

Series: Focusing on the Family
Message: Turning the Hearts of the Fathers
Text: Malachi 4:1-6 (AM 6/17/07)

Most of us today are all grateful for our fathers, and rightfully so. Yet the most significant problem plaguing families today in America is *the absence of fathers*. Many absentee dads are physically AWOL, but most are simply *emotionally and spiritually* absent. The last prophetic word in the Old Testament called Father's back to the home. Could there be a more relevant word in our contemporary culture?

I. A Heart Turned Toward Christ (2-4)

A father's surrendered love.

- Love the Savior – *You who fear my name (2)*
- Loathe Sin – *All who do wickedly will be stubble (1)*
- Listen to the Scripture – *Remember the Law of Moses (4)*

II. A Heart Turned Toward Our Companion (2:13-16)

A father's sacrificial love.

- Be committed to your marriage – *the Lord has been witness (14)*
- Be cherishing to your wife – *she is your companion (14)*
- Be champions of the institution – *your wife by covenant (14)*

III. A Heart Turned Toward Our Children (6)

A father's shaping love.

What does a father's heart turned toward his children look like?

- It's Fashioned upon a living *relationship*.
- It's fixed with loving *boundaries*.
- It Fosters a lasting *legacy* – *“the hearts of the children to their fathers!”*

Application to life: Dads how is God turning your heart toward your family today? What will you do with the revelation the Father has given? Wives how will you encourage your husbands to be godly fathers? Children do you sense the Holy Spirit prompting you to faithfully *honor your dad*? Remember the longest journey begins with the first step.