



the Source

Let anyone who is thirsty come to me...

We first learn about relationships in the family setting, and what we learn there often sets the tone for how we relate with others over our lifetimes. Our text deals with a most important one, the relationship of a child to its father. I have nothing but positive memories of my own father and marvel at how my son fathers his children.

Sadly, that is not always the case. Too many kids grow up with an absent father or worse yet, an abusive father. Sometimes the relationship goes sour on the part of the child as in our text when King David's son Absalom decides he could do a better job as king and sets out to overthrow his father, so he launches a rebellion.

David knew he had to put the rebellion down, but he still loved his son and wanted Absalom's life spared.

He put the word out to his commanders that the young man was not to be killed.

However, his trusted general Joab took it upon himself to kill the rebellious son.

So, where did this relationship get off track? It happened when Absalom engaged in a revenge killing over the rape of his beautiful sister Tamar by her half-brother Amnon.

As the rebellion takes shape, both the father and the son sought counsel as to what they should do. Absalom sought out a trusted counselor who outlined for him a path for rebellion and he foolishly acted on the advice.

David too sought out advice from his commanders and though their advice was sound, it wasn't the best. They advised him not to go with them to battle. Unfortunately, he learned you cannot expect the hired help to protect your relationships and do what only you should do.

Fathers, the soldier can't do your job and neither can the coach, the teacher, the youth leader, nor your wife. We live in an era that abounds with counselors. Choose wisely those to whom you listen.

— Joe Grove, First Church member

A Family Affair

Read Mark 10:46-52. The story of Bartimaeus is one we are learning in children's Sunday School as we look at the Healing Miracles. Being blind, Bartimaeus could not see Jesus but had heard about the miracles he performed. He believed the impossible was possible with God.

Sometimes we are only given pieces of how to solve a problem and we must have faith to keep trying and see it through to the end. We may be missing pieces of the big picture, but God isn't. Nothing is impossible with God. It can be hard to have blind faith when we don't get the full picture of what we can expect day to day or even as we grow up! Only God knows what is in store for each of us. Our job is to try, ask for help, and trust that God has the master plan.

Invite a friend to Sunday School and come hear more stories about God turning the impossible into the possible! Your class may be lowering a paralyzed puppet through a roof, or creating soap.

Dear Lord, guide us as we venture in your world so that we might always be aware of your presence in our lives. We rejoice with Bartimaeus and all those who have felt your healing touch. Help us to feel your touch in our daily lives. Amen.

— Tammy Parks, Elementary Coordinator

Monday: 2 Samuel 16:23 and 18:1-4

As a counselor, Ahithophel was highly thought of by both David and Absalom, yet the advice he gave Absalom led to Absalom's death.

- How do you determine when you need the counsel of others and how do you evaluate both the counselor and the advice?

Tuesday: Proverbs 13:1

A wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a mocker does not listen to rebuke.

- What was the best advice your father gave you as you were growing up?
- What advice did he give you which you wish you had listened to and didn't?

Wednesday: Romans 12:19

Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written: "It is mine to avenge: I will repay," says the Lord.

- The conflict between David and Absalom began as an act of revenge on the part of Absalom. Have you ever felt the need for revenge? Did you accomplish it or just imagine it?
- If you accomplished it, how did it work out? If only imagined, are you happy you let it rest?

Thursday: 2 Samuel 18:9

Absalom's men are being defeated and Absalom is riding through the forest on his mule when his hair catches in the trees, leaving him hanging. The scripture says Absalom was a handsome man and apparently pretty vain about his long hair, so there is a bit of irony here.

- It is easy to become vain about our looks, our talents, or our social status. What are you tempted to be vain about?
- How do you deal with your own vanity?
- What things in our culture feed into your vanity?

Friday: 2 Samuel 18:12,13

A soldier reports to Joab that Absalom is hanging from a tree but he refuses to kill him. His reasons for not doing so seem to be that the King will eventually find out who did it and that Joab will not protect him when the king finds out.

- What do you think about the soldier's reasons?
- How often do you avoid doing the wrong thing only because you might get caught or because nobody will cover for you?
- Is there any virtue in this?
- Is it virtuous to do the right thing for the wrong reason?