



INSPIRATION FOR THE *UP* RELATIONSHIP



*Lift*

I WILL *LIFT* UP THE CUP OF SALVATION  
AND CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD.

PSALM 116

# INSPIRATION *for the* “UP” RELATIONSHIP

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## MY FATHERS' LOVE

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I don't know which of U2's songs is the most famous, but their 1987 hit, "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" has to be in the rankings for number one. Music, vocals, and energy cannot account for all its success. The message is soul-gripping. Most of us have an experience (or several) in life that have left us empty and disillusioned, wondering "Where can I turn? Is there someone who will wrap their arms around me and my hurts?" The answer I have found is the answer U2 also gives. The one to whom we turn is our Father in heaven.

But can God help with real life...daily life...life when it strays so far from our idyllic dreams? Cindy Schroeder is a friend of mine, and her testimony is a witness to the amazing power of a father's love, both on earth and from heaven. Here is her story...

My family and I arrived in Atlanta on February 1, 2001. I have a daughter in 4th grade and boy/girl twins in Kindergarten, and I am a single parent. I grew up in West Texas and came from a big family where divorce was never much an issue. I have a wonderful dad that has a quiet way about him. He was constant, loving and always there. But then so was my Father in heaven. I had been taught that this Father in heaven was always

with me and always loved me, but He seemed awfully quiet also. When my marriage, and my world, fell apart I came to know my dad as someone so brokenhearted over his daughter's pain that his eyes filled with tears and his voice would break when we spoke. I began to understand his loyalty to me, that he would never give up on me or despise me for mistakes I had made.

I saw an unconditional love from dad to me. I also began to know this Heavenly Father of mine in a whole new way. God is not so quiet with me anymore and through my dad I can begin to understand the pain this God of mine feels for his daughter. He shows me daily His constant presence in my life and just when I think I cannot take anymore He reminds me of His forgiveness for all my past and daily mistakes. I know without a doubt now He is always there. Even with such loss in my life I have finally found a new and deeper relationship with my dad here and also with my Heavenly Father. ☺

**I JOHN 3:1 – HOW GREAT IS THE LOVE THE FATHER HAS LAVISHED ON US THAT WE SHOULD BE CALLED CHILDREN OF GOD.**

*Don McLaughlin*

# MY HEART YOUR HOME

SONG  
CCLI 184877

Come and make my heart your home  
Come and be everything I am all I know  
Search me through and through  
Till my heart becomes a home for you.

A home for you, Lord  
A home for you, Lord  
Let everything I do  
Open up a door for you to come through  
So that my heart would be a place  
Where you want to be

You are my portion  
Filling up everything  
You are the fortune  
That's causing my heart to sing  
It's amazing  
That you could make yourself at home with me

Come and make my heart your home  
Come and be everything I am all I know  
Search me through and through  
Till my heart becomes a home for you.



# Scripture to Remember

## 1 John 3:1

1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

## Galatians 4:6

6 Because you are his children, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."

## Psalms 68:5

5 A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.

## Hebrews 12:9-10

9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! 10 Our parents disciplined us for a little while, while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good that we may share in his holiness.

## Matthew 6:26

26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store

away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

## Psalms 103:8-14

8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. 9 He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; 10 he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; 14 for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust

God wants us to know him as Father. He is so passionate about it that he brings it up over 200 times in the Bible! Meditate on these verses and consider what it means God to be your Father.

# REFLECTION

JOURNAL

## *on your* “UP” RELATIONSHIP

*After reading and considering each scripture listed on page 4, record your personal response to the corresponding study questions.*

**WHAT IS THE JOB OF A FATHER?** God often refers to himself as “Father.” What is he risking by describing himself this way? On the other hand, what important qualities could he be revealing to us in calling himself our Father? \_\_\_\_\_

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How is God’s version of Fatherhood different from what we see on earth? \_\_\_\_\_

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The Psalmist called God a “father to the fatherless?” Are there ways that you feel fatherless? What needs might God be able to meet that an earthly father cannot? (Psalm 68:5) \_\_\_\_\_

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Consider the verses from Hebrews. What is good about discipline? How have you learned from the times God, as your father, has disciplined you? (Hebrews 12:9-10) \_\_\_\_\_

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Consider the verses in 1st John and Galatians. In Jesus’ first language of Aramaic, “abba” is much like the English word “daddy.” How might such an intimate relationship with God change your understanding of him? (1 John 3:1, Galatians 4:6) \_\_\_\_\_

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Write down your own definition of unconditional love. Now spend some time imagining the love and care God the Father has for all His children. With His unconditional love in mind, spend a few moments talking with God about how His unfailing love is making a difference in your life.

