

THE BIG IDEA: When it comes to authority, just like gravity, what goes up must come down.

The Take-Off

Welcome to the beginning of the end! Today we arrive at the final chapter of the book of Ephesians, and we've got 3 weeks left in what has been a fantastic journey through this letter.

Next week we'll celebrate Resurrection Sunday talking about the victory that we have through Jesus and then in 2 weeks we'll wrap it all up in a service that I promise you won't want to miss!

But this morning, we're going to talk about something that all of us have in common: parents and bosses

Now, some of us may have grown up with a great relationship with our moms and dads, and some of us may not have even known our moms and dads

In fact, the second group is growing at an alarming rate - listen to some stats about fatherlessness in America today [Share selected stats from <http://thefatherlessgeneration.wordpress.com/statistics/>]

No matter what your past or present situation is with your dad or your child's dad, we can agree on this one thing: dads are important. Really important.

That can make you want to vomit if dad isn't around, but hang in there with me until the end and that feeling will hopefully get better.

Most of us over the age of 18 have had a boss, and if you haven't, give it time and you will.

Sometimes you'll have a good boss, and sometimes you'll have a bad boss, but you'll probably never have a boss as bad as George Pullman or J. Edgar Hoover.

J. Edgar Hoover would actually keep FBI employees on call 24 hours a day to do chores around his house and is reportedly known for having workers take animal poop from his yard to be analyzed because he thought he was being stalked by wild animals.

Umm, crazy.

So, good or bad, we've all had parents and we've all had - or will have - bosses. And in the first 9 verses of Ephesians 6, Paul gives us some instructions about the relationships we have with them, and basically he tells us that **when it comes to authority, just like gravity, what goes up much come down.**

Two points that we want to make that should help us understand how to live out that Big Idea, and both of them are about Jesus.

1. Jesus is higher

- a. So often we feel trapped because we have a limited perspective
- b. John Maxwell's "The Law of the Lid" doesn't just pertain to leadership
- c. It also pertains to relationships
- d. If children see their parents as the ultimate authority, or if employees see their bosses as having final say over their lives and destinies, the lid is too low
- e. That's when we can start to feel trapped and claustrophobic, right?
- f. But lift that lid and look a little higher:
 - Hebrews 2:8 - everything is subject to Jesus!
 - Philippians 2:9-11 - every knee, every tongue
 - Isaiah 6:1 - the Lord is high and lifted up
- g. When we really start to see the exalted Jesus - really get how much higher He is than moms, dads, bosses, our situation - we can't help but begin to be filled with hope.
- h. Satan's lie is that you're trapped and at the mercy of a person
- i. God's truth is that you're never trapped as long as He is higher than a person
- j. Literally, the turning point in my relationship with my dad was the day I stopped complaining about him to everyone and started talking about him to God
- k. Your circumstances may or may not change right away, but your perspective will
- l. If you need to see things differently down here, look up and see Jesus.
 - Psalm 121:1-2 - lift my eyes - help comes from the Lord
 - Isaiah 40:26 - God calls each star by name! What??? Higher!

2. Jesus is better

- a. It's one thing to know that Jesus is higher than the dads and bosses we have, but that would be a problem if that was all He is
- b. But Jesus isn't only higher, He's better, and while He's better for a lot of reasons, let's just focus on a couple
- c. First, He's better because He sees us
- d. Don't miss the simple fact that God addresses 2 classes of people in this passage that were ignored in the culture of that day: children and slaves.
- e. He gave a voice to the voiceless and dignity to the undignified. He saw them.
- f. That's really what kids want from their dads and what employees want from their bosses
- g. I remember once being out on the porch yelling at my dad and my mom came out and broke it up
- h. She asked me why I was yelling and I said it was the only way I thought he would hear me
- i. Dads, your children want to feel like they've been seen, been heard
- j. Those statistics we read earlier? They change with the presence of a dad.
- k. [Share stats when the father is involved]
- l. In Christ, you and I have a Father who sees us and frees us
- m. Genesis 16 - Hagar and her fatherless son - mistreated by an angry master - found the God who sees (El Roi)
- n. Psalm 121:3-8 - a whole lot of promises from the God who sees us!!
- o. Jesus is better because He sees us and He rewards us
- p. Hebrews 11:16 tells us that when we look up and see Jesus we find ourselves filled with faith to believe that He is a rewarder of those who seek him
- q. So, here's what that means in our Big Idea: if you and I are only seeking something from our dads or our employers, what we can receive back is limited to what they can give
- r. When Mom died, all of us kids struggled through the grieving process - we needed more comfort than we felt like our dad was giving us
- s. We started to get angry and hurt until a grief counselor told us we were expecting our dad to be our mom and he couldn't
- t. Earthly dads - good or bad - are limited, but God isn't.
- u. Earthly bosses - good or bad - are limited, but God isn't.
- v. And so let your service and your obedience go ALL THE WAY UP TO GOD so that your rewards can come ALL THE WAY DOWN FROM GOD (Ephesians 6:7-8)
- w. What goes up must come down.

The Landing

All week as I've prayed over this passage, my heart has broken for the fatherless, and for the moms of the fatherless
My heart has broken for the mistreated - those who feel trapped in a bad environment with a person in authority over them who doesn't see or reward them

And I really want us to take the time to pray for those 2 situations, and then I want to read a passage of Scripture over us as a promise from the God who sees us, from Jesus who is higher and better

[Pray]

Close out reading Isaiah 40:21-31

God sees us. Lift up your eyes and see Him, because Jesus is higher.

God frees us. Let Him take the lid off your circumstance, because Jesus is better.

This morning, you and I are not trapped by people if we serve Jesus, and we won't be rewarded by people, either. Our reward will come from much higher, and it will be much better.

When it comes to authority, just like gravity, what goes up must come down.