**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | Dads Who Shoot Straight |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Psalm 127 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2157 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. There is a war on the family today.
      1. In the media and entertainment, marriage is often mocked, devoted parents are ridiculed, and fathers are depicted as buffoons or even cruel and vindictive.
   2. The importance of fathers in the home cannot be overstated.
   3. Psalm 127:1-5
      1. Children are like arrows, and dads are like archers.
      2. When dads learn to shoot straight, the kids will hit the mark.
         1. An arrow is no more effective than the warrior who shoots it.
         2. The bow is not much better than the man who holds it in his hand.
2. THE ARCHER MUST BE STRONG (Psalm 127:4)
   1. No matter how fine the arrow or how strong the bow, it takes skill, practice and determination to make the arrow go where you want it to go.
   2. There may be many reasons why an arrow misses its target.
      1. There may be some bad arrows.
      2. There may be some moving targets.
      3. There may be an unforeseen wind that blows the arrow away from the target.
         1. None of these reasons diminish the warrior’s responsibility; it only increases his responsibility that he might shoot with skill.
   3. A dad’s responsibility is to shape, sharpen and shoot these arrows at the enemy.
   4. The archer must be strong spiritually.
      1. A dad’s highest ambition is to be a good husband and father.
3. THE ARROWS MUST BE STRAIGHT (Psalm 127:4)
   1. Children are not born straight arrows.
      1. Children are not, by nature, arrows; they have to be made into arrows.
   2. An archer cannot shoot straight with crooked arrows.
      1. Among life’s most difficult tasks is shaping, sharpening and shooting the arrows that God has put in your hand.
         1. The problem we have in society is not juvenile delinquency but the delinquency of dads; dropout dads, dads who fail to do and be what they ought to be.
         2. Ephesians 6:4
            1. The word nurture means “discipline” and admonition means “the teaching of the Lord.”
         3. Colossians 3:21
   3. One of the prime marks of success for any man is whether or not his kids are spiritually sharp and emotionally straight.
   4. There will come a time when the arrows are out of your hand. While the arrow is in your hand, you have a responsibility.
      1. Many fathers want to give this responsibility to professionals today.
         1. A professional storyteller called television.
         2. A professional educator.
         3. You can hire a professional to mow the lawn and wash the car; your child will not have to learn discipline or responsibility.
         4. A professional can teach him or her how to swim.
         5. A professional guidance counselor to give your child ideas about his or her future.
            1. You cannot pay someone else to do what God wants you to do.
   5. How do you shape and sharpen arrows?
      1. Begin early.
         1. Proverbs 22:6
         2. Little children can be shaped and molded very easily.
            1. The curiosity factor is very high.
            2. The memory factor is great.
            3. The trust factor is at its highest point.

Matthew 18:3

* + - * 1. The humility factor is at an all-time high.

Little children are not too proud to learn they can take advice, and they have an innate ability to believe.

* + 1. Be creative.
       1. Deuteronomy 6:6-7
          1. It is so in your heart to teach and share about the Lord that it bubbles out.
          2. Share about the Lord when you rise up, when you lie down, when you go out, when you come in, as you walk, as you talk, etc.
    2. Work to build character.
       1. Most dads are working on sports, grades, health, popularity, etc., but not character.
       2. Character is integrity.
       3. Who is teaching the following to your children?
          1. Contentment and courage
          2. Courtesy and discernment
          3. Fairness and friendliness
          4. Generosity and gentleness
          5. Helpfulness and honesty
          6. Humility and kindness
          7. Obedience and orderliness
          8. Patience and persistence
          9. Self-control and tactfulness
          10. Thankfulness and thriftiness
          11. Wisdom and zeal
       4. Compliment your children for character qualities.
    3. Set limits.
       1. 1 Samuel 3:13
       2. God set limits on Adam and Eve in the Garden.
       3. If you do not set limits on your children, it is a sign that you’ve rejected them.
       4. When you set limits, do not just have a lot of little rules, but set some great principles and then adhere to them.
          1. If you give in when your children push against these limits, they will lose confidence and have no security.
    4. Assign responsibilities.
       1. Give your children regular work assignments.
       2. Teach them that there is a link between success and work.
       3. Teach them about money management.
    5. Have a happy home.
       1. Let your home be filled with laughter.
       2. Your home should be the happiest place in town.
       3. Proverbs 15:13-15
    6. Let them see God at work.
       1. They hear sermons and messages at church, but the home is the classroom and the laboratory.
       2. How do your children see God at work in your home?
          1. They will see God in your worship.

They will see when you go to church and when you miss church.

* + - * 1. They will see your priorities in your worship.

They will see how you spend your money.

They will see how you spend your time.

* + - 1. Let them see God as a vibrant reality in your life.
    1. Cover them constantly with prayer.
       1. If you are the archer and your children are the arrows, then the bow is prayer.
          1. Prayer is what sends them forth.
       2. A father without prayer is like an archer with an unstrung bow.
       3. Never, never stop praying.

1. THE AIM MUST BE SURE (Psalm 127:4-5)
   1. If you are a good archer and have a good arrow, then you still need a good aim.
      1. You have to have a goal.
   2. The family is under attack.
      1. How do we take the institution of the family back?
         1. By our kids; a godly seed.
         2. How do we shoot down the ideas of the enemy?
            1. With our arrows.
   3. Oftentimes, we’re trying to keep our children from the enemy.
      1. We should aim our children at the enemy.
   4. Parents, more than anyone else, determine the direction of the arrow.
      1. 3 John 4
      2. We have goals for ourselves; we have desires for our children.
         1. We cannot make goals for other people.
         2. You have to have a desire before you release the arrows.
   5. Arrows are not to be collected; they’re to be projected.
      1. Parents are to work themselves out of a job.
         1. Arrows are to be straightened.
         2. Arrows are to be sharpened.
         3. Arrows are to be shot.
      2. As parents, we are to produce kids who can emotionally leave home and come to love someone else more than they love their own parents.
2. CONCLUSION
   1. Dads, ask God to make you a mighty man.
      1. It is God who gives you strength.
   2. Get to work shaping, sharpening and seasoning your arrows.
   3. Work on your skills at being an archer.
   4. Rethink what your goals and desires are for your family.
      1. What is your aim for your children?
      2. What kind of success do you want?
      3. Do you want to raise a man, a lady for God?
   5. If your children are grown and the arrows have gone in the wrong direction, it’s not too late.
      1. You can recover lost arrows.
      2. Pray again, and ask God in mercy to give you a new chance, and pray and pray and pray.
         1. Psalm 127:1
   6. If you grew up without a father or with a dad who was cruel and vindictive, there’s another Father in glory; there is a Father in Heaven.
      1. Matthew 6:9
      2. Psalm 27:10
   7. The Father in Heaven wants to be your Father.
      1. The only way He can be your Father is if you will become His child.
      2. The only way you can become His child is to be born into His family; to be born again.
      3. You can be born into His family today.
         1. Acts 16:31
   8. To be saved means that every sin is forgiven and that Jesus Christ now lives in your heart and will one day take you home to Heaven.
   9. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   10. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
       1. Romans 3:23
       2. Romans 10:9-10
       3. Romans 10:13
       4. Acts 16:31