

## Grace: Being a Father and Grandfather

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June 13, 2020

Hyun Jin Moon's Family Peace Association



As Father's Day is right around the corner, I was thinking about fatherhood. I heard an ad once on TV that stated, "You do not have to be perfect to be a parent." This makes so much sense to me.

I loved my pops. He was not perfect. He taught me a lot. What he did, I ended up doing... pretty much. If he told me not to do something, and he did not do it, I did not do it. If he did something and told me not to do it, I did it. If he told me to do something and he did it, I did it.

Our kids will basically end up doing what we do. We are the mentors for the future.

As a father, this was something I really agreed with. I need to be a good role model for my family. Yet, the struggle was and is that I am not perfect. This is where grace comes along. If our children can overlook our flaws and imperfections, we are so fortunate; as their children will do for them. I believe we as parents strive to do the best, lay the best foundation, set the best conditions, and do the right thing for our kids.

A father in all aspects does need a counterpart. However, a mother helps a father be a very good father as a father helps a mother be a very good mother. They are a team.

So, you might ask, "What about being a grandfather?" Well, you do not have to be perfect to be a grandparent.

You can see how your own sons and daughters learn as you did on how to be a parent. They - like you - will ask their parents for advice, suggestions, insights, and thoughts. Likewise, they will strike out on their own and find their own paths to parenthood. There is wisdom in asking for advice, sifting through it all, and taking ownership of what you think is best as a couple to raise up your own child.



It does seem that as a grandparent, the time has slowed down. When you were so busy making a living, doing your work, earning a living for your family, you were in the fast lane. Sure, there were special times to spend with my family. Yet, it often seemed like I had less time.

Now as a grandparent, it's like Grandfather Time has gifted you more time to play and be with the grandchild. Of course, you still have to make the time. You still have to

expend the energy. It is a different dimension, a different paradigm of life.



Yet, there still is a great responsibility. You want to teach the grandchild, you want to mentor, you want to have fun but help in the learning process.

You may come to notice a WOW, that is how our own children learned the ABC's, the 1,2,3's, how to recognize pictures and form words and speak. It is as if the movie picture slowed down and even got into more focus.

I wrote a couple of acrostic poems on fatherhood and grandfather ([see below](#))

My grandson and I have had a special opportunity to meet over video on cellphones during the pandemic. We would talk from one hour to three hours, four or five times a week. He has been my teacher in many ways: Speaking clearly and identifying items correctly.

I was telling him Thomas the Train was going down the road and he quickly corrected me. Not road, but tracks! He has unique sounds for a truck, a monster truck, a fire engine, a school bus, or a garbage truck. It is important

to get them right.

We have a dog that is a type of liaison. If I cannot find a truck my grandson wants to see, I blame it on the dog. If he does not want me to read, I say the dog wants me to read, and then my grandson is very happy then to listen.

I wrote a poem about him that says a lot about our relationship. ([see below](#))

I do realize you need to make the time. I would hope to say I made the time with my own children, but I think they will be the final judge on that. And if I did not, this is where grace comes again. If my children can forgive me for not being a perfect parent, I know that my grandson will forgive me for not being a perfect grandparent.

There is an awe of sorts knowing that your own son or daughter along with their spouse created. It helps you reflect as well that how Heavenly Father helped you create with your spouse and now it is passing on. There is the wonder of life that is real and very tangible.

When our grandchildren's parents interact, you too can see how precious their relationship is. My

grandson loves me, yet he so much more loves his mom and dad. That is how it should be.

## **The Grandiose Grandpops**

*By Mike Yakawich: dedicated to all grandparents*

Time to answer the phone  
Grandson is calling feeling alone  
Reading hour is now here  
Sit down, all the books are near

Over the phone we read books  
Acting, emotionally placing looks  
Trucks, cars and the fire engine  
Illustrating how much you can imagine

Let's read about trucks  
No, Please, not about the ducks  
Airplanes, construction and cars that race  
Watching the many running after the chase

Thank you for the special chance  
His smile is amazing at a glance  
It is all worth the community  
With him reading is an opportunity

Please read he asks more grandpops  
How you speak is the really the tops  
Actually, a pretty good actor of sorts  
You make reading such fun sports

The hour passes so quickly  
He shouts for more with indignity  
Please one more story to be told  
You must read before I get too old

Super fun says I at this  
It is so enjoyable I cannot miss  
Yes, one more book to be re-d  
Then you must go off to bed

What is an acrostic poem you ask? An acrostic **poem** is a **poem** where certain **letters** in each line spell out a **word** or phrase. I wrote these for our Black History Month Poetry Night 2020 read at the Billings City Library.

### **FRIEND**

Faithful  
Respectful  
Integrity  
Engaged  
Neverending  
Dedicated

### **BROTHER**

Bold  
Respectful  
Outgoing  
Thoughtful  
Honest  
Earnest  
Resilient

### **GRAND-FATHER**

Generous  
Reader  
Actor  
Narrator  
Decider  
Faithful  
Attentive  
Teacher  
Healer  
Entertainer  
Resourceful

### **HUSBAND**

Honest  
Unconditional  
Supportive  
Brave  
Active  
Negotiator  
Devoted