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# A FATHER'S *Legacy*

by Sandra Mackey

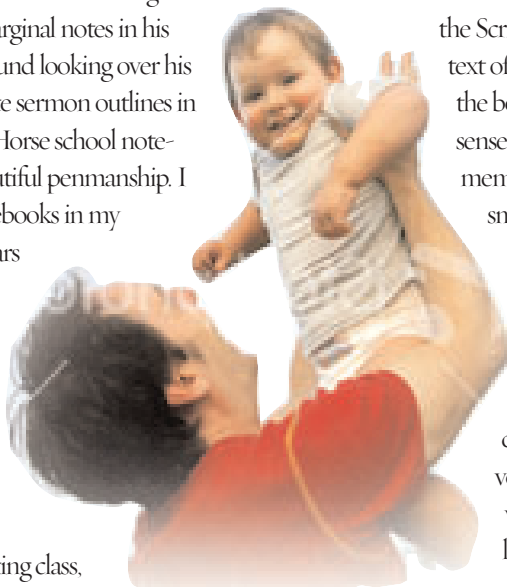
*M*y father left me an amazing legacy. I have most of the books that he and his father used to assist them with their Bible study before the advent of Bible CDs, Encyclopedias on the Internet and Bible software for laptop computers and ipods. Many of my fondest memories are of quietly sitting with him at the dining room table and watching him study and make marginal notes in his Bible. I could be found looking over his shoulder as he wrote sermon outlines in spiral bound Blue Horse school notebooks with his beautiful penmanship. I still have those notebooks in my library. Over 40 years have passed since he left this life, but his influence is still felt significantly when I hold one of those books.

Valedictorian in his high school graduating class,

my father didn't go to college, but he was a self-educated scholar, especially of the Bible. When I was about 12 years old, he taught me how to research a Greek word in an Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, and identify its meaning in Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. I'm sure that was the beginning of my love for

the Scriptures, and not just the text of the Scriptures, but for the books themselves. My senses are flooded now with memories of the wonderful smell of the leather binding, the feel of flexible, thin India paper and ink; the treasure of having maps, references, dictionary and concordance all in one volume. I'm not sure which came first, the love of the book or the

*(continued on back cover)*



# STORIES OF FAITH

A consistent aspect of my childhood was the evening family devotion time my dad led daily. I grew accustomed to this “culture” not realizing it would be a cornerstone of my walk with the Lord in later years. On our annual visits to my grandfather, I witnessed him take the devotions a step further. He had devotion times both morning and evening. It was during one of these early morning devotion times that I gave my heart to the Lord at my grandfather’s bedside. I grew close to the Lord and He grew close to me (James 4:8).

I have gone through many challenges in my life, but this part of my life never changed and God never left me either. And now, Vani and I along with our sons

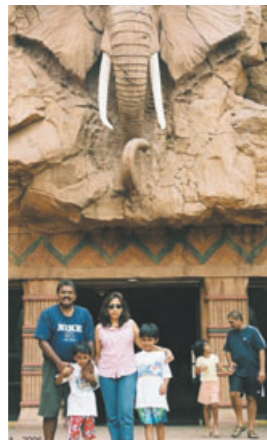
Neil (8) and Nathan (6) enjoy our daily devotions. It was during one of our devotions that Neil gave his heart to the Lord. He is young and will go through many trials in his life, if the Lord tarries. But I have faith that he will grow close to our heavenly Father, and I know our Father will be close to him.

*I was reminded of the amazing impact a father can have on how his children come to view God.*

On a recent trip back home to visit my family, (I grew up in Africa), I was reminded of the

amazing impact a father can have on how his children come to view God. Our Lord is the best dad. Looking back, it is amazing to me how He has hung in with me even in my times of rebellion and how His grace and mercy has carried me.

*Tom Jacobs*





# A Father's Legacy

(continued from page 6)

love of the contents of the book. But for me, it has become inseparable.

Bibles in many translations and several different languages honor my bookshelves -- more Bibles than any one person needs, but each special in its own way. One of the reasons they are all special is that I believe from the depth of my being that each contains God's message to me. I have many Bibles all with the same message -- guarded by the providence of God throughout all generations so that every reader has access to the inspired word of God.

Through the Scriptures we see the redemptive love of a Father for His children. In the Bible we see the evidence of God's Spirit being intertwined with our lives, evidence that causes our faith to grow and confirms the promise of a heavenly home with Him.

Listen to the psalmist, David, "As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone and its place remembers it no more. But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children -- with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts." (Psalm 103:13-17).

Dear Father, help us to learn to love your Word. Give us a hunger for your message. Let us never take the Bible for granted, but help us to cherish this gift and pass it on to our children's children. Through your Son, Jesus, amen. ☺



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EACH EDITION OF LIFT IS CREATED TO INSPIRE  
OUR READERS TO GIVE THEMSELVES FULLY TO GOD.

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