

Pastor Mark Mikels

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DISCOVERING HOPE IN THE REVELATIONS OF SCRIPTURE

"THE REVELATION OF TRUE FAITH"

(Revelation 12:17)

Intro ... On this Father's Day, I want to focus our attention upon the tiny phrase with which last Sunday's message ended and from which today's Hope-Generating Revelation arises: **Revelation 12:17**.

HOPE-GENERATING REVELATION FIFTEEN ...

"THE REVELATION OF TRUE FAITH"

Here's ...

TODAY'S KEY SCRIPTURE ... Revelation 12:17

*The dragon ... went off to wage **WAR** against ...
those who **KEEP** God's **COMMANDS** and
hold fast their **TESTIMONY** about Jesus.*

What a way to describe true believers!

They "**Keep God's Commands**" ... They not only know God's Commands; they obey God's Commands ... They practice what they preach.

They "**Hold Fast their Testimony about Jesus**" ... They cannot be deterred from their belief in and commitment to Jesus Christ.

They catch the attention of the Devil Himself ... They are the ones that are a threat to His Kingdom and yet He is no threat to them for '*Greater is the ONE that is in them than he who is in the world.*'

Many of them will join that '*Band of Martyrs*' who find solace under the very Throne of God ... They are Tribulation Saints!

Though they follow us in time, their testimony precedes us and can inform us. Through this Revelation of John, we get to see what '*True Faith under Dire Circumstances*' looks like.

It's a powerful and motivational thing to see

'TRUE FAITH IN ACTION.'

On this *Father's Day*, I would like to pay tribute to one who Demonstrated such **TRUE FAITH** for me ...

My Dad ...
BOB MIKELS

Over the years I have talked so much about my mom that some of you feel like you know her though you have never met her.

Today I would like to talk about my Dad ...
And I would like to talk about him in light of today's passage:
As one who in my eyes demonstrated **TRUE FAITH** throughout his life.

***"He kept the commands of God and
He held fast His Testimony about Jesus."***

I present him as one whose earthly life can serve as an example that any Dad can take to heart on this *Father's Day* ...

As I look back these many years, here are some:

KEY COMMANDS OF GOD KEPT BY BOB MIKELS ...

First Key Command I would mention that Bob Mikels kept:

* **TRAIN up a child in the way He should go** - (Proverbs 22:6)

***"Train up a child in the way he should go,
and when he is old, he will not turn from it."***

Dad took us where such training could be found.

We were in Sunday School and Church every Sunday and even though there were not many '*Born-Again Believers*' in our little country church, the Bible was revered and taught faithfully in the Sunday School.

My mom and dad made sure of that because they were the Superintendents of the Sunday School. We memorized Scripture and learned all the Bible Stories and we were taught that those stories were true. We had a house full of Bible Story Books and other Christian Books to read and be thrilled by.

During the summer, my dad would drive us all to a fabulous Bible Conference two to three times a week to hear the greatest of Christian Music and Christian Preaching. It was in one of those summer meetings that I, at the age of nine, responded to the Gospel Invitation and gave my life to Christ. My Dad walked down the aisle with me and actually spoke up for me when the evangelist asked: *'Why have you come forward?'*

During Jr-High and High School days, he gave up his Saturday nights to drive us 20 miles to our Youth For Christ rallies where I first received opportunities to share in Christian ministry.

Dad made sure we were *'trained up'* in the way we should go.

All five of his children, now old, are firmly in the Lord's Camp and following the Lord's Way.

Second Key Command Bob Mikels Kept:

* ***KEEP the Scripture ever before Your FAMILY*** - (Hebrews 4:12)

"The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword."

He Read the Word - He Got us into the Word

You could not grow up in our household and not know that the Bible was God's Word and the most important book in the world.

Dad's bible was tattered and even though we kids frequently groaned inside when he would pick it up after a meal for our family devotions, we knew the value he and my mom placed upon it.

Part of that Youth For Christ activity I mentioned was a Bible Quizzing Competition that could feed any young person's competitive drive while forcing that young person into an intense study of some book of the Bible. My Dad enjoyed those competitions as much as any of our athletic ones.

