

“Cinderella” by Steven Curtis Steven Chapman

Okay, this is a really touching, emotional, even weepy song we’re using today, Steven Curtis Chapman’s “Cinderella.” One thing I notice is how fast life flies by ... graduations, weddings, kids and grandkids.

The basic message of this song is simple: “life’s short ... invest your life wisely.”

There are two phrases from this song we’re going to focus on, and then I want to play a testimony Steven Curtis Chapman gave regarding his own daughter at the conclusion of today’s service.

The two phrases: “Dad, I need you” and “Oh please, Daddy, please!”

1. “Dad, I need you.”

The first verse of “Cinderella” sets the stage for what’s going on. There’s a dad, and his little girl. And he comes home from work, tired, drained ... and still there’s work to do. Sound familiar? But, she’s there, at the door, pleading with him “Dad, I need you.” She’s playing “Cinderella” and she wants dad to help her practice some dancing ... [Play snippet #1]

She spins and she sways to whatever song plays
Without a care in the world
And I'm sitting here wearing the weight of the world on my shoulders
It's been a long day and there's still work to do
She's pulling at me saying "Dad I need you!
There's a ball at the castle and I've been invited
and I need to practice my dancin'
Oh please, Daddy, please!"

It’s a touching song that reminds us on Father’s day that the influence of dad’s is really important. What, exactly, can a father provide that is deeply needed today? The Bible has our answer ...

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NLT)

⁴“Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.

⁵And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength.

⁶And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today.

⁷Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at

home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.

⁸Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders.

⁹Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Six things she needs from her dad ...

- She needs a dad that listens to God with a single-minded focus.
- She needs a dad who loves God with wild abandon.
- She needs a dad with full commitment to Godly living.
- She needs a dad who is a repetitive teacher of the Bible.
- She needs a dad with a 24/7 spiritual mentality.
- She needs a dad who is conspicuously Godly.
- She needs a dad that protects her from harm.

ILLY: Have you ever wondered whether a giant asteroid might hit our planet, like the one that may have wiped out the dinosaurs on earth? The planet Jupiter "is our first line of defense" says Allan Boss, an astrophysicist at the Carnegie Institution of Washington. "It is something like 99.9 percent efficient at throwing dangerous space junk, asteroids, and meteorites back out to interstellar space." How does that happen? Jupiter is 318 times heavier than earth. Because of its mass, Jupiter creates a huge gravitational field that acts as a giant cosmic vacuum cleaner, drawing the "junk" that floats into the gravitational field toward it and away from other planets. Jupiter displayed its protective power six years ago when a monster comet broke into fragments and bombarded the planet Jupiter with more destructive power than all the atomic bombs on earth. Not all space particles get deflected by Jupiter, but living in Jupiter's gravitational field minimizes the destructive forces that enter the earth's atmosphere. Considering Jupiter's protective role, the ancient Romans unknowingly named the mighty planet well. In Old Latin, Jupiter means "**Sky-Father.**"

2. "Oh please, Daddy, please!"

Luke 11:11-13 (NLT)

¹¹ "You fathers—if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead?

¹² Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not!

¹³ So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him."

Be a "yes" dad!

Listen to the last verse and chorus of our song ... [Play snippet #2]

[Verse 3:]

But she came home today with a ring on her hand
Just glowing and telling us all they had planned
She says, "Dad, the wedding's still six months away
but I need to practice my dancin'
Oh please, Daddy, please!"

Personal Note: It's only 3 weeks now until my son Cole's wedding ... this song really hits home for me.

The chorus ... [Play snippet 3]

[Chorus:]

So I will dance with Cinderella
While she is here in my arms
'Cause I know something the prince never knew
Oh I will dance with Cinderella
I don't want to miss even one song
'Cause all too soon the clock will strike midnight
And she'll