

THE DADS' UNI PHILOSOPHY



Dads' UNI

Understanding, Nurturing, Imparting

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WHY DO WE NEED DADS' UNI?

The morals and ethics of any society or nation is the fabric that holds it together. The way we relate to each other and treat our fellow man will ultimately influence our entire nation, either for good or for evil. Without a solid moral and ethical framework a society begins to breakdown, piece by piece, person by person, family by family, suburb by suburb and city by city.

The breakdown happens slowly over a number of generations, until it implodes upon itself and is destroyed. Although the decline seems slow from where we stand in history, it is definitely measurable, measured by a number of factors of which we are all aware. Divorce rates, crime rates and youth suicide on the increase, the widespread breakdown of the family unit, the huge increase in the number of unwanted pregnancies and abortions in our nation, violence in our schools and streets and gang related crime.

To find a solution to the problems we face as a society we must first identify how they began. Within the 20th Century there were two major revolutions that profoundly affected our society, the first was the industrial revolution and the second was the sexual revolution. The industrial revolution transformed our society from one that was originally based upon an agricultural and farming base, to one that became primarily an industry base.

It took the men and the fathers out of their homes and placed them into the factories and workplaces. They were no longer available 24/7 to raise their sons and daughters and to teach them the way in which they should go in life, but were often absent for 10-12 hrs a day 6-7 days a week making a living to support their families financially. Many of you may recognise a similar situation in your own time schedules.

The parenting role began to fall more and more to the mothers as the men went off to work each day. The men no longer had the input into the raising of the children as they had for generations past, and what was previously a co-operative effort between both parents, became almost solely the responsibility of the mother. This fundamental change in the way we raised our children was to have a profound effect over the next two generations, as the fathers role seemed to decrease more and more.

The second revolution that we faced in the 20th Century was the sexual revolution of the 1960's. They called it 'The Age Of Aquarius', and with it came a major cultural change. The revolution encouraged free sex and experimentation with drugs, it encouraged rebellion against authority and what is called moral and ethical relativism, where 'if it feels good and doesn't hurt anybody else, do it!' It gave birth to a philosophical position of 'no absolutes', where every established fact or creed is challenged and often discarded.

Psalm 2 says

" Why do the nations rage and the people plot a vain thing, the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against The Lord and against His Anointed, saying ' let us break their bonds in pieces and cast away their cords from us."

The revolution of the 1960's was determined to free itself from the moral and ethical framework of our society, to reach for a higher goal. They aspired to greater freedom, but a generation later we find ourselves more and more in bondage. The better life that they hoped for has not eventuated. It is time to return to the moral and ethical foundations that made our nations great, a framework that does work and has been proven over many hundreds of years.

Our foundations stones have been laid in the Judeo-Christian Ethic, The Ten Commandments and the teachings of the Holy Bible. As we as fathers and the leaders of our families, return again to moral and ethical standards of the bible, we will strengthen the next generation. We will rebuild the firm foundation for them to stand upon, so that our children and our children's children would know the stability and strength that God has destined for them.

Suggested Action:

Consider wisely which road in life you want to take, and how it may ultimately effect eternity for both you and your family.

DADS' UNI: UNDERSTANDING

I thought it was time to revisit the foundations of Dads' UNI and to explain afresh the elements that make us who we are as an organisation. While in the role as Senior Pastor of a church on Australia's Gold Coast in the 1990's I received the idea and concept of Dads' UNI whilst in prayer. Any God-given calling doesn't merely reside in the mind as an idea only, but is 'birthed in the spirit' of the person 'He' has called to fulfill the work. In such a way God spoke to me and implanted a seed inside me which is constantly being watered and growing into a fruitful ministry. Initially I'd like to speak about the first letter of our acronym UNI, and the word it stands for is Understanding.

Dads' UNI is based upon the three foundational precepts of Understanding, Nurturing and Imparting. These three areas address the requirements of the mind, the emotions and the spirit of man and seek to bring them into a position where they can receive the fullness of God's blessing and abundant life.

Dads' UNI - Understanding

Understanding

Noun - the ability to understand something; comprehension.

