

Cultivating Your Most Precious Gift From God

Yesterday was the last day of summer, at least for us. It was the last day the pool was open before it shut down for the year. Most of our summers involve a significant amount of swimming and this year was no different. So when the pool was finally closing down last night, it felt like the end of the summer for us.

But before it did, we made the most of it. I spent about an hour throwing my children and the children of three other families into the pool over and over again. Needless to say, *I am hurting today ...*

During the course of the afternoon, I was watching my son swim. He loves to just float in the water, underwater. This is a miracle because he used to scream like he was being murdered anytime he would get water in his ears. Now he loves it. He also *hates* the cold water. He is perfectly fine just being in the corner of the pool by himself, jumping in and out of the water. As I was watching him, I saw myself over and over again. **I saw myself in him.**

I grew up in Australia and spent a significant amount of my life by the beach. I love the water. I love to just dive under the water and float. But as much as I love water, I *hate* cold water. I don't have a lot of body fat on me so I feel the cold significantly. I could also spend all day, by myself, in the water and be just fine.

I didn't teach my son any of those things. I didn't sit him down and instruct him that he was to love floating, hate the cold and enjoy his own company. He just does those things because he is my son. He carries my DNA and strangely enough, that also affects things other than genetics.

John 1:12 tells us that, ***“all who received Him, He gave the power to become sons of God, to those who believed in His name.”***

Do you receive Him? Then you have become a child of God and if you are born of God, you carry the DNA of your Father.

I was thinking on this yesterday as I watched my son. If I carry the DNA of my Father, then there are things in me that come directly from Him. I may not even be aware of it, but I get the gift of being like my Father. It may be the most normal thing to me, but others see it and see my Father in me.

It also means the DNA in me will produce the image of my Father simply because that is what it was designed to do. That's a great relief and a great responsibility. In the same way that planting a tomato seed in the ground will produce tomatoes and not potatoes, your life is ***designed to produce the image of God***. A cultivated life will produce the work of God simply because that is what it is designed to do. You cannot escape the power of that DNA ... if you will cultivate it.

That's the part of the equation that requires us. ***The cultivation is up to us.***

My son loves the water right now, but if I stop taking him to the pool and I never give him the opportunity to cultivate that love, he may forget. His love of floating may get filled with a love for other things. In time, he may completely forget his love for water. That would be a sad day. What could happen if I cultivated that love? We have all seen the Olympians whose parents poured hours and time and money into the things that their children loved and ultimately produced champions. It could go either way.

The question today is, what are you going to cultivate? Just because you carry the DNA of your Father doesn't mean you won't be tempted to fill your life with other things that

cause you to forget who you are. It is easy to crowd our lives out with things that are lesser loves. It is easy to forget who we are.

So we need to be reminded. We are not simply striving to be like our Father. We actually carry the DNA of our Father in us. We may not even be aware of it at times, but we will naturally do things that look like God simply because we are sons of our Father. We do, however, have a responsibility to cultivate that DNA in our lives and continue to produce the fruit of a God-life in our lives.

What things can you do this week to cultivate the God-life in you?

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