

Who has best modeled God's compassion for you? Stories of important people in our lives.

Rise and Shine – June 24th

Psalm 103:13-14

*As a father has compassion for his children,
so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.*

For he knows how we were made;

he remembers that we are dust. (For context, read 103:13-18.)

The psalmist here compares God's compassion with that of a father, who recognizes that his children don't have the same abilities he has as an adult. A compassionate father knows that his child has limitations that don't apply to him, so he makes allowances for those limitations.

In the news

Father Comes to His Daughter's Rescue to Rebuild Her Confidence

Before his 2-year-old daughter's first dance recital at Hamilton City Hall in Bermuda on May 29, Marc Daniels was best known as a tough and tenacious defense attorney you'd want in your corner if you were in legal trouble, according to a June 2014 article in *The Bermudian*. The leading litigator at Marc Geoffrey Barristers & Attorneys, Ltd., has also served as a senator in the Progressive Labor Party on the island.

But thanks to a video taken at the recital that has been viewed more than 15 million times, the brawny barrister is now being hailed as the "Daderina" who cared more about his daughter's welfare than he did about his pride.

Dressed casually in shorts, baseball cap and bright shoes, Daniels was holding his youngest daughter Suri when he got word that his toddler, Isabella, was having a meltdown right before she was supposed to go on stage with the other child ballerinas. The girl was screaming for her father and weeping hysterically, leading Daniels to conclude that Bella "needed hugs from her daddy," but "there was not a lot of time to comfort her." So, he instinctively inched his way from the wings onto the stage to Bella's side.

"Despite having a tantrum, I can tell she wanted to stay onstage, and I didn't want to discourage her before the big performance by making her be the only one to come off," Daniels explained. "I walked on holding Suri and stood next

to her, trying to help build her confidence. I told her I loved her and that she's an amazing dancer. I asked if she wanted to dance with daddy and she nodded, so I thought I'd join in."

Beguiled by her father's antics, Bella's stage fright slowly dissipated, and she began to mirror his somewhat awkward pirouettes and flamingo-like poses on one leg, to the delight of the audience.

"I've practiced with them at home on many occasions, so it wasn't unfamiliar to me," said the father of three (his eldest, Giada, is 4 years old).

"Before having the girls, I don't think I'd ever attempted any ballet moves before, but now everyone in Bermuda knows me for my toe-pointing," Daniels remarked.

"Even in court the other day, one of the magistrates made a comment about my moves that prompted the court to erupt into laughter," he said, adding that "Jurors, police officers and members of the prosecution" had been performing twirls and pliés for him in recognition of his new balletic endeavor.

Daniels's wife, Kim, who had been helping backstage when Daniels ventured into his daughter's balletic world, couldn't be prouder. "It's so amazing to watch this go viral," she wrote on Facebook. "Our girls will forever cherish this moment [heart symbol] Marc Daniels."

This is truly a touching instance of a father's love for his child – a scene likely playing out worldwide millions of times each day. Current research has reaffirmed the importance of a loving father in a child's development for both sons and daughters. A child's psychological, cognitive and emotional well-being are strengthened by the secure presence of a loving father. Fathers tend to provide not "toxic masculinity," but salutary masculinity.

Here are some Bible verses to guide your discussion:

Matthew 9:18-19, 22

While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. ... Jesus turned, and seeing [the woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years] he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well. (For context, read 9:18-26.)

Here we find two people in urgent need: a dying 12-year-old girl (Mark 5:42) and a woman who had been hemorrhaging blood for as long as the girl had been alive.

Jairus, the father of the girl (Mark 5:22), held a prominent position, which he was willing to risk by appealing to an itinerant rabbi to save his only daughter's life (Luke 8:42). Just as Daniels was willing to suffer embarrassment to restore his toddler's emotional equilibrium, Jairus didn't care what people thought about him, if only his daughter could be healed.

While Jesus was en route to Jairus' home, the second, older woman approached, hoping that by touching the edge of his cloak, she might find healing. She had spent all she had on physicians, but instead of finding relief, her condition only deteriorated, and now she was penniless as well (Mark 5:26).

The law stated that a menstruating woman was considered unclean and made impure anything or anyone she touched during her period. For 12 years, this woman had been excluded from ordinary social interaction and temple worship where she might at least draw near to God. To be out in public, mingling with the crowd, would have been offensive enough, but to intentionally touch a rabbi's robe would have been completely taboo.

When the woman touched Jesus's cloak, he did not rebuke her, but instead called her "daughter," and sent her away healed physically and in peace emotionally (Mark 5:30-34). Then Jesus continued on to raise Jairus' daughter from the dead, to the astonishment of her parents.

In the case of both females, Jesus affirms their worth to God the Father. Both are worth his time and attention. This story is not just about Jairus as a role model for fathers, but about how God is father to both females, whatever age they are.

Questions: When has someone gone against societal norms to stand up for you or bring you peace? What fatherly or parental traits did Jesus and Jairus have in common? How do the actions of each reflect the parenthood of God?

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12

As you know, we dealt with each one of you like a father with his children, urging and encouraging you and pleading that you lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory. (For context, read 2:1-12.)

Paul described his relationship with those who accepted the gospel he declared in the most intimate of familial terms. He considered them brothers and sisters (vv. 1, 9), and also his own children (vv. 7, 11).

He and his ministry partners treated the new believers with gentleness, working hard night and day (the way parents work for their children) to bring them the gospel (v. 9). They provided encouragement and challenged them to grow into the calling of God upon their lives.

Questions: What are times in your life that you were experiencing fear or trauma and needed to be reminded of the God who cares so much that he gave his one and only Son that you might have abundant life? How did someone come alongside you to give reassurance that God is with you and cares for you so that you could find hope and courage for the next steps you needed to take in life?

Prayer for Young Persons (BCP p.829)

God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*