To comprehend, to apprehend, to grasp, to perceive, to discern, to appreciate, to conceive or absorb

(Proverbs 2:1-5) My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, So that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

The mind is a gateway into our inner life and it is here that we must begin if we are to be successful in bringing about the change that is required to transform our lives. Right thinking will open up the path to right actions which will bring about right results in life, where as wrong thinking will open the path to wrong actions which will bring about wrong results in life. How crucial it is therefore to start by laying the correct mental foundation so that we make the way open for a wonderful life.

Having understanding is more than merely acquiring knowledge on any given subject, it may begin in the mind but then it must go deeper into our human experience. Understanding comes through reflection and meditation upon the important areas of life and the experience we receive in their out-working over the years. Dads' UNI provides our teachings world-wide to any men desiring to improve as a parent by understanding, perceiving and grasping the truths of fatherhood.

Understanding wisdom

(Proverbs 21:30) There is no wisdom, or understanding, or counsel against the Lord.

There are many 'experts' these days with much to say on any given subject and often we as the public listen to their counsel and follow their advice. However it is also important to note that these are merely fallible men who have been educated and trained by other fallible men in our Universities and Colleges. My point is this, much of their advice may be sound and usable in our lives but we should not fall into the error of accepting without question those things which they say.

There is I believe a 'Litmus Test' that should be applied to every area of life if we are to truly attain wisdom and not merely have our heads filled with the knowledge of men. That 'Litmus Test' is the comparison that we must all make between what the 'experts' say and what God Himself says in the Bible. God is revealed as our Creator, it was He who designed us and knows every aspect of our lives intimately. God has always been and always will be and His eternal life is filled with infinite knowledge. Without doubt there is no-one more qualified than our heavenly Father to dispense wisdom and knowledge and those who disagree with what He says on any given subject will ultimately be proven to be in error.

Wisdom comes when we understand how to apply those truths we find in God's word in a way that is acceptable in His sight, so that we may fully benefit ourselves and our fellow-man. Dads' UNI aims to bring understanding and wisdom to the important areas of parenting, and empower fathers to raise wonderful children.

Understanding responsibility

(Psalm 127:3) Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward.

Children are one of the greatest rewards we as a man can receive on this earth, but with that reward comes a responsibility to care for them. God our heavenly Father has delegated the care of each child born to its parents and especially to the father of the child, and it is ultimately before Him that we must stand and give an account of how we treated our children.

Every father was first a son, and as a son relied upon his parents to provide for him, to protect him from danger and to guide him in life. Without these basic safeguards a child has little chance of survival in the hostile world we live in. It is a father's responsibility to accept this challenge of taking care of his child, and ensuring to the best of his ability that they have every opportunity in life.

Fathers who fail to accept their role in the family abandon their child to many destructive and harmful attacks. A child has no way to defend itself in a hostile world, but is easily taken advantage of when there is no provider, protector or guide in life. Dads' UNI emphasizes the importance of shouldering our parental responsibilities as a pathway to becoming the best men that we could be.

Understanding relationships

(John 15:13) Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Life in this world is about relationships. Our first relationship is with our parents and siblings in the family in which we were born, and it is here that we learn many of the keys to maintaining and building healthy relationships. Understanding the importance of showing respect and honour to each member of the family, and especially your parents is foundational in understanding how all relationships in life work.

The realisation that we all get offended at times by others and we also offend others is easily understood, because we are all individuals and think differently on many subjects. It is because of the proliferation of 'offenses' in life that we must master the life principle of giving and receiving forgiveness regularly. As we go through life the keys of respect, honour and forgiveness are outworked in our friendships at school, our relationship with our girlfriend and ultimately will be with our wife and family.

Those who fail to master these basic principles of how to relate to another human being will struggle to be truly successful throughout their lives, for it is within relationships that we find our greatest fulfilment and happiness. Dads' UNI teaches that it is within our relationships that we find both our greatest blessings and our greatest challenges in life, and without doubt it is those fathers who lay down their own selfish desires and choose to serve that enjoy the experience most.

Understanding values

(Proverbs 12:22) Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.

The values we esteem within society like working hard, being honest and treating our fellow-man with kindness are based upon the principles of God's Word. These values are eternal and proven throughout the history of mankind to be beneficial not only to those who practice them but also to society in general who profit from them.

Values and standards in society set a bench mark of what is acceptable behaviour and what is not, and should be established clearly and taught to every member of our society. Historically it is often when we as a society stray from these standards and disregard these values that we find ourselves experiencing the negative results of selfish and cruel acts perpetrated upon individuals and communities.

Dads' UNI advocates the return of our society to the Biblical standards observed by our forefathers, that we may enjoy the security and stability that they have been proven to bring to us all.

Understanding God's principles

(Galatians 6:7) Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

There are many principles that are spoken of within God's Word and they all apply within our lives as men and fathers. Daily study of the scriptures in the Bible gives many insights into both what is acceptable in the sight of God and what will benefit our lives as men here on the earth. God watches everything we do in life and He has set principles in motion that rebound back to us many of the acts we commit in life, whether they are positive or negative.

If we are kind to others we will also be shown kindness somewhere in our life, if we are generous toward those who are in need then God will not forsake us in our own time of need. If we forgive others of their errors and come to God humbly seeking His mercy then God will surely forgive us our errors too. But if we are harsh and cruel toward our fellow-man or devious and wicked in our hearts then we will reap the harvest of the destructive seeds we have sown and bring judgement down upon our own heads.

By understanding that God's principles are established forever in the earth we as men can choose to walk in a way that will not only benefit us individually but also the children we are raising. Dads' UNI upholds that in life it is always advantageous to do things God's way that we may receive the fullness of the blessing He desires to give our family.

Acquiring an understanding heart is the foundation for receiving wisdom in every area of our lives, and especially in the areas of fatherhood. This is obtained through both loving and fearing God and putting His ways first in your life. Every other aspect of life falls into its proper place when this foundation stone is laid firmly in our heart as a man. To be the best man and father we can be in this world we need to seek daily to acquire an understanding mind and heart, and the blessings that they release into our family.

DADS' UNI: NURTURING

I am continually reminded about the importance of laying a firm foundation in every area of life if what we are attempting to build is to stand the test of time. This principle remains true whether we are building our new home, considering a career change or planning for a family. Building something that will last requires time, effort and a considerable amount of wisdom. Continuing our short series on the foundational principles of our Dads' UNI organisation that are found within our acronym UNI, we progress to the word Nurturing.

Dads' UNI is based upon the three foundational precepts of Understanding, Nurturing and Imparting. These three areas address the needs of the mind, the emotions and the spirit of man and seek to bring them into a position where they can receive the fullness of God's blessing and abundant life.

Dads' UNI - Nurturing

Nurturing

Verb - Caring for and protecting (someone or something) while they are growing

Helping or encouraging the development of (someone or something)

Cherishing (a hope, belief, or ambition).

When I write on the subject of Nurturing my mind inevitably reverts to the illustration which I believe best describes the process of Nurture and the picture is that of a plant conservatory. In a well prepared and thought out plant conservatory all the elements that are needed to bring a plant from seedling to full maturity are present.

The basic elements required for plants to thrive are water, sunshine, good soil, clean air and room to grow. There needs to be the right amount of each element, distributed at the correct time for the plant to truly thrive. It is also important that each plant be positioned in the correct location for its own particular requirements. Every plant is different and has differing needs and so it is with children, they are all unique and it is our job as a father to identify their individual needs and provide the best environment for them to grow and truly prosper in life.

Every gardener knows that plants don't just need attention when they are seedlings, but constant care is also required while they continue to grow into maturity. This principle is relevant in our role of fatherhood, we are the gardeners and our children are our plantings. Like plants, our children will require the correct amount of nutrients to be added to their lives at the right times to help them grow. They will also require a constant weeding around them to keep them free of the restraints of bad influences. In our nurturing role we will need to ensure that our children are receiving those elements they require daily and we must be prepared to prune away the wrong attitudes that all children develop.

