

“Father’s Day”
By Chris Ulrich
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George and Zena Holmes recommended a movie to me a few months ago called, “Expelled.” In this movie, Ben Stein interviews several people about Darwinian Evolution as opposed to Intelligent Design. He interviewed people on both sides of the issue, and one thing that struck me, there’s a prominent atheist named Richard Dawkins; Ben Stein asked him, that, if he were wrong, and God were real, what would he most like to ask God, and Professor Dawkins said that he would want to know why God has hidden Himself from us. Of course, the Bible says that we know God by the things that are made (Romans 1:20).

Chris asked Joe Ramirez to share a testimony about his dad. Joe read Deuteronomy 5:16, and he talked about how his father taught him a work ethic, and that there is no excuse for missing work. It’s important not to be late, because, once the door shuts (Matthew 25:10), that’s it.

Chris talked about how, when he was younger, and he had friends over, his parents treated his friends better than they did their own children; offering to get them something to drink or a snack, whereas with their own children it was more like, you know where it is, get it yourself. That was not a point of contention, in fact, that’s something that I look back on with fondness. It certainly always made our friends feel welcome and they did and looking back on it now that was what was most important.

Chris asked Zena Holmes to share about her dad. Zena said that her dad died in 2003, and she hadn’t seen him in a long time. Just a few months ago was she able to see the ashes, and gain closure. She and her sister cried together for a long time. She also said that George was a better father to her daughter than her daughter’s biological father; so much so, that she has said that if she ever gets married, she wants George to be the one to give her away.

Chris said that we can’t rewrite the past. There are regrets in each of our lives, but we can’t change those things. My parents don’t want me to come back, except to visit, because they see the change in me, and they are glad for it.

Chris asked Chris Schilling to share about his dad. Chris S. said that Pastor Paine has remarked that he likes to leave a place better than he found it, and that his dad is the same way. He likes for people to ask how he’s doing, so that he can say that he’s doing finer than a frog’s hair split three ways (I thought frogs didn’t have hair—that’s because their hair is so fine that you can’t see it). He likes to eat breakfast at Denny’s; he’ll order two sausage patties, two eggs, hash browns, toast, and a smile. That usually puts the server in a better mood. Sometimes he and my mom would be out eating somewhere, and he’d get that sparkle in his eye, and my mom would say, “Don’t even think about it.” He’s had a pretty rough life, though; he’s lost two wives. He had a brain aneurism when I was nine. I couldn’t understand that; up until then, he had always been able to do anything. Because of the aneurism, he lost his job, and his self-esteem; he got frustrated. It could have killed him, and he has acknowledged that God brought him through that. When I was fourteen, my stepmother died of cancer. I realized then that my dad had

been her source of strength. I asked my dad once how he stayed married, and he said that a lot of it was that, “we never let the sun go down on our wrath” (Ephesians 4:26).

Chris U. pointed out that God can heal our relationships, but, without God, time is our enemy. The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is something that a lot of people have tried to deal with physically, and nothing seems to be working. I need to pray about that. We all have problems, challenges, difficulties, but we need the power to go the extra mile.

Chris asked Jim Martin to share. Jim talked about becoming a father at age eighteen (the mother was sixteen), and how they had to grow up fast. My dad was the steady rock for me. He came from a time when fathers worked, and provided for their families. I am thankful that my dad provided that kind of example for me. Today our kids grow up surrounded by so much nonsense. I think I only raised my voice to my dad once in my life: there was a situation with one of my siblings, and my father wouldn't speak up for himself. I told him that he needed to do something, that he couldn't just enable this. After a while, he told me that he wanted to go to Jacksonville, Florida; I took him down there. The situation with my sibling resolved itself, and he asked to come back to his family, so I brought him back.

Chris talked about the Lord's Prayer, “Our Father, which art in Heaven...” (Matthew 6:9-13) and he asked, “How many of us really believe that God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son?”

James 1:17-18 ...every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father...

If this is not about having a blessed life, then I really don't know what it's about. To fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man (Ecclesiastes 12:13). This is not like a game show, where if you get it wrong, maybe you can get another try. Nothing better is going to come along. I had somebody recently try to tell me that we came from apes; I told him, “Well, if that's what you want to believe.” He thought I should just agree with him.

God knows us better than we know ourselves. Luke 12:6-8 tells us that the very hairs of our head are numbered. God knows how many hairs are on our heads; I don't know how many hairs are on my head. It also tells us that we are of value. That doesn't mean that we don't have problems; I die daily (1 Corinthians 15:31). Pastor Paine once said that there are people who will try to tell you that once you become a Christian, everything goes well, but it really doesn't work like that. At the same time, my life is far, far better than it would have been otherwise. If the answer isn't in God, then there is no order. Jesus said, “**If ye love me, keep my commandments**” (John 14:15), and in 1 John 5:3, it says that His commandments are not grievous.

We have standards. There is a standard of holiness, a standard of hospitality, and a standard of keeping commandments.

Hebrews 12:6-10 ...what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? ...

From the beginning, God has ordained a parallel between our relationship with our physical fathers, and our relationship with Him as our spiritual Father. Now, I realize that there is sin in this world, and some things have become polluted. Maybe you never

had a good relationship with your father. The media certainly never talks about people having a good relationship with their fathers, because that doesn't sell.

John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world...

Do we really believe that God daily loadeth us with benefits (Psalms 68:19)? Our lives have purpose. Even if your natural father was never there for you, your heavenly Father is always there for you. He promised that He would never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5).