

Are You Like Your Father?

One of my most poignant memories of my late father is of him seated at his desk with his Bible open, studying. My dad was devoted to Jesus Christ and had an insatiable hunger for biblical knowledge.

I remember watching him many times as he pored over passages and prayed for understanding. Years later, I had the privilege of getting a seminary education, and one day during a class lecture, I thought of him.

Surrounded by my fellow graduate students in a stately lecture hall, my eyes began to water. I was imagining how much my father would have loved being in this class.

He never made it to seminary, but because he held out before me the example of someone who “trembled” at God’s Word, studying it became my own desire.

My behavior was not unusual. Children who are nurtured and trained in the safety of their parents’ love seek to embrace the parents’ qualities throughout their lives.

Not every one of us has the experience of love and protection in an earthly sense. But in a spiritual sense, we can all attest to having that experience with our heavenly parent—God, the Father.

We are commanded to imitate Him: “Therefore be imitators of God [copy Him and follow His example], as well-beloved children [imitate their father]” (Eph. 5:1, The Amplified Bible). We should resemble Him and act like Him.

There’s a good reason for this. Our nation and the world are longing to see the reality of God in the lives of His people.

The apostle Paul wrote, “The creation waits in eager

expectation for the sons of God to be revealed" (Rom. 8:19, NIV). There are many for whom a demonstration of the reality of the One we worship is long overdue.

If only they could see Him reflected in His church! If only our brokenness didn't reflect so poorly on our precious Lord!

What is the creation waiting to see? I believe above all things, the unsaved desire to see the reality of Christ's sacrificial love.

Sadly, it seems harder for us to exhibit unconditional love toward those in the family of God than to those on the outside. We hear too many stories about brothers and sisters who are wounded by other members of the body of Christ.

This kind of behavior isn't lost on those who are looking for God. The unbeliever may not have any great knowledge of who (or what) God is, but he or she is quite adept at identifying who (or what) He is not.

Now is a moment when hearts are being taken captive to fear. Men and women are desperate to know if there is any hope—any security out there.

Let's tell them, "Yes, there is hope, peace, protection!" Better yet, let's show them the evidence of the hope we have: Let's show them how we love one another.