

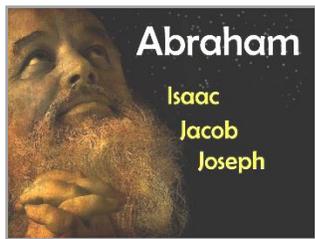
Something to Pray About

April 2014 – Cindy Sears

Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. —Exodus 3:6 NKJV

Patriarchs

We need Patriarchs. Now, I am not advocating a return to a fully patriarchal society. Still, what is going on in our world today brings to my mind that old adage, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water." According to God's Word and the history of the Israelites, and throughout thousands of years of various cultures, the man has been the leader or authority figure of the family. Like all positions of authority or power, that privilege and honor has often been abused and taken to the extreme. I don't think God ever envisioned a dictatorship in the family. Through the Apostle Paul, we have been assured that in Christ there is neither male nor female (see Galatians 3:28), and the husband is to love the wife as Christ loved the Church (see Ephesians 5:25). When there are two authority figures – husband and wife – there has to be a way to settle an impasse or disagreement; thus, God set up the man as the ultimate leader. Maybe that statement makes you angry or uncomfortable. What it should do is make a woman realize how important her choice of a husband and father for her children is. And it ought to make a man see how important and necessary his role in the family is.



Christ is the head of the Church. He is also the ultimate head of the family. The husband is under the authority of Christ and the husband is ultimately responsible for the spiritual and physical and emotional well-being of his wife and children. He will be held accountable—more accountable than his wife.

Did you know that psychologists and sociologists are now referring to adolescence as the time between 11 and 30 years of age? It used to be considered as being between 11 and 18 years of age. Our boys are growing up physically, but they are not becoming men. They are not taking on adult responsibilities and behaviors. These "men" are more interested in acquiring the latest electronic gadget or game or what their favorite sports team or figure is doing than they are about their career, marrying and raising a family, or what is happening politically in their community or nation, or attending and supporting their church with their time and money (if they even bother to go to church).

Our society needs men who are willing and able to be responsible men; and we also need them to become patriarchs. A good patriarch is a man who has taken on the responsibility of raising, supporting, and leading a family, and has also contributed to the betterment of his community and its welfare in some way. He is a steady, strong, centering influence for the whole family and even the community he lives and works in. A Christian patriarch's stand for Christ is obvious through his faithful service in and financial support of his church and its ministries. He reaches out to his neighbors who are in need of a helping hand, too.

A true patriarch is honorable and highly honored by all who know him. But that honor comes with a price. It is earned through right actions, faithfulness, and sacrificial giving of himself to his family, his

community, and his church. Who is willing, who is able to become the next patriarch in your family?

We have some good, faithful, hardworking men in Ebenezer UMC. I pray that God will lead them to remain faithful to the church, to Christ, and to their families. I also pray that the young men of this church will look to the older men of faith and model their lives on how they have lived and served in their families, the church, and this community. May all our young men be willing to take on the mantle of true adulthood, and become a blessing to our community and our nation.

Dedicated to the memory of PawPaw “Babe” Sears, Gene Sears, and Uncle Bob Sears—and to all the men who have served this church, the other churches in this area, their families, and this community faithfully and honorably for so many years. †

Patriarch—*n.* 1. the male head of a family or tribe; *the Patriarchs*, the men named in the book of Genesis as the ancestors of mankind or the tribes of Israel.

3. a venerable old man.

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