

A WORD FROM ABOVE Scripture used: [Matthew 3:16 \(MSG\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon took a pause in our summer series “Back to Basics”, to honor and celebrate fathers today. The truth is that fathers often have not been who we need them to be. Many of us have a “daddy hole” in our hearts. Albert Einstein mentioned that his father was strict and distant. Albert Einstein vacillated between resentment of his father, and a longing for validation. Elon Musk says his father was distant and critical. It is very painful for a child to have a father who is not emotionally available. Producer Constance Wu mentioned emotional turmoil in her childhood, and a sense that she could not get anything right. Justice Sonia Sotomayor’s dad was an alcoholic and died when she was 9, leading to an exceedingly difficult childhood. A father’s role is indispensable, irreplaceable.

KEY POINTS

1. [Acts 28:3 NLT](#) tells the story of Paul’s travel, shipwreck, and lighting a bonfire to get warm. Paul is bitten by a snake. He is wounded, but the venom takes a long time to take effect. This is a metaphor for men’s condition: we have been wounded, bitten by the proverbial snake, when our dads are missing.
2. [Acts 28:4 \(NLT\)](#): people suspect Paul to be a murderer (the irony is that he had been a murderer, before a divine revelation totally changed his life). But they change their minds when they see Paul is not ailing from the venomous snake bite. The opinion that others have of Paul goes between two extremes, showing that sometimes we can’t do anything right in life.
3. We must grab the moment of reset in the father-child relationship: retrain ourselves to see the goodwill, the attempts of the other. Allow ourselves to make mistakes. Listen to the other’s story. Engage with empathy and grace. Accept limitations and adjust expectations.
4. Pray for a trustworthy father figure to rise in your life. For Pastor Hurmon, this has been Bishop [Donald Green](#), who has given him lifelong encouragement. The antidote to insecurity is affirmation; it’s informed love, knowing the other’s flaws, but still showing unconditional love that heals our brokenness. Paul shows we can break the pattern. We can change. To the person whose life seems defined by abandonment, God declares “You are mine. You are chosen and marked by my love. I see your potential.” Love is not connected to our performance, but by favor, choice, and decision to start living into it. We can make the other into the delight of our lives.
5. Jesus becomes a pattern for how to live life, and the Holy Spirit moves into the interior of our lives. [Judges 6:12 \(NIV\)](#): Gideon was hiding, defeated, and petrified by his fear of the future. God talks to him and tells him he’s a mighty warrior, a courageous one, a leader. God speaks to him in the most empowering way. In the same fashion, He tells us that we are greater than our guilt, and truly capable of miracles.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** -Take a moment to reflect on your relationship with your father either in the past or now. Do you have a “daddy hole” in your heart that was created by a fractured relationship with your dad? Ask God to reveal to you how this has affected your life.
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider the entirety of your father. What good came from him? Even if you never knew him, what do you recognize that was good? How can you reset your thinking about your dad and recognize that he is broken and as Pastor Hurmon said “bitten”?
- 3) **DO** - If you need a father figure in your life, pray that God will bring one to you. Think about the men He has already placed in your life. How might one of them fulfill that role? If you are a man, how can you become a mentor and father figure for someone you know? Please join us next week as we return to our series “Back to Basics”.