

# seeing the unseen

## I. Preamble & Prayer

### A. What do Fathers do?

- ✓ Erma Bombeck, the columnist, once wrote—
- ✓ I received a letter from a single mother who had raised a son who was about to become a dad
- ✓ Since he had no recollection of his own father, her question to me was "What do I tell him a father does?"
- ✓ Erma openly shared herself—when my dad died in my ninth year, I, too, was raised by my mother, giving rise to the same question, "What do fathers do?"
- ✓ As far as I could observe—
  - a. they brought around the car when it rained so everyone else could stay dry
  - b. they always took the family pictures, which is why they were never in them
  - c. they carved turkeys on Thanksgiving
  - d. kept the car gassed up
  - e. weren't afraid to go into the basement
  - f. mowed the lawn, and tightened the clothesline to keep it from sagging
- ✓ Erma continued, it wasn't until my husband and I had children that I was able to observe firsthand what a father contributed to a child's life.
- ✓ What did he do to deserve his children's respect?
- ✓ He rarely fed them or did anything about their sagging diapers, wipe their noses or fannies, played ball, or bonded with them under the hoods of their cars.
- ✓ What did he do?
  - a. He threw them higher than his head until they were weak from laughter
  - b. He cast the deciding vote on the puppy debate
  - c. He listened more than he talked
  - d. He let them make mistakes
  - e. He allowed them to fall from their first two-wheeler without having a heart attack
  - f. He read a newspaper while they were trying to parallel park a car for the first time in preparation for their driving test
- ✓ If I had to tell someone's son what a father really does that is important...
- ✓ It would be that he shows up for the job in good times and bad times
- ✓ He's a man who is constantly being observed by his children
- ✓ They learn from him how to handle adversity, anger, disappointment and success
- ✓ He won't laugh at their dreams no matter how impossible they might seem
- ✓ He will go out at 1 a.m. when one of his children runs out of gas
- ✓ He will make unpopular decisions and stand by them
- ✓ When he is wrong and makes a mistake, he will admit it
- ✓ He sets the tone for how family members treat one another, members of the opposite sex and people who are different than they are
- ✓ By example, he can instill a desire to give something back to the community when its needs are greater than theirs
- ✓ But mostly, a good father involves himself in his kids' lives

- ✓ The more responsibility he has for a child, the harder it is to walk out of his *or their* life
- ✓ A father has the potential to be a powerful force in the life of a child
- ✓ Grab such an opportunity! Maybe you'll get a greeting card for your efforts
- ✓ Maybe not. but fatherhood, it's steady and important work

**B. Prayer** – Father in Heaven, you provide us with an incredible, indelible example of what a Father does—your unfailing love in sending Jesus to rescue us, unshakeable when extreme cruelty was shown your Son, and you willingly permitted him to die. Amazingly, it pleased you to lay the iniquities of us all on him. Help us today to see the unseen, to discern how you, our Father God actually are at work. AMEN

## II. Message

### A. Opening Illustration

- ✓ Max Lucado tells the story of when his daughters were young, and trying an experiment
- ✓ Max asked his 8 year-old Jenna, to go one side of the den in their home
- ✓ He then had Andrea, who was six, stand on the other side of the den
- ✓ Max and their 3 year-old Sara sat on the couch in the middle of den and watched
- ✓ Jenna's job was to close her eyes and walk
- ✓ Andrea's job was to be Jenna's eyes and talk her safely across the room
- ✓ With phrases like—"Take two baby steps to the left" and "Take four giant steps straight ahead."
- ✓ Andrea safely navigated her sister through a treacherous maze of chairs, vacuum cleaner, and a laundry basket
- ✓ Then Jenna took her turn—she guided Andrea past her mom's favorite lamp
- ✓ Shouted just in time to keep her from colliding into the wall—when Andrea thought her right foot was her left foot
- ✓ After several treks through the darkness, they stopped and processed
- ✓ "I didn't like it," complained Jenna. "It's scary going where you can't see."
- ✓ "I was afraid I was going to fall," Andrea agreed. "I kept taking little steps to be safe."

### B. Apply the Principle—Unalterably Blind to the future

- ✓ I can relate, can you?
- ✓ We grown-ups dislike the dark too—but we walk in it
- ✓ We like Jenna, often complain too of how scary it is to walk where we can't see
- ✓ And we often, like Andrea, take timid, itty-bitty steps so we won't fall
- ✓ We've got good reason to be cautious—we are blind, we can't see the future
- ✓ We simply have zero vision beyond the present
- ✓ I can't tell you for certain that I will be able to finish this message today
- ✓ Nor can you tell me with complete certainty that you will live to hear this entire message today
- ✓ Now I hope we both do—but seeing the unseen is not—
  - a. A case of nearsightedness or obstructed view

