INTRO: ARE YOU FAITHFUL? That is a question I have been beginning my sermons with for three weeks in a row. WHY? Because according to scripture, GOD REQUIRES FAITHFULNESS (1 Cor. 4:1,2). So, again I ask, ARE YOU FAITHFUL? Each week as we have been looking at FAITHFULNESS, we have been getting more and more specific, and TODAY I want to REALLY get specific focus on an area of FAITHFULNESS that is VERY CRUCIAL IN TODAY’S SOCIETY. That is FAITHFUL FATHERHOOD! Are you a father? ARE YOU A FAITHFUL FATHER? God requires and expects ALL Christian fathers to be FAITHFUL to biblical principles and when such is so, great blessing occurs. When such is not the case, great trouble is brought into the family in so many ways! So, since today is FATHERS DAY, we shall study from the Word of God, THE FAITHFUL FATHER. Remember this: FAITHFUL FATHERS BUILD GODLY FAMILIES.

BACKGROUND OF TEXT: In Genesis chapter 35, Jacob was told by God to go to BETHEL, which was the place where, 28 years earlier as he was fleeing from Canaan, he had a dream in which he saw THE HEAVENLY LADDER in which God made him heir to the Abrahamic Promises. Now, when Jacob went back to Bethel, God was reassuring him that the original covenant will be fulfilled. After that reassurance, Jacob moved on to Hebron, the home of Abraham and Isaac.

APPLICATION OF TEXT: In verses 1-5 of the text, through Jacob’s actions, we see elements of what it takes to be a FAITHFUL FATHER. Those elements apply to all fathers today.

I. THE FAITHFUL FATHER LISTENS TO GOD VS. 1
   “AND GOD SAID…”
   A. The Past Circumstance with Jacob – God told Jacob to do four things.
      1. “Arise.” – That is an ACTION VERB which means, “GET UP AND GET MOVING WITHOUT DELAY.” According to the record Jacob had been in Shechem for 6 years wherein was a lot of wickedness and idolatry…not a good place for a man of God to be with his family.
      2. “Go To Bethel.” – About 15-20 miles south of Shechem. When Jacob was there 28 years earlier, he promised God he would return (Gen. 28:10-22). That promise had been delayed, and so now God gives the command.
      3. “Dwell There.” – God wanted Jacob to remain there for a bit so that He could revive him and renew His covenant with him. This chapter records the first of 8 major revivals in the OT. A good text to study!
      4. “Make an Altar To God.” – God was calling Jacob to worship Him.
   B. The Present Circumstance with Fathers
      1. God has established the Father as the Spiritual head of the family.
2. God expects Fathers to listen to Him daily with the intent of full and complete obedience for himself and his family. How does God speak to Fathers?
   a. Through the Word of God
   b. Through the Holy Spirit
   c. Through the Spiritual-Minded Servants of God
3. God WILL LEAD THE FATHER EACH STEP OF THE WAY!
   WHEN DAD LISTENS TO GOD, GOD WILL BLESS DAD! DAD, ARE YOU FAITHFUL IN LISTENING TO GOD TODAY?
   ILLUSTRATION:

II. THE FAITHFUL FATHER SPEAKS FOR GOD VS. 2
   “THEN JACOB SAID…”
   A. The Past Circumstance with Jacob – Jacob was responding to what God said by relating it all to his family and leading them as God directed. The message Jacob to his family from God brought SPIRITUAL REVIVAL to the family. Note what he said:
      2. “Be Clean.” – A word for purification which in that day simply meant to “wash your body.” THE SYMBOLISM WAS GREATER! It symbolized TURNING FROM IDOLS TO GOD (REPENTENCE) AND BEING FORGIVEN.
      3. “Change your Garments.” – This symbolized A NEW LIFE-STYLE (SANCTIFICATION).
      4. “Go to Bethel.” – The exact place God commanded
   B. The Present Circumstance with Fathers
      1. The Fathers are SPOKESMEN FOR GOD in the family. To neglect this duty, is to be UNFAITHFUL, NEGLIGENT, AND DISOBEDIENT.
      2. The Family is to listen to the father as listening to God.
         THIS SHOWS THE GREAT RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BIBLICAL FAMILY. IN GOD’S WAY, THE FATHER LISTENING TO GOD AND THEN SPEAKING TO THE FAMILY, FOLLOWED BY THE FAMILY OBEYING, IS THE TRUE SOURCE OF BLESSING FROM GOD! THERE IS NO DEBATE WITH THIS ISSUE FROM GOD’S PERSPECTIVE!
      3. The Fathers message is the same as Jacob’s message
         a. Put away strange gods…
         b. Be spiritually clean…(Repent from sin).
         c. Change your lifestyle to godliness…
         d. Go where God leads…(Ministry, location, etc.)
   DAD, ARE YOU FAITHFUL IN SPEAKING FOR GOD TODAY?
   ILLUSTRATION:

III. THE FAITHFUL FATHER OBEYS GOD VSS. 3,4
   “LET US ARISE AND GO UP TO BETHEL.”
   A. The Past Circumstance with Jacob
      1. There was Fatherly Obedience Vs. 3
         - Jacob led his family to Bethel
      2. There was Family Obedience Vs. 4
         - The family forsook the idols and followed Jacob
B. The Present Circumstance with Fathers

1. Fatherly obedience to God is a MUST! Do you hear that dad? FATHERS MUST BE IN THE WORD OF GOD DAILY, ALLOW THE SPIRIT TO LEAD THEM, AND FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTION OF THEIR SPIRITUAL ASSOCIATES.

2. Family Obedience to Fathers is a MUST! Do you hear that family? REBELLION OR NEGLECTING THE DIRECTION OF THE FATHER ONLY TAKES THE FAMILY OUT OF THE PROTECTION OF GOD!

DAD ARE YOU FAITHFUL TO GOD IN FULL OBEDIENCE?

ILLUSTRATION:

IV. THE FAITHFUL FATHER IS PROTECTED BY GOD VS. 5

“THE TERROR OF GOD WAS UPON THE CITIES.”

A. The Past Circumstance with Jacob

-Because Jacob obeyed God and because Jacob’s family obeyed him, THE FEAR OF GOD was placed by GOD HIMSELF in the minds of the cities so that NO ONE PURSUED THEM TO DESTROY THEM IN THEIR JOURNEY TO BETHEL! WOW!

B. The Present Circumstance with Father

1. When the Father obeys God personally, and when the Family obeys God through the Father, GOD WILL GRANT PROTECTION FROM THE ENEMY!

2. That is JUST the way GOD WORKS! The father who disobeys God and the family who disobeys the father is being set up for spiritual, emotional, physical and social destruction.

A FATHER AND A FAMILY CANNOT FORSAKE GOD’S WAY AND EXPECT GOD’S PROTECTION. BUT FULL OBEDIENCE BRINGS THE POWER AND PROTECTION FROM GOD IN EXTREME WAYS.

DAD ARE YOU FAITHFUL TO GOD AND THUS ARE EXPERIENCING HIS PROTECTION?

ILLUSTRATION:

LESSONS: