see Christ alone shine through his life.

My challenge to you is to remember and look for the godliness in your dad this Father’s Day and forget the humanness. “Love covers a multitude of sin” (1 Peter 4:8).