***1 Kings 2:1-3 Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: 2“I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. 3And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn.***

Father’s Day – a day to honor father figures in our lives, be they grandfathers, step-fathers, uncles, older brothers, or fathers. Our world tries to marginalize fathers and for good reason. The world serves Satan and Satan knows that, if he can take out the father, the family is less stable. Statistics show: 71% of children dropping out of school, 63% of youth suicide, and 90% of runaway children have this in common – no father figure in their life. Father’s count – they matter – make sure fathers knows they matter.

In our scripture, verse 1 says - *Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying* ***–*** David’s day to die is drawing near, he knows it. He has anointed Solomon to be the next king. In 1 Chronicles 28, we find that God chose Solomon to succeed David and build the Temple. Now, David charges his son Solomon. The Hebrew means that he enjoined him, meaning he commanded Solomon. So what follows is not a soft suggestion. No! He charges Solomon to complete a work.

Fathers, set expectations for yourself and your children. Children who see their fathers setting goals are more likely to set goals. Children that receive acknowledgement from their father believe themselves more valuable and have a higher self-image. Challenge your children, letting them know you’re there with them. Isaiah 41:13, God sets this example - *For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, ‘Fear not, I will help you.* Charge them, support them, and show them they have nothing to fear.

Verse 2 *I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man.* David knows what we all know. Dying is part of living. Every father has an appointment. David knew his appointment is drawing near. He charged Solomon to be strong. Solomon was a young man at this time – probably in his mid to late teens. David had been a man of war, but Solomon wasn’t. David cut his teeth on adversity. Solomon hasn’t. David charges him to prove himself a man? How? Through fist fights and disrespecting women? No, this is a charge to be wise, strong of mind, having great courage, while ruling the people with justice and fairness. Where in the world could Solomon turn? In 1 Kings 3, we find that Solomon humbly turns to God, and God gives him a wise and understanding heart, as well as riches and honor.

Fathers, David taught Solomon to seek the Lord first, and everything else falls in line. You can give your children no greater lesson than to teach them to seek the Lord first, seeking wisdom and understanding. One day, Daddy won’t be there anymore, but the Lord God continues forever. When we live life as a father seeking God and keeping His ways, children learn to live life seeking God and keeping His ways. The body dies, but the example lives on. Be the example

Verse 3 *And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn.* David says – Follow God. Keep His ways. Solomon, as king, was required to handwrite a copy of the Law, as Moses had spoken in Deuteronomy 17 says - *Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life.* Learn God’s word. Keep His ways, statutes, commandments, judgements, and testimonies, as it is written in the Law and turn not to the left or right. A king that clings to the Truth will prosper.

Fathers, teach your children to cling to the Truth, learn God’s word, hold to it always so that they prosper in life. Demonstrate this in how you love your wife, treat your children, interact with the people around you, and work in and out of the home. Be sure your child has a Bible. Read it with them. Walk in God’s ways and let the children see – even the mistakes and repentance. The children are watching. What are we teaching?

Fathers, this week – encourage your children, set expectations, cheer their efforts, teach them to seek God first, and let them see you pursuing God and His word. The US Dept of Health and Human Services found that both boys and girls, with an engaged father in their life, do far better in K-12 school, and are twice as likely to pursue higher education. The 2017 US Census revealed a direct relationship between engaged fathers and whether children live in poverty. God knows all of this. He doesn’t need the US Government to conduct a study. He gave us His truth. Fathers, we are a key part of our children knowing the truth, meeting Jesus, and that Truth setting them free for eternity. We are not marginal and we are not meaningless. We are charged and we are commanded. Let’s Live the Truth boldly before everyone, especially our children, pointing them to the Savior, Jesus.

If you’ve never accepted Jesus, do it now. Happy Father’s Day.