- b. Nor a condition that passes with getting past childhood
- ✓ I am talking about an opaque blindness—a darkness impenetrable to light, not allowing light to pass through
- ✓ In this life we are totally blind to the future—one limitation we all share
  - a. Wealthy are just as blind as the poor
  - b. Educated just as sightless as the unschooled are
  - c. The famous have as little knowledge of the future as the unknown
- ✓ None of us know—
  - a. How our children will turn out
  - b. The day we will die
  - c. Whom we will marry or if marriage even lies before us
- ✓ Let's admit it, when it comes to knowing the future, what Christian author, Max Lucado, says is right, "We are universally, absolutely, unalterably blind."
- ✓ We're like Jenna in the experiment, groping through the darkness, listening for a familiar voice. Like Andrea, taking small steps so that we don't crash or fall down
- ✓ But there's a way to pierce the impenetrable darkness—the answer lies in our Scripture Reading today

### **C. Scripture Reading – 2 Corinthians 4:14-18 NLT**

- ✓ TEXT- 2 Corinthians 4:14-18
- ✓ What is the Answer to piercing the darkness?
- ✓ Answer?
  - a. The risen Lord Jesus
  - b. Jesus, God's grace reaching more and more
  - c. Never give up—our bodies dying, but our spirits are being renewed every day
  - d. Our present troubles are small and won't last very long
  - e. We don't look at the troubles we can see now
  - f. We fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen
  - g. We set about each day to do this one thing—seeing the unseen

### **III. Application: Jairus, a father's story**

#### **A. Jairus seeks Jesus**

- ✓ Open your Bible to the gospel of Mark, Chapter 5
- ✓ In Jairus' own words, let's permit him to tell his story
  - a. I, Jairus was the leader of the Jewish synagogue in Capernaum
  - b. Now that may not seem like much, but it took me years to arrive at such a position
  - c. It was a position that made me the most important man in my community

- d. The synagogue, unlike places of worship perhaps in your day—in my day were the center of religion, education, leadership and social activity
  - e. Being synagogue leader meant you were the senior religious leader, top-ranking professor, the mayor, and well, the best known citizen in the whole town—all in one
- ✓ I, Jairus, had it all—the whole package of perks and privileges, except for one very dark spot in my world
  - ✓ I needed one assurance—that my daughter will live
  - ✓ TEXT: Mark 5:21, 22 NLT READ
  - ✓ Being who I was in my community, I didn't lower myself beneath too many people—but I was one desperate Dad
  - ✓ You see, the Jairus you might expect to see is not the—
    - a. Clear-sighted
    - b. Every word correctly spoken
    - c. Robe and regalia just right

#### **B. Jairus—the blind man seeking a precious gift**

- ✓ I am Jairus, a blind man begging for a gift as I fall at Jesus' feet
- ✓ TEXT: Mark 5:23 NLT READ
- ✓ I'm a distraught Dad—every measure has been tried, every specialist consulted and treatment pursued
- ✓ Have you been there? Dads?
- ✓ Bartering or trading with Jesus favors was not my method here—
  - a. You do me a favor and I'll see you are taken care of for life
  - b. Guys in Jerusalem are getting more than testy—let me make a few calls
  - c. This is not my normal position to bow and scrape—but these aren't normal times
- ✓ No fooling around—I was a determined Dad, so I pleaded, "Please come heal her, so she can live."

#### **C. That MOMENT IN LIFE**

- ✓ There are moments in your life where what you have to offer is nothing, zero...compared to what you asking to receive
- ✓ I, Jairus was at this point
- ✓ Really, what could a Dad offer in exchange for his child's life
- ✓ No games, no disguises, no masquerades
- ✓ I, Jairus, am blind to the future and Jesus had a lock on the future—so Jesus please, help me!
- ✓ Jesus, who loves an honest and true heart—turns and with a gesture and physical step, starts towards my house
- ✓ TEXT: Mark 5:24 NLT READ
- ✓ Amazed, I think, "Things are going to be ok, Jesus is coming, everything is going to be ok!"

#### **D. Painful Delays**

- ✓ Now you must know, the distance from the seaside of Galilee to my home near the synagogue was a very short distance—less than two kilometers, just over a half-mile
- ✓ But the crowds of people and their needs—sick people appearing in unrelenting waves
- ✓ And of course, Jesus would not, and could not pass them up
- ✓ How was I, a nervous Dad, with Jesus coming *with me* to my daughter’s side going to object?
- ✓ But we were going at a glacial pace—grass grows faster, time was our enemy, I was excited and agitated all at the same time
- ✓ Talk about seeing the unseen—what I was seeing was driving me crazy; what was unseen, I feared was my daughter dying with us just a few hundred yards away
- ✓ We were only a quarter of a mile from my home when Jesus suddenly raises his healing hands and exclaims—“Who touched my robe!”
- ✓ I’m not kidding

