

FROM THE EDITOR

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Like many other people around the world, in South Africa we also do not miss the opportunity to honour our fathers on a special day. Father's Day is celebrated on the third Sunday of June and marking the occasion, people express love and affection for fathers and thank them for their support and guidance. 2009 is also the International Year of Astronomy, giving us the added privilege of honouring the Father of all creation!

So, let us briefly focus on aspects of fatherhood in all its facets: a father to children (biological & spiritual), a father to nations, a father of ideas and a father of legacy. These aspects can be viewed from many perspectives of which the role of God as Father is probably the most critical. While it is humanly impossible to measure up, God can and does provide humans with the ultimate Role Model. It is with His grace and revelation that we can tackle the issues facing us as fathers and as men.

I heard a prison's chaplain remark once that many inmates would have a tattoo on their bodies with the 'mom', 'I love Mum' or even 'Mother' but that he had never witnessed a tattoo that said 'Father', 'Dad' or 'Daddy'! Sad, isn't it? It is also an indication of the results of failed fatherhood. There are the obvious relationships between fatherhood and mentorship and we can explore this relationship in great detail without neglecting to also focus on the important role of mothers!

We can investigate issues related to the father as 'creator', not only in a biological sense

but also in spiritual, emotional and creative aspects. God is the cosmic Creator and puts in place rules and laws that govern everything in that. We call it 'science' but to God it is simply a playout of His amazing creativity. Obviously there is a responsibility that comes with being creative and as mentors (fathers & mothers) we have to carry the same responsibility on the seeds we plant in our protégés, or in the world at large. Our greatest responsibility is to instil values and morals in our offspring that will be a testament to the legacy we leave; our greatest responsibility is to train up the next generation ensuring the well-being of our planet.

It would really be interesting to see the effects when our leaders start focussing more on mentoring rather than doing things for personal gain. How important to we regard this aspect of 'fatherhood' or 'mentoring' in South Africa today? What if politicians stopped politicising and started fathering? What if teachers left personal agendas at home and concentrated on the mentoring of a future generation and nation? Would 16 June 1976 even have happened? What if preachers stopped posturing and started fathering? What if teenagers and young adults viewed sex as a holy doorway into the responsibility of nurturing earth (and all who dwell therein) instead of a fickle past time? As always I have more questions than answers, but I believe that in asking the right questions we will be challenged to tackle issues that are important and carry with it eternal consequences!