

The Love of a Father

Father's Day is Sunday, June 19. Although my own father has been dead for 26 years, the memories of him are still very fresh, very real, very powerful. A torrent of them pours forth whenever I hear his favorite song, *How Great Thou Art*, and it is performed often.

What do I remember about him? Many things, but among them:



- **His love for his three sons.** There was never any doubt of that. Although busy with various responsibilities, he always made time for us. To be with him when he came in from work was always exciting, even when he had chores for us to do, working alongside him.
- **His work ethic.** A farmer for the early years of his life, my Daddy's days began about 4:30 every morning in order to feed the livestock and the chickens, and to milk the cows. Later, when he moved to town, he worked in a lumber yard. In the final years of his life, he was a barber, a skill he had practiced with the family and others throughout his life.
- **His sense of humor.** My father loved a good story, both in the telling of one and in hearing one. His hearty laughter will always be special in my mind.
- **His strong faith.** The inspiration of Daddy's dedication to his Lord and the church still burns within me, and it will for the rest of my life. He was a Baptist deacon who believed that when the church doors were open, we should be going in. But, he practiced his spiritual convictions every day of his life, and he became a model for me and my brothers.
- **His eagerness to share blessings with others.** Even though our family did not have a lot of discretionary income, Daddy frequently gave of the produce from his sizable garden to neighbors, and made a practice of selling a portion of his crops to give money to mission causes.

So, despite his physical absence, Father's Day will be a time of reflection – and gratitude – as I recall my Daddy and what he meant to me.

Many of those we serve in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home are fathers who have sacrificed much for their families. Their sons and daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, will be gathering around them in our centers or their homes this Sunday, or calling them on the telephone, to thank them.

Let's do all that we can to make those occasions pleasant and joy-filled.

– Beecher Hunter