Deuteronomy 11:18-21 "Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. And you shall write them

on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth.

Like the nurturing father described in the scripture above, our role must be constant and vigilant to ensure that our children are raised in the best possible way and thereby given the best possible chance of a wonderful life and eternity. What follows is a short list of some of the areas we will need to be diligent in as a father.

Physical nurture

To nurture our children physically we as fathers need to provide for them the basics of life such as food, clothing and shelter. These components will sustain the natural physical life of a human being so that they can grow into full maturity, from a child into an adult. A balanced and nutrient rich diet containing fruit and vegetables, proteins and grains is broadly recommended by nutritionists. It is also our responsibility to provide clean well-fitting clothes and a safe and secure place to live to ensure that our child is physically prepared for life.

If we as the father and head of the home lead an active physical life then our children are far more likely to follow our example and also be active and healthy. By encouraging them to pursue a sport or activity and supporting them in it we can help ensure that they can grow strong and fit for life. Taking on a supportive role as a manager or coach of their team or even just a regular supporter will make a big difference to your child, as your approval as their father is vital for their well-being.

Emotional nurture

A child's needs however do not stop at physical requirements, every child has an emotional appetite that must be met as well. We as fathers, in partnership with our wife, need to provide for the emotional needs of our children by establishing a loving, caring and supportive environment for them to grow up in. I can not stress too much how important emotional nurture is in the life of a child, especially that which comes from their father.

Boys need to do things such as hug and wrestle with their father regularly to help develop a positive and balanced male self-image, and avoid the gender confusion that is constantly being promoted in the world. Girls need the hugs and tickles from a loving and encouraging father that treats her like a princess and tells her how wonderful she is, this will impart to her the self-image she requires to be a healthy and happy individual. Both of these actions from a father impart love and acceptance to a young child and help develop them into emotionally secure adults.

Intellectual nurture

Our children's minds are designed to be a library and resource that they can draw upon throughout life to help them travel successfully through this world. But each library must first be fitted out and stocked with books and it is here that we as parents have a huge opportunity and responsibility. We can ensure that the information stored within the data-base of their mind is valid, encouraging and pointing them in the right direction in life.

By reading to our child at an early age we can impart to them a love of learning and train them to use their imagination. Fathers who read to their children strengthen the bond they share. There is often a wonderful interaction between them via the inevitable questions that arise from telling stories. Regular bedtime stories are a wonderful way to nurture our child intellectually and open up an educational pathway that will help them get ahead in life.

Spiritual nurture

A child's spirit is the central hub out of which they live and relate to the world. It is incredibly important to protect a child's spirit by ensuring that the words they hear about themselves are encouraging and imparting hope for their future. As a father we need to share our own values, faith and beliefs with our child that they may share our direction in life and hope of eternity.

Many things in the world are destructive for a child and none more so than the words that people speak and influences that surround them. Although we can't protect them from every negative situation we can ensure that the majority of the influences and words spoken over their lives are positive and encouraging, rather than destructive and belittling.

Nurturing our children may not come naturally for many men, as we have come out of generations where father/child nurturing relationships have been neglected or even discarded entirely. The good news is that every man has the ability hard-wired within themselves to succeed in this wonderful area of parenthood. It is by applying ourselves as men and committing to nurturing relationships that we can create a strong bond with our child that will last a life-time.

DADS' UNI: IMPARTING

One of the most wonderful things a father can do in life is to bestow a blessing upon his children. We all have a blessing to give, whether it's a kind word, an encouraging smile or something that can be defined as a spiritual endowment. We can only give to others that which we have ourselves, and so it is with our blessing, as a father we have the ability to share a part of our life with our child. As we conclude our short series on the foundational principles of our Dads' UNI organisation that are found within our acronym UNI, we arrive at the final word Imparting.

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Dads' UNI – Imparting

Impart

Verb - To make known. (information)

to communicate, to pass on or convey, to disseminate or circulate

To bestow (a quality)

to give, to confer, to grant, to bestow, to provide, to supply or contribute.

