

Are You Willing to Live for Your Children?

My friend Phil took his 12-year-old son, Mark, to fish for salmon in Alaska. They hired a seaplane and a couple of guides and flew to a pristine, secluded bay.

After a day fishing upstream, they returned to find their seaplane high and dry. The tides fluctuated 23 feet in that particular bay, and the pontoons rested on a bed of gravel. Since they couldn't fly out till morning, they settled in for the night and enjoyed some of their catch for dinner. Then they slept in the plane.

In the morning the seaplane was adrift, so they promptly cranked the engine and started to take off. Too late, they discovered a piece of gravel had punctured one of the pontoons, filled it with water, and the plane capsized. No safety equipment could be found on board—no life vests, no flares, nothing. The plane gurgled and submerged into the blackness of the icy morning sea.

Fortunately, they all had waders, which they inflated. The frigid Alaskan water chilled their breath. They all began to swim for shore, but the riptide countered every stroke. The two men alongside Phil and Mark were strong swimmers and they both made shore, one just catching the tip of land as the tides pulled them out of the bay toward the open sea.

Their two companions last saw Phil and Mark as disappearing dots on the horizon, swept arm in arm out to sea. The Coast Guard reported they probably lasted no more than an hour in the freezing waters—hypothermia would chill the body functions and they would go to sleep. Mark, with a smaller body mass, would fall asleep first in his father's arms. Phil, a strong swimmer himself, could have made the shoreline too, but that

would have meant abandoning his son. Their bodies were never found.

What father wouldn't be willing to die for his son? If we are willing to go so far as to die for our children, why is it that we often don't seem willing to live as a godly example for them?

Until every church discipless every man ...

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Patrick Morley is the president of *Man in the Mirror*.