

Set up Film Clip 1:24: 39- 1:27: 57

Chris Gardner was a man who was looking for a better life for his son. Chris has not met his father until he was the age of 29. He made a pledge to himself that he would always be a part of his children's lives. He was doing an internship with a stock brokerage firm, but not getting paid. And eventually he found himself homeless until the money from sales that he was doing on the side would come in. By day he was working with hundreds, thousands of dollars, dressed in a nice suite and using his technical skills. By night, he struggled to keep his son safe and healthy. This is the first night that they found themselves homeless.

Play FILM CLIP 1: 24: 39 - 1:27: 57

Gracious God,

These words come from a place of deep longing. May they be offered in honor of you and heard anointed by your spirit of hope. Amen

FATHERS DAY

This has been a hard week to figure out a sermon. This is Father's Day. It is a day to be celebrated and to reflect. Some celebrate their first Father's Day with a baby is stretching and yawning in your arms. . For others we realize that there is pain for this is the first year without your fathers, or fathers have lost children. That is a wound that is carried with us with such great loss. We celebrate the ways that our fathers have been there for us and grieve the ways that our fathers have let us down. It is a day that we pause and honor and appreciate all that fathers do- work hard, cuddle and read stories, teach the intricacies of sports, play and ALSO lay down the line... fishing days...lazy afternoons playing baseball, teaching our sons and daughters how to change tires or change the oil in cars.... Embrace adventure. . Men in children's lives are important.

SHOOTING IN SC

Father's Day can be a mixture of emotions. This is complicated by the, shooting in South Carolina this week. The onward marching reality of racism in our country just doesn't seem to take a breath. What do we do? I am so sad that this young man sat for a whole hour listening to the Gospel in a church and STILL, his hatred dominated the day.

What does all this say to our lives and the people we care about?

Though parents cannot control the decisions their children make in the world. We can lay a strong foundation.

Sidnie White Crawford was once asked what the solution of the Mideast Crisis was, She said, "We have to quit teaching our children hate."

Parents, fathers have a big impact on our children's lives, and so I challenge you.

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

In the movie THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS, he confesses that his father was not a part of his childhood. He makes a promise to himself that that will never happen to his children. Even when he finds himself homeless with his son and struggles with what to do, he never lets go, he treats his son with love and care. Eventually he becomes a successful business man. But, in the hard times, he tries to remain strong and centered for his son.

Our children interrupt our lives in beautiful ways. If we ignore them, we give up the opportunity to teach them and love them in beautiful ways. In the Pursuit of Happiness:

1. He makes sure that his son is not scared. He protects him. He plays with him and shows the power of imagination.
2. He teaches him that he can dream.
3. He never lets him go. He doesn't walk away from him.

TEACHING OUR CHILDREN ABOUT COMPASSION

How do we teach our children compassion? How do we let them know that they are not the only ones in the world? And that they are a part of something bigger. We are called to teach them to live in liveliness, compassion and not in hate. We model it by the way we live our lives. We talk about it. We immerse them in the work of Christ who tells us to love our neighbor. Karen Armstrong tells a story about a Rabbi- Rabbi Hillel. A man comes to him and asks him to recite to Torah standing on one leg. And so he stands on one leg and says, "What is hateful to you, do not to others. All else is commentary." Our lives are the commentary on "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and mind and soul. Love your neighbor as yourself" That is what Jesus teaches us every day. Do we teach this to

our children? When they interrupt us, do we get aggravated, or do we use this as an opportunity to teach them something new? .. Do we respond with patience and compassion? We teach our children that those who seem so different from us are really not and they are our neighbors not to be JUST tolerated, but understood and loved as a neighbor. Our children are to be taught that the world is big and diverse. And we are called to be welcome to differences, not to hate them. Not to try to destroy that which we cannot understand. The people at Mother Emmanuel church were worked for the sake of love. And were killed by hate. But Christ tells us again and again. We are one in the spirit. We are one in Christ. Christ's work of love will have the ultimate word as we rise up to create a world that refuses to accept racism

ILLIAD

Karen Armstrong tells a story- In the story The Iliad, the war between Greece and Troy is raging. Iliad's best friend is killed and he is enraged. So he take revenge and kill's Hector who had killed his friend. He will not release his body to his people. To the people of Greece that means that Hector will wander endlessly in death. One night Hector's father sneaks into camp to request his sons' body. When he sees Iliad, Iliad sees his own father in the eyes of this man. And they begin to weep. It is believed that weeping together creates a bond for life.

Today, as we celebrate Father's Day and the power of fathers in so many people's lives, we also remember this story of how our weeping today over the racist shootings again and again, creates a bond of compassion.

As we remember the movie The Pursuit of Happiness, we remember that God as a father weeps, cares for us, creates in us an imaginations, looks over us and holds us.... And tells us to dream... dream of magnificent things... like peace.

FILM CLIP-

54; 00- 55; 43

(DREAMS)