



father's day guide

FTD month
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Celebrating Fathers who can bring their little children to Jesus

Father's Day is a powerful opportunity to speak about fathers and to fathers. In your church context, you might have many good examples of positive, involved and present fathers to young children, or you might recognize this as a big challenge in your community. You and your church can speak up about this in ways that brings about positive change. The ideas below are aimed at fathers of children in the first thousand days, but can be adapted for fathers of any age.

Remember that Father's Day will bring up a range of emotions and memories for people in your congregation. Some congregants have had very negative experiences of fatherhood and might not want to 'celebrate' Father's Day. Some might be resentful of the father of their child who is not being present, positive or active in the life of his children.

Every fatherhood story is unique. Be sure to keep your messaging uplifting, encouraging and not judgmental or critical.

Affirm the role that dads have in the lives of their young children

Dads have a special and unique part to play in giving their young children a strong start to life. Many times, however, they are overlooked and not included. You could use some time in your Sunday meeting to encourage fathers (and help others see the opportunity that dad has). You could use phrases like, "Dad you are a brain builder. Dad, you are more than an ATM – you matter! Dad, your children are fearfully and wonderfully made by God!"

Play or share a video that encourages dads in their role of being a dad

Many times a good story, or video can communicate powerful messages. You could use a short video in a Sunday meeting, or send it out through your communication channels.

Here are two examples:

- **Video 1:** [Baby talk for dads](#)
- **Video 2 :** [A dad and his baby talking](#)

Share a small gift with dad

Dads are often overlooked when we talk about parenting children in their first thousand days. Sometimes a small token can go a long way in helping dads feel seen and acknowledged. Depending on your budget and capacity, you could give all dads a small gift that can be a reminder of the important role they have. It could be a print out of Luke 18:15-17, that can be stuck up at home. This reminds dads of the value of his young children in God's eyes, and can spur him on to grow as a father.

Ask a dad to share his story or journey of being a father in the FTD

There is power in testimony. There may be a father in your church community that can share his testimony of being positive, present and involved in the life of his very young child. These testimonies can encourage dads, as well as help other family members see the opportunities that dads have to invest in their babies. It can also create the space for families to talk about the challenges or barriers that dads are facing.

Call congregation to pray for dads

On Father's Day, there is a wonderful opportunity to be praying for dads and with dads. When we pray, we are asking God to intervene, and we are also blessing fathers. It is also an encouragement to the congregation to continue to pray for fathers. Dads have an important role to play in raising their children – who are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Remember to also pray for fathers who have unborn children.

Conclusion: ✨

The topic of fatherlessness in South Africa is a complex one, and the church has a wonderful opportunity to speak up about it. These ideas are intended to help you and your church speak up about this topic in a way that the whole congregation can be part of strengthening men in their parenting roles.