Grace and Truth

Reflection by Jim Christianson - Boulder, USA

It began very early in my life. So early in fact that my earliest memories are of those two things: my father loving me and my father teaching me. Good fathers know how to show grace to their children and they know how to teach them truth. My father, never one to shy away from showing affection, always gave the best hugs (the kind that squeezes your insides and makes you giggle), we wrestled, he held my hand when we walked. My dad never missed an opportunity to throw me in the air, a little higher each time and then tussle my hair. My father tucked me in bed, he got up early with me to watch the sun rise, we stayed up late and slept out under the stars. My mother even tells the story of how my dad would try to take me and my sister on my parents’ date nights because, as he put it, “I just love being with them.”

Through his love, my dad knew how to show his kids grace…and then there was the teaching. The teaching was so important to our relationship. I don’t think I was much older than four or five before I was sitting on his lap learning to drive the car, and of course learning how to throw a ball (and much later, throw a curve ball, too), then there were the sessions on how to sweep the garage and change the oil in my car, and how to work; really work hard for your family. My dad taught me that when walking with a friend, always take the side closest to the street to keep them from danger; just one of the things that makes you a good friend. Truth. My father taught me good things, he taught me difficult
things. Once during some of my more foolish and arrogant high school years, he pulled me aside and said “Son, I love you, but your head is getting pretty big and you are starting to act like a jerk.” Grace and Truth.

My father is still teaching me, still loving me. I am 41 years old and I now have three sons of my own and I finally get it, I finally understand. All this time, my entire life, my dad has been showing me Jesus. God, in His infinite wisdom, has created this relationship we call family, this person we understand as father to show us who He is, to help us understand His love for us. It doesn’t take too much living to know that life is going to be tough and sometimes messy and there are so many things for Him to teach us, to show us a better way. When I read Matt 7:7-11, I find very clearly how Jesus feels about me:

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? 11 If you then, who are 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: 7-11 (ESV)

Father wants to give us good gifts. He gives us Grace each and every day. He wants to teach us those things that are best for us. Our Father wants to teach us Truth, to show us a better way. He came to show us the fullness of who He is. Grace and Truth.

Recalibrate

1) What truth is the Father trying to speak into your life today?

2) Where in your life do you need to understand and accept God's grace?

Send your thoughts or comments to Jim Christianson.