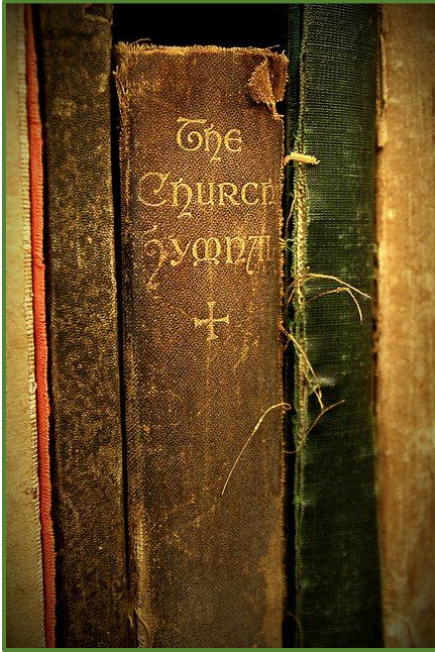


## Scribbling in a New Book

A young boy watched as his father walked into the living room. The boy noticed that his younger brother, John, began to cower slightly as his father entered.



The older boy sensed that John had done something wrong. Then he saw from a distance what his brother had done. The younger boy had opened his father's brand-new hymnal and scribbled all over the first page with a pen.

Staring at their father fearfully, both brothers waited for John's punishment. Their father picked up his prized hymnal, looked at it carefully and then sat down, without saying a word. Books were precious to him. He was a minister with several academic degrees. For him, books were knowledge.

What he did next was remarkable. Instead of punishing his brother, instead of scolding or yelling, his father took the pen from the little boy's hand, and then wrote in the book himself, alongside the scribbles that John had made. Here is what the father wrote:

*John's work, 1959, age 2. How many times have I looked into your beautiful face and into your warm, alert eyes looking up at me and thanked God for the one who has now scribbled in my new hymnal? You have made the book sacred, as have your brother and sister to so much of my life.*

"Wow!" thought the older brother. "This is punishment?"

The older brother, now an adult, said that hymnal became a treasured family possession. It was tangible proof that their parents loved them, and it taught the lesson that what really matters is people, not objects; patience, not judgment; love, not anger.

And that's a good lesson for all of us.

Sunday is Father's Day. God's plan is for us to be like Him. He created us in His image, and He gives His Spirit to His children.

Let's honor our earthly fathers – if we still have them – and strive to emulate our Heavenly Father.

*Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus (Romans 15:5 NKJV).*

– Beecher Hunter