

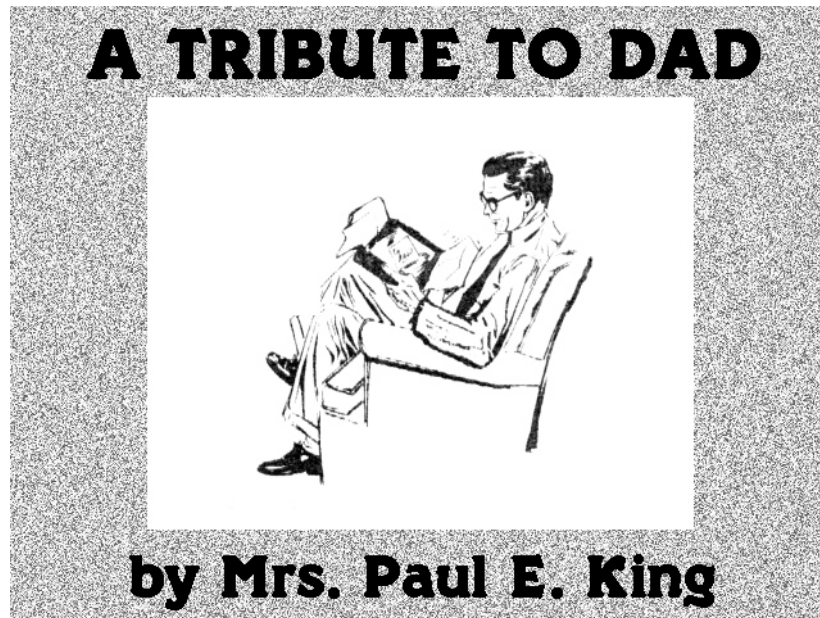
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The Sunday School Beacon  
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**A TRIBUTE TO DAD**  
**By Mrs. Paul E. King**

Dad, today is Fathers Day, and I am truly grateful that one day out of the year is set aside strictly to honor you, and the many other wonderful fathers across our nation.

I want you to know that I am proud of you as my father and that I am proud to be called your son. Mine is not a carnal pride. Ah no! Rather, it is the

kind of pride which my dictionary states, ". . . may be a thing noble, dignified, and admirable . . ." (End of quote). And when I say that I am proud of you, it is that which my dictionary states as (and again I quote) "having a feeling of glad satisfaction" (end of quote). I have all this and more, You have been my ideal of noble manhood and manliness.

Looking back over my life in retrospect, I'm sure I gave you a few anxious moments during those exciting but sometimes unstable young teen years. For this I am sorry, I know I never gave you trouble, nor broke your heart by being wild and unruly or running around with those who were known as "the wild set"; but there were times, in my heart, that I wished you'd have been anything but a preacher. Being called a preacher's kid took grace, Dad; real grace. And during my early teens, you and I both know and remember that my supply of grace was virtually nil and extinct.

Thanks, Dad, for loving me during what were "trying" years for you. Thanks, too, for being patient with me and for loving and caring for me and about me during those neither-man-nor-boy-but-on-the-brink-of-young-adulthood years. It was your constant love, your undying patience and your agonizing and interceding prayers that restrained me and kept me from taking a leap in the wrong direction and way.

Youth can be a fearful time for daring and foolishness -- and folly. And for messing up God's beautiful plan for one's life. It was your love and wise counsel and many prayers that guided me past the chasm of "There's no harm in it," and steered me far from the pit of "Everybody's doing it." Thanks, Dad; thanks much. You're wonderful.

I recall the time when I first became, aware of the fact that the church was drifting. Not the church you pastored with God's help, you kept it Biblically sound and right on track of the "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" - - but the church, generally, and our denomination particularly. I was shocked when I realized that some within our own denominational body of believers didn't believe in the tenets of the church, all of which came directly from within the pages of the Holy Bible.

Dad, I watched you like a hawk, as goes the saying. I never told you this, to be sure, nor were you conscious, even, that I was watching you. Would you, like some others who came out openly and strongly and, even, vehemently, at our district conference (one year in particular), take issue

against these sacred, God-given and God-ordered tenets and issues? I was sure you wouldn't; I had unbounded confidence in you and in the direction you were going. I knew my father; knew, too, that he would not take his family down the "broad way that leadeth to destruction," nor would he lead his flock -- his parishioners -- along the brink of worldliness and error, to their ultimate destruction.

I felt a surge of manly pride wash through my being as I saw you get to your feet that never-to-be-forgotten and memorable conference day and address our general and district leaders. I saw your tears from where I sat, two seats behind the conference boundary lines. Involuntarily, I began to weep with you. Chap Cunnington, sitting next to me, nudged me and said, "It's only another boring conference, Jonathan; so why the tears? Come off of it!"

I looked at Chap, wondering what was wrong with him. Didn't he realize the significance and the seriousness of what was happening? After all, his father, like you, was an elder and a pastor on the district. But Chap merely slapped me companionably on the shoulder and said he was leaving, that he never did enjoy sitting in on a conference session.

