

Time with My Sons **Pastor Barry A. Clardy**

There is a priceless treasure given to each of us if we do not ignore it. In fact, in every moment we live, we have the potential to create memories for the future. It is a gift called “Time.”

Time is like a blank canvas awaiting the artist to pick up the paint and brush and paint a unique, valuable, and meaningful portrait—one that only you as a father can paint.

Some of the greatest portraits or memories I cherish are time I shared with my two sons, Graylin and Cameron. Once little, now grown, they have been and continue to be my greatest investments in life.

I could walk down memory lane and vividly describe many memories we made from fishing trips, ball games, family vacations, or personal conversations that taught me as much about life as I hope it taught them. I think the reward and life lessons those times gave me are far greater than perhaps what it gave them.

Time spent together has taught me a few lessons that far exceeds fatherhood but helped me grow and continually evaluate the priorities of life as a person.

One of the many lessons I learned from the time invested with my sons is availability over missed opportunities is preferred. While I admit my personal imperfections and a fair share of missed opportunities, I always wanted my sons to know they are a priority to me. I have tried to be present.

When they looked up, I wanted to be at their games and for them to know I am their number one fan. When we took road trips together or just hung out doing our thing, I wanted them to know they are my focus. They are not an accommodation, but rather my choice—a top priority.

Another lesson I learned is affirmation and affection over accolades and mere achievements. While I want my sons to succeed and flourish, I never wanted their motivation to perform to be from the pressure I created to convey significance and value. I want them to know they already have that from me. “These are my sons in whom I’m well pleased.”

Confidence, character, integrity, the growth of personal skill sets, and the need for perseverance to achieve life goals are some attributes we cannot gain by osmosis but by being intentional by making deposits into their lives. A father’s affirmation is essential—a son’s love, priceless.

While there have been many moments filled with laughter, tears, lessons learned, some regrets, and memories, I can honestly say the time I invested with “my boys,” who are now young men, continue to bless my life. I say “investment” because with it is a promise of a return. Dividends of seeds sown, love given, and the hopeful lessons for life learned along the way. Once a father, always a father.

I have heard it said, “you are a dad by the birth of a child, but you become a father by choice to a child who is born.” It’s true.

Life is a classroom, circumstances the lesson, and often God sends both biological and spiritual fathers to be the teacher along the way.

Today, I am thankful for the time I have been given with my sons, and I hope to make more memories for the future. A Father’s Day gift that keeps on giving!

Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.

1 Corinthians 4:15 NIV

Submitted by:

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