As a father we have all received authority from God our Heavenly Father. Our authority is to be the head of our home and the person most responsible before God for the raising of our children. Although in modern times many men seem to have delegated much of their parental responsibilities to their wife, this is a short-sighted solution that is destined to failure. Children need their father to be fully involved in every area of their life if they are to prosper and mature physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

The spiritual blessing that fathers have to give their children is powerful and has far-reaching effects in their children's lives. Like the roots that spread out from a tree, so a father's blessing reaches far beyond the initial impartation. What follows is a short list of some of the most common ways a father can impart a blessing to his children.

Baby dedication

Matthew 19:14 But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

One of the most traditional opportunities that fathers have to impart a blessing to their child is through baby dedication. In baby dedication a child is presented before God for His blessing and God is petitioned to watch over and protect the life of the child. The parents are often requested also to make a commitment before God to bring the child up in the fear and love of God, and the child is either prayed over by the minister and parents or in some churches the child receives a baptism of water. Whatever the process in your particular church the important

thing is that it is done, because having God Himself watching over and protecting your child is incredibly powerful.

Fathers should take advantage of this wonderful time to begin the process of imparting spiritual blessing to their child by dedicating them to the Lord as a baby. This is often the first in a marvellous series of opportunities we have to strengthen our bond with our child through connecting spiritually with our Heavenly Father and His blessing.

Reading Bible stories

Psalm 78:3-4 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, telling to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.

The Bible is filled with amazing stories of how God has moved powerfully in the lives of real people like ourselves in times past. As we as their father read these stories to our children their hearts are opened up to the impartation of faith, which comes by hearing God's word. The miracles in the bible are meant to be retold from generation to generation so that each new era in history has an opportunity to rise up and see God's hand move in their times as well.

Reading the Bible stories to our children reinforces our beliefs, standards and values in their young hearts and inspires them to live a life that will bring honour to themselves and their family.

Praying for our child

Numbers 6:23-26 "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: "The Lord bless you and keep you, The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.'"

It is a father's role to be the protector of the family, and one of the most important ways to safeguard our marriage and children is through the vehicle of believing prayer. God has stated that if you come to Him in humility and ask for His forgiveness and His help that He will indeed begin to move in your life, and to watch over you and your family as you pray daily.

The prayer above is a wonderful way to impart blessing to your child and can either be sung or spoken quietly while they sleep at night. It can also be added to your daily prayers for God's grace and mercy to be upon your child's life, and spoken with thanksgiving that God is indeed accomplishing it faithfully.

Praying over our child

Mark 10:15-16 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

The blessing that comes with the laying on of hands is often powerful and life changing for a child. When a believing father prays over his child through laying on of hands the Spirit Of God is imparted to the child and a blessing comes with it. Because it is spiritual in nature the blessing is not always fully understood, it is however a transference of some of the very best things that God has established in you throughout your life into the heart and spirit of your child.

As I said before we as a man can usually only give those things that we ourselves possess away to others in a blessing, there is however an exception to this rule. When a father who is filled with the Holy Spirit prays over his child, there are occasions when God Himself will reveal something by His Holy Spirit and impart a word of encouragement and faith through revelation or prophecy. I have personally experienced this many times and although we as men may only understand a minute portion of God's plans for our child's life, yet even that knowledge can impart vision and faith into our child's heart.

Leading your child to Christ

2 Timothy 3:14-15 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

The ultimate goal of every father should be to ensure that his child has every opportunity to find salvation through Christ Jesus. In a million years time the only decision that really counts, will be whether or not we believe in Christ's death, burial and resurrection from the dead. As a man we need to ensure that our own faith is strengthened and encouraged daily through prayer and study of God's word in the Bible and through fellowship with other believers, so that we have an abundance of spiritual blessing and wisdom to impart into the life of our child.

In my experience there is nothing more important in life than preparing our child both for life here on earth and in eternity. There are many challenges that we will face throughout life as a father and in every one of them it is advantageous to have the blessing and favour of God over our life and over the lives of our children. Spiritual Impartation is the key to opening up the doors of faith and hope in the hearts of our children and every father is called by God to take up this all important role.