

# Precious Time for a Son

Charles Francis Adams Sr. (1807 – 1886) was a son of President John Quincy Adams and grandson of President John Adams.

He served two terms in the Massachusetts State Senate before running unsuccessfully as the vice-presidential candidate for the Free Soil Party in the election of 1848 on a ticket with former President Martin van Buren. During the Civil War, Adams served as the United States Minister to the United Kingdom under Abraham Lincoln.

So, he held very important positions of leadership for his country. Because of the powerful people he encountered and significant events in which he was involved, he chose to keep a diary.

One day, he entered into it: *Went fishing with my son today – a day wasted.*

His son, Brook Adams, also kept a diary. On the same day about which his father wrote, Brook Adams made this entry: *Went fishing with my father – the most wonderful day of my life!*

The father thought he was wasting his time while fishing with his son, but the son saw it as an investment of time. The only way to tell the difference between wasting and investing is to know one's ultimate purpose in life and to judge accordingly.

I, too, remember with great fondness the occasions when my father, Waymon Hunter, took me fishing. Those times are some of the special memories of my life. There was a clear, fresh-water pond on the farm where we lived, not far from the house. On some days in the summer, my dad and I would get up early, grab fishing poles and head to the shoreline.

He taught me how to bait a fish hook and laughed heartily when my first catch was a turtle.

At the end of a long, hot workday, it was not unusual for him to take me to the pond for cooling off and for swimming. I'm still thrilled to recall how he enjoyed the water, and his patience in teaching me how to swim. My love of being in, on and around the water is strong today because of his example and influence.



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Other events that are cherished in my memory banks are those trips from the farm into Cookeville to buy supplies – riding in a horse-drawn buggy with the reins in my father’s hands. These were true father-son times to talk about the rain, or lack of it, and the effect on the crops, or hay-baling in the fall and names of neighbors who would help, or dreams that a boy would have about his future and how to achieve them, or lessons about life that only a father can give his little boy.

And contrary to the words of Charles Francis Adams Sr., my father, Waymon Hunter, cherished those times together about as much as I did.

On this Father’s Day, in particular, I am grateful for his words and his example.

*These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up (Deuteronomy 6:6-9 NASB).*

– Beecher Hunter