Third Key Command Bob Mikels Kept: (Actually a dual one)

* **PRACTICE Tithing and DEMONSTRATE Stewardship**

*"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse
that there may be food in my house."
(Malachi 3:10)*

It takes real obedience for a '*poor man*' to tithe.
Poor my dad was and tithe my dad did.

My dad worked for minimum wage in an economically distressed area his entire life. He was paid in cash every Friday and 10% went into the '*Tithe Box*' kept in his bedroom dresser drawer.

Every Sunday morning, he would line all five of us up and open the tithe box and hand out our Sunday School Offering.

One of us would get the special honor of putting the big gift (a dollar) in the missionary bank for Aunt Flo (Dad's younger sister) who spent her entire adult life as a missionary in Africa.

We knew that 10% of all we would ever earn belonged to the Lord.

DEMONSTRATE STEWARDSHIP ...

*"He that does not provide for his own household
is worse than an infidel."
(2 Timothy 5:8)*

My Dad was a hardworking man and he was a skillful man. He was a finish carpenter. He and his Dad built the house I entered as a newborn. He and his Dad built the Church we worshipped in after the original structure became unusable.

He could have made far more money during the building boom of the 50s and 60s had he joined the union and followed the jobs wherever in the state they might take him.

But he believed that '*providing for your family*' also entailed being available to your family and so he turned away from that option.

He worked a 44-hour week ... Monday through Friday and Half a Day on Saturday. He and my mom managed their few funds well. We kids never actually knew that we were poor.

But we grew up knowing that:

'Tithe' was a priority - Hard work was a necessity.

Fourth Key Command Bob Mikels Kept:

* ***LIVE Expectantly and Exuberantly*** - (Ecclesiastes 5:10)
"Whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might."

My dad worked hard and he took advantage of whatever ***'perks'*** it brought.

The big ***'perk'*** in his life was the opportunity his carpentry job at a major Pocono Mountain Resort gave him to play golf for free on one of the finest golf courses in the country. He taught us all to play the ***'hallowed game'*** and how to behave on the ***'sacred grounds.'*** Many Sunday afternoons were spent hunting the golf balls that the wealthy patrons would ***'hit into woods'*** and lose.

There was almost as much joy in the Mikels' household over finding a brand-new golf ball that had only been struck once or twice as the Bible says there is in heaven over finding a lost soul!

My dad loved playing golf and pushing himself ever closer toward mastery. Par or birdie was his objective on every hole. It was an objective he regularly achieved.

He encouraged us to find God's Will for our lives and to give ourselves to the fulfilling of it.

Two of his sons became pastors. One of his daughters has spent her life teaching in Christian School. All five are solid and vocal in their faith.

Indeed: He pursued things vigorously and passionately and taught us to do the same.

And now for the ***Second Component of True Faith*** - a component that needs not so much ***Example*** as simply ***Expression***.

HOLD FAST YOUR TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS!

This morning, on this Father's Day, I would share with you ***Five Commitments concerning Jesus Christ*** that my father truly ***'Held Fast'*** ... These were absolutely non-negotiable ...

Here they are:

BOB MIKELS' KEY COMMITMENTS CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST

* HE is the ***ETERNAL*** Son of God

No question about this - Jesus was not *'just a man'* -
"In the beginning was the Word ... and the Word was God."

* HE is the ***ONLY HOPE*** for mankind.

My dad never looked for some magic solution to the problems of life -
New Life through faith in Jesus was the only solution.

* HIS Birth, Life, Death and Resurrection were all ***MIRACULOUS***

We definitely believed all of that even
when the pastor of our little Moravian church didn't.

* HE will ***COME AGAIN*** for His Own

We grew up with a belief in *'The Rapture'* - the *'Coming of Christ for His Church'* - We needed to be watching and ready.

* HIS ***TEACHINGS*** are to be ***OBEYED***

"If you love me you will keep my commandments."

Knowledge that didn't lead to obedience was worse
than no knowledge at all.

My Dad was solid as a rock when it came to His Testimony concerning the Person and Purposes of Jesus Christ. Every Dad needs to be so!

And now Dads, today's ***'Final Thot'*** would seek to be an encouragement to us all.

Final Thot ... A ***DAD*** of true faith is a living ***REVELATION***.
God's ***TRUTH*** is seen ***IN*** him!