



BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



Father Knows Best

The sitcom "Father Knows Best" ran from 1954 to May of 1960. It was described as a program much like a Norman Rockwell painting. It was based on a middle-class American family with a father, mother, two teenaged boys and one pre-teen daughter. Although the Anderson family experienced the same issues of a typical family with teenagers and a pre-teen, this fictional family was a reminder of what a family could be like.

In the TV series, Jim Anderson was the father and insurance salesman who always managed to have time for his family. He was a wise and loving father who always knew what was best for his family. Jim was a strong character and his children felt comfortable sharing the concerns of their lives with him.

Does Father Still Know Best?

Since "Father Knows Best" last aired, other great family sitcoms have come along reflecting similar values. (I know I'm giving away my age by referencing the Golden Age in television.) As I look back at these shows, there was always a respect for the father in each family. Today, we live in a time when it is clear that we fathers don't always know what is best. As hard as we may try, our families do not always bond as closely as the families of these sitcoms. We don't always have the wise counsel of Jim Anderson; and even when we do, we do not always have children with receptive ears!

For most men, being the head of our families is not always that simple. We sometimes feel the hurts and pains of our broken families and have no idea how to put them together again. Like in the childhood story of Humpty Dumpty, we feel that all the king's horses and all the king's men could not put our families together again.

Fragmented Families

Men, I want to tell you how you can move towards picking up the broken pieces in your family. Hope begins with our relationship with our Heavenly

Father.

Some of you may not have had role models to show you what a good father is like. You may have read self-help and parenting books, but somehow your family still feels broken. I still believe there is hope. The king's horses and men may have helpful ideas, but John reminds us the King of Kings can help us put our fragmented families back together.

John said, "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are." (1 John 3:1) He is a Father who loves us and our families more than we can ever love them. When we allow Him to be our Father, we find the awesome power of His love for us as He adopts us as His children forever!

Hope in Adoption

This adoption begins when we put our trust in Jesus as our Savior. John said, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John 1:12) Our children may never say about us, "Father knows best"; but if we trust in Him, He can help put the broken pieces of our relationship back together.

Maybe you are feeling that your family is too broken to be put together. Maybe you are even saying to yourself, "I'm too broken to be put together!" We all fall in this category, but our God specializes in those things that seem impossible. Does it happen overnight? Not always, sometimes the changes are gradual. But He promises to be there with us during the process. In the concerns of this life, we can rest assured that He promises never to leave or forsake us. (Hebrews 13:5)

God's amazing grace can transform your life and your situation. His grace can make this Father's Day your best Father's Day yet.

- Dr. L.W. Edwards

Stop the Leak!

What's the best way to fix a leak? In Mary Mapes Dodge's book *Hans Brinker*, a finger was enough for the Little Dutch Boy to hold back the water seeping through a crack in one of Holland's dikes. Imagine how this story would have played out if the dike had seepage a few feet away on either side of the first crack. The more leaks appeared in the dike, the harder it would be to stem the tide. At a certain point, the Little Dutch Boy would run out of fingers. This helpless situation unfolded on a much larger scale at three mines in Colorado on August 5, 2015.

Solving One Problem, Creating Another

In an effort to keep polluted runoff mine water from Cement Creek, a naturally-formed stream which flowed into the Animas River near the town of Silverton, Colorado, a water treatment plant had been constructed at the Sunnyside Mine. When this treatment plant closed in 1996, the runoff water from the mine was plugged with a concrete "finger" in a project which was completed in 2002. Shortly thereafter, the Environmental Protection Agency noted that the rate of acid water discharge at Gold King and other nearby mines had greatly increased.

On August 5, 2015, EPA contractors working at the Gold King Mine with heavy equipment accidentally set off a chain reaction which led to the colossal multimillion-gallon spill of orange, contaminated mine water into the Animas River. Most of the water which had been diverted by the cement plugs now ran freely into the river shared by three states.

Fortunately, just over one week after the massive spill, most of the orange color from the mine water had dispersed. Still, the crisis was far from over. Commercial and agricultural sites along the coastline had to wait until they received clearance that the water was safe to use. A legal battle soon followed as the affected states sued the Environmental Protection Agency for its role in the mess. The whole situation provides a fitting reminder of the danger of inadequately addressing life's problems.

The Treatment Plant of the Heart

Sin in the heart is like the contaminated water at Gold King Mine: Once we're aware of a leak, it will take more than a finger in the dike to stop it. Plugging the leaks of discontentment, selfishness, ungodly anger, lust, envy, pride, resent-

ment and bitterness with efforts at changed behavior will only cause them to find the path of least resistance, expressing themselves in a different, equally damaging way — unless they are treated at their source, the heart.

Jim Berg wrote, "God goes to great lengths to address the heart issues of His people. He is not satisfied with leaving the relationship with Him unreconciled. Don't be satisfied with any change you see if it is obvious that there has been no real reconciliation with and submission to God." [1] The "leaks" we see in life are symptoms of a deeper problem with our relationship with God. Any remedy for the symptoms which does not address the heart problem is a plug which will only be temporary, incomplete and ultimately, ineffective.

What the Sunnyside water treatment plant did for the mine's acidic water, God longs to do for our hearts. We can either allow Him to cleanse us, or attempt to plug the leaks with our self-made solutions. Only one solution is permanent. Only one solution will truly fix the problem within us. Better to allow God, who knows what is best and does all things well, to make us clean.

Think your leaks are too many? First John 1:9 reminds us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It starts with a humble prayer. Acknowledge your need before Him today, and soon the waters which flow from your life into others' will be made clear.

- Cam Edwards

[1] Berg, Jim, *Changed Into His Image*, Bob Jones University Press, Greenville, South Carolina, 1999, p. 86-87.

