

A Good Good Father Acts 4:23-31

As parents, we want for our children what we think is best for them! Right?

But how do we know whether what we think is best for them truly is or not?

We can listen to the advice of others who we believe parent well, we can do the best we know how w/ the experiences we have gained, & we can apply Scriptural principles to our parenting, but we are not all-knowing parents!

- We did not knit our children together in the womb, God did that!
- Our words don't carry an ultimate authority, only God's Words do!
- We may make plans & decisions for the good of our children, but we can't guarantee that outcome, only God & His plans can!

"Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand!" Proverbs 19:21

Our knowledge, our authority, our influence is limited, but God's is not!

- God is all-knowing – Romans 11:33-36, Psalm 33:13-15, Jeremiah 1:5
- God is all-powerful – Psalm 147:5, Daniel 4:35, Job 42:1-2
- God is in absolute control – Job 31:4, Isaiah 14:27, 46:10, Psalm 135:6
- God is a God who created all things, and He creates it all with purpose!
- God is a God who speaks & His Word reveals His good & perfect will!
- God is a God who ordains all that comes to pass! He declares the end from the beginning, & He does it all as a loving Father! Matt. 7:11; 1 Jn 3:1

These truths about God should be encouraging, & they should give us hope as parents/fathers, because we don't have to try to know everything, do everything & control everything - there is a good, good Father who does!

What does all of this have to do with Acts 4:23-31?

- In Acts 4, things didn't exactly go according to the apostle's plan, but their response demonstrated a trust in a much greater plan!

Context – The disciples had lost their leader, some of them had already been arrested for the message Jesus gave them to proclaim, they had been commanded to be silent & even their own people were rejecting them.

They must have questioned at some point:

- Did God really know that this was going to happen?

- Who is really in control? Is it the Jewish leaders, the Romans, God?
- Is this really the way it's supposed to be? How can this be God's plan?
- Does God really have our best interest in mind? Is He truly a loving Father?

If they asked themselves these questions, their questioning didn't last long b/c despite their circumstances they respond with worship & prayer!

Despite their limited knowledge, their limited power, & their limited authority, they responded with great trust in a Sovereign God.

By praying, "Sovereign Lord", the apostles were testifying to the truths that we declared earlier about who God is, even amidst our limitations.

- They acknowledged Him as the Creator of all things, therefore declaring that He is the One who is truly in authority over it all! – Vs. 24
- They acknowledged that what they were facing was in accordance with what God had spoken long ago thru David, by the Holy Spirit! - Vs. 25
- They acknowledged that everything that had transpired was done by the hand of God Himself, according to His predestined plan! – Vs. 27-28

This may not have been the plan that the apostles would have come up with, but they knew that what was transpiring was in accordance with a plan that was greater than their own – it was according to God's plan.

If the apostles could have such a perspective amidst their circumstances, how can we not trust God, as a sovereign Father, in ours?

If you are going through a tough time, if what you have been experiencing is rejection, if those in authority over us seem to not be doing what they ought, if it seems as though God & His plan are absent in your life, will you/ will we respond as the apostles did here in Acts 4?

- Will we pray, not against our situation, but for boldness despite it?
- Will we look for the evidence of God's hand & plan at work around us, instead of complaining that this isn't the way it is supposed to be?
- Will we lift up Christ no matter our circumstances?

I truly believe that if we stop focusing so much on "our will" being done, and instead prayed more faithfully – "Let Thy Will be done", that this place in which we gather, this church, would be shaken by God's presence as well!

Do we want an easy life, or do we want to live out our good Father's plan?

6-17-18 **A Good Good Father Acts 4:23-31**

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As parents we want for our children what we think is best for them! Right?

- I want my son to win at least one baseball game this season because I fear that too much losing will take away his desire to play the game!
- I wanted at least one kid to respond to all the invitations my kids passed out for VBS, so that they could see that it was worth it!
- I have intentionally tried to shelter my children from certain things because I want them to not be negatively influenced by certain things in this world.

Romans 11:33-36

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! ³⁴ “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” ³⁵ “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” ³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Psalms 33:13-15

¹³ The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; ¹⁴ from where he sits enthroned he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, ¹⁵ he who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds.

Jeremiah 1:5

⁵ “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

Psalms 147:5

⁵ Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.

Daniel 4:35

³⁵ all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”

Job 42:1-2

42 Then Job answered the LORD and said: ² “I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.

Job 31:4

⁴ Does not he see my ways and number all my steps?

Isaiah 14:27

²⁷ For the LORD of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?

Isaiah 46:10

¹⁰ declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,’

Psalms 135:6

⁶ The LORD does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths.

Matthew 7:11

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!

1 John 3:1

3 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are...