**E. The 12-Year Woman**

- ✓ TEXT: Mark 5:30,31 NLT READ
- ✓ We all looked around, I, Jairus was standing next to Jesus, and even I had rubbed a shoulder once or twice with Jesus as we had walked together
- ✓ Someone touched your robe?
- ✓ Are you toying with us Jesus?
- ✓ No, he was serious—he saw what the rest of us could not see
- ✓ That’s just like Jesus, I learned that day
- ✓ As we waited, and Jesus repeated, “Someone touched my robe, healing went out from me.” and kept looking—let’s read it
- ✓ TEXT: Mark 5:32 NLT READ
- ✓ Till finally a woman, standing erect, full of vigor, yet trembling...said, “It’s was me!”
- ✓ And then she did something familiar—like me, Jairus, she too fell at Jesus’ feet
- ✓ And a twelve-year battle with disease was history—and a new future for her was written
- ✓ My own heart for my daughter leaped with hope as she testified—Jesus had this to say...
- ✓ TEXT: Mark 5:34 NLT READ

**F. Darkness Closes In**

- ✓ Jesus had a few more encouraging words to say to her when suddenly I felt someone put their arm around me
- ✓ I turned and a frightfully familiar face met mine...a very responsible temple courier of mine was suddenly by my side
- ✓ TEXT: Mark 5:35 NLT READ
- ✓ Get ready—hold on to your hat, friend
- ✓ Here’s where the walk with Jesus takes a noticeable turn
- ✓ TEXT: Mark 5:36 NLT READ
  - a. Jesus to this point was being led by me, Jairus...now Jesus leads

b. I felt like I was trying to convince Jesus till now, now Jesus is convincing me

c. Jesus not only overheard my courier, he was ignoring his words, like they had never been said

✓ Friend, when I heard those words my world crashed—all I could see was my little girl's lifeless body

✓ But Jesus quickly and decisively said, "Jairus, don't listen to them, just trust me."

✓ And you know what? I believed him—Jesus was seeing something I could not see!

✓ I believed *in* Jesus! Up to that point I had believed *about* Jesus...now I was all in with Jesus!

✓ Remember, Paul wrote: "We set our eyes not on what we see but on what we cannot see." 2 Cor. 4:18

### **G. Jesus Leaves the Crowd behind**

✓ Suddenly Jesus did something I don't ever recall seeing any professed—*Messiah* ever doing...

✓ He stopped the crowd, and graciously, yet firmly asked them to stay behind

✓ While we, Jesus and I along with his core disciples were going on to my home without them

✓ Stunned, wide-eyed with wonder at what I was seeing—we soon turned the corner, me and our small group

✓ And as we did the mournful cry of mourners and their musical dirge were waxing forth—in their element

### **H. The Seeing One sends another Crowd packing**

✓ I was still expectant, but understandably guarded when we walked into my home

✓ Jesus however was clearly disturbed, even agitated, then Jesus spoke

✓ TEXT: Mark 5:38,39 NLT READ

✓ There was this pregnant pause and then of all things—the crowd of mourners *laughed* at Jesus

✓ I was uncomfortable, not sure how to see my way through this awkward moment—Jesus was not, he saw perfectly

✓ TEXT: Mark 5:40 NLT READ

✓ Jesus didn't ask *these people* politely this time—he personally showed them the door and asked them to leave right then

✓ My wife and I embraced, tears clearly had been flowing down her face, her outer cloak was damp with many fallen tears

✓ Jesus turned now, with our home now strangely quiet

✓ And we all together made our way to our daughter's room where I had left her only a couple hours earlier

### **I. Jesus Sees the Unseen**

✓ Jesus without hesitation walked to our daughter's bed and reached for her lifeless hand

✓ My heart was about to explode with grief, when I remembered Jesus' words to me just 15 minutes earlier

✓ "Jairus, don't listen to them; just trust me."

✓ Seeing the unseen

✓ I squeezed my wife's hand and smiled at her with a look of expectancy—can you believe it?

✓ I was believing in Jesus to do the very thing I had asked him to do to begin with—help my little girl live

✓ Jesus then spoke, let's read it...

✓ TEXT: Mark 5: 41b, 42 NLT READ

**J. Jairus' and his family believe**

- ✓ I can't put into words what a believing Dad felt that day
- ✓ I stood transfixed, looking at my daughter, alive and whole and then looking at Jesus
- ✓ I'm the synagogue leader, but at that moment after a long hug of my daughter and wife
- ✓ We all three knelt and placed our belief in Jesus—not just as Teacher, and Healer, but as *the* Messiah!

**IV. Close**

- ✓ Has an impenetrable darkness crept into your world
- ✓ If it has, the only Answer to it ever dissipating and remaining so is Jesus
- ✓ A young father in the Bahamas cried out the same plea Jesus did to Jairus that day to his son
- ✓ Their house had caught fire and was engulfed in flames and the son had mistakenly run back into the house for something
- ✓ Now the smoke was thick and the father could see the son up on the second story, but with the smoke the son could not see his father
- ✓ The young dad cried out, "Son, go ahead and jump, I will catch you! Don't be afraid, trust me!"
- ✓ The boy cried, "But Daddy, I can't see you."
- ✓ "I know," his father called, "But I can see you."

**V. Prayer** – Precious Lord! All-seeing One, would you take our tiny, almost nothing sized faith and increase it. And as we fix our eyes on you, the unseen One, all these things we can see will pale into insignificance. Please, as we believe in you, renew in our spirit your likeness oh God! We pray this in Jesus' name. AMEN!