

For Broadcast: 5<sup>th</sup> September 2021

## DADS 101

### *Interview*

**Richard:** I'm Richard Fox and this is Messages of Hope. Happy Father's Day! What do you love about being a dad?

#### **Voxpops:**

*"I love the kids saying daddy can we jump up on your back."*

*"Getting home from work and coming to open the door and getting dad! dad! dad! dad! dad! dad! dad! dad!"*

*"Yeah I love the absolute excitement that my son gets when he sees me walk in the door. He's still at the age where he thinks I'm pretty much the best at everything."*

*"Watching them grow and develop over the years and see them with their mates and just enjoying life. That's really special."*

**Celia:** So Richard what do you love about being a dad?

**Richard:** Oh I love spending time with my kids and just entering their world, playing their games, building Lego and having fun with them and just spending time with them. And their hugs are very special too.

**Celia:** And there are times though that being a parent is actually really quite hard work. It's not all fun and games.

**Richard:** That's right. Yeah it can be very difficult at times.

**Celia:** There are times when things just don't go to plan.

#### **Voxpops:**

*"We were at an opposition footy club and I used a few expletives about how much I was disliking being there and that we should go home. I think my son was about three or four years old and he repeated those expletives in regards to how much he liked the footy club! That pretty much got me nomination for father the year I think!!"*

*"It happened with my third daughter. We went on a pushbike ride and I just chucked her on the back of the bike and her leg got stuck in a wheel and broke her leg! That was one thing I shouldn't have done."*

*"I remember when my first son was only a couple months old and I was doing work away in a remote part of Australia. When I came back I didn't recognise my son and I was only away for 14 or 15 days! That's how much they change."*

*"My third child, second son, right from the beginning he was a very poor sleeper. One night after nights and nights of him crying and not wanting to go to sleep I just remember grabbing him by the shoulders and saying GO TO SLEEP! I recognized from that next day on I'd broken something between he and me and he didn't want me as much and that really hurt me, wounded me but I knew that I was the cause of it. But hearing words of forgiveness from God and from others saying you know we muck up but there is forgiveness."*

**Richard:** Yes as a dad and as parents we often muck up.

**Celia:** That reminds me when my son was 11 years old he fell off his scooter and unbeknownst to me broke his wrist. He came up to me and said "oh you know I fell off my scooter and I'm a bit sore" and I asked him out of a scale of one to 10, "what's the pain like?" He said "about three or four." So I went "oh no problem, just put a bit of ice on it if it hurts" and left him. Anyway a week later I'm watching him at football training and thinking he's actually still wincing when he catches the ball and I thought perhaps I better get this checked out. I rang the doctor, got an appointment. We got there and he said "yeah actually your son's wrist is broken and you have to go down to the hospital and get it reset because it's been over a week!!"

**Richard:** How did that make you feel?

**Celia:** Well like the world's worst parent, like you know your son has been walking around with a broken arm for a week!!

**Richard:** Yeah it's easy to muck up as a parent and as a dad you know forgetting your kids sometimes or hurting them.

**Celia:** Yeah well I could probably give too many stories and that makes me feel even worse!

**Richard:** But then it comes into the power of saying sorry and forgiveness and demonstrating that to your kids.

**Celia:** Absolutely. That's so important that they can see that we are human.

**Richard:** Yes you know we have a God who loves us and forgives us and we need to be able to demonstrate that to them too. Actually I've found that has actually strengthened the relationship and made it grow even stronger.

**Richard:** Being a parent and loving your children means sometimes you have to set boundaries for them.

**Celia:** When I was training to be a teacher one of the first lessons they gave us was you are not their friend, you are their teacher and it is about setting those boundaries and those disciplines so that so that there is a difference between you and them. My husband and I took that into our parenting. The fact that we are not their friend, we are their parent.

They've got plenty of friends, they need a parent to set those boundaries. And I just felt that that was a really important thing and I could see the benefits of having that structure.

**Richard:** Yeah. Because you love them.

**Celia:** Absolutely. It doesn't mean you can't have fun with them, it doesn't mean you can't enjoy their company. But it's really important we felt that they had these boundaries, these structures, so that they could be safe, so that they could feel safe and they knew how far they could go before you know something might happen and what the consequence would be.

**Richard:** Yeah yeah. Giving discipline isn't easy but giving it actually gives them protection and love and a space where they can just develop and grow.

**Celia:** We asked our group of dads how they felt about discipline from a father's perspective.

**Voxpops:**

*"I look at my kids and I think 'masters of manipulation'. They picked up on any little signal there was that Mum and Dad were not perfectly aligned with what the matter was."*

*"My wife and I separated when my son was 2. He's now seven and a half. I don't even like the word discipline but when it comes to discipline, communication is huge for us so that we are on the same page consistently."*

*"Discipline is not a bad thing. If we've got boundary setting and you've got love. You can't have one without the other. I mean we've got to have both, the boundary setting and the love."*

*"One of the things that I did learn about myself when I became a father was that actually I was more the authoritarian, the policeman you know. I look at myself back then and I was there to watch out when they messed up and I had to make sure I'd just weed out all the bad stuff."*

*"I look at my kids and I think you're being naughty, you're doing this, you're doing that. And yet whenever they stayed with the grandparents or with other people, perfectly behaved! They did what they were told. And I'm thinking No you're telling me porky pies here! And so the learning from that is what they might do in regards to testing the boundaries at home, which is a safe environment because they know we love them, and as dads I think we forget that at times. The kids actually love us."*

*"I found more and more over time that it's not just about being punished or corrected, it's about being forgiven and embraced and accepted again and letting them know God's love, God's forgiveness."*

**Celia:** Today on messages of hope we're celebrating Father's Day and looking at the joys and struggles of parenting, particularly as a dad. Sometimes I hear people talking about children as being a right but I really see children as a gift.

**Richard:** Yeah they can be very special and they provide you with so many wonderful moments.

**Celia:** I want my kids to look back on their childhood and remember that they were loved. The love, the laughter, the security but mostly that they were loved. What about you Richard, what do you hope for your children?

**Richard:** I hope they grow in confidence in their life and who they are as people, as individuals and also in the community. That they can grow up with a faith, a faith in God that provides them a direction and support and hope for them in the future. My prayer is that they live hope filled lives and find the joy in life.

**Celia:** So let's hear from our group of dads about what they hope for their children.

**Voxpops:**

*"I hope that they're a value to society, that is that they contribute and they don't take."*

*"My hope and dream for my children would be that when they grow up they still come to me as their dad. For whatever, to come to talk, whether it be for help or guidance or whether it's just because they want to come and have a chinwag and to laugh and just want to be with me sometimes."*

*"I hope they find a partner that really makes them complete."*

*"The hope for my son going forward and in the future is that he finds what he's interested in and that he has the courage to go after that. To not be overly influenced by others and follow other people's dreams but find his own. Personally, as a person that's come to faith and to know God later in life, that he too finds his Heavenly Father and he finds that warmth and that love and that strength in God that I found."*

**Richard:** You've been listening to messages of hope with Richard and Celia. For more about parenting and finding the fun in it go to [messagesofhope.org.au](http://messagesofhope.org.au) Of for a free booklet, Call us on 1800 353 350

**Voxpops:**

*"I know my father was really good to us but he always said oh I wish I was a better father. I know I've said that quite often too but my wife has always said Oh but you have been good. And even now from the kids you know occasionally I've said sorry I haven't done a better job and they've said no, you did the best you could. I love you for it."*

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