I was scarcely aware of Chap's hasty exodus, so intently was my gaze fixed on the lone figure standing, now, in front of the microphone on the conference floor.

I was beside you that day, Dad; not in physical, bodily form, but with all that was within me. Yes, I was up there with you begging, from my silent heart, for you to be the man whom I had always, ever, and only known you to be: the man who knew no fear where right and righteousness and true holiness was at issue and at stake: the man who would rather preach from a tree stump or a brush arbor and be able to preach the whole counsel of God with freedom and liberty in the Holy Ghost, than to have the largest and most prestigious church on any district and be told what he could or could not preach and teach.

I leaned my arms on the back of the seat in front of me, sitting on the edge of my seat, listening with fast-beating heart and bated breath to your kind but firm and positive entreaties and statements and tear-filled pleas, and as I listened -- with a wide-open heart -- God the Holy Ghost settled forever some things in my soul. Yes, Dad, you heard me right: It was in that service

that God's standards, as prescribed and given in His Word, became a forever-settled issue with me. God was stamping everything you said that day with His stamp of approval and, at the same time, He was stamping and sealing it indelibly and forever" upon my heart. "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in Heaven. So stated the Psalmist in his one hundred nineteenth psalm, verse 89, and so answered and replied my heart.

As I stated previously, the teen years can be years of daring and foolishness and, sadly, of folly and of messing up one's life. Fortunately for me, I had a godly and God-fearing father who not only prayed for me but used measures of "persuasion" to help keep me in line and on track. In my heart, however, I felt that, perhaps, along some lines you may have been too strict and too old fashioned in your thinking. I recall the time when Jenny Sterks wanted me to come over to their house for an afternoon of fun and horse riding -- a Sunday afternoon, it was. I thanked her graciously and said no.

"Is it because of your father's preaching against it?" she asked without a moment's hesitation.

"I . . . I . . . well, I'll just not be over," I replied with a stammer and left it at that, instead of telling Jenny that God's Word declared plainly that we were to, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8), and that you were preaching against Sabbath desecration simply because God's Word said it was wrong.

I was embarrassed and ashamed to take my stand back there, Dad. And now I weep for shame to think that I didn't have the courage and the spiritual backbone, back then, to stand nobly and bravely by you and with you in your stand for right and for uprightness. So many of my peers were, even then, deeply entrenched in the new thinking of, "There's nothing wrong with eating out on Sunday," and "There's nothing wrong with miniskirts"; "nothing wrong with skin-tight jeans for boys"; "nothing wrong with long, shaggy-looking hair for boys and cut hair for girls." In fact, Dad, as I look back now, in some people's thinking, nothing much was wrong in anything anymore. Already, absolutes were being put aside and cast away for the "broader" way of thin king; the way of humanism, agnosticism and anti-Christ.

I want to thank you for the message you preached on hell the night, I got saved, midway into my teens. So long as I live, I will remember that God-

anointed message, I know there were others who repented and were converted that night; but I will always believe God had you preach that for me, Dad. I knew I would burn forever in that terrible lake of fire unless I got serious with God and did something about my soul; something real and for keeps: I knew then that the mere profession I had would not stand the test of the blazing, burning eyes of God upon me. I, who had had much light but had rejected and spurned the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten, beloved Son. I settled the sin question that night, Dad. Forever. My, what a change God made in my heart and my life! It was a beautiful, wonderful and radical change. I was converted. I knew it; you knew it; all of my acquaintances and friends knew it.

And then came the glorious and wonderful experience of entire sanctification! How can I ever describe what God did for me! I will quote from a great writer-preacher of another generation past; his pen described my justification and sanctification experiences profoundly and perfectly and wondrously well:

In justification there is life; in sanctification there is life more abundant.

In justification there is love; in sanctification there is perfect love which casteth out fear.

In justification there is peace with God; in sanctification there is the peace of God.

Justification destroys the shoots of sin; sanctification destroys the roots of sin.

In justification we put on the new man; in sanctification we put off the old man with his deeds.

In justification there is joy -- intermittent joy; in sanctification there is fullness of joy -- abiding joy.

Justification is obtained by surrender, repentance, and faith; sanctification is obtained by obedience, consecration, and faith. -- C. W. Ruth

Thanks Dad, for being a preacher of holiness and of holy living; you not only preached it, you lived it, as well; day in and day out. Your holy and godly

example made me eager to obtain this second, definite work of grace. Your messages served to whet my already hungry appetite for holiness of heart: I wanted a cleansed and a pure heart. All thanks be to God, I was not denied! Today, the Holy Ghost resides and abides in my heart.

I love you, Dad, more than my tongue can tell or my pen can express adequately. If I have one great earthly desire, I guess it is to be like you -- because you are like Jesus!

Happy Father's Day, Dad. You are the greatest and the best and, again, I love you!

Your son,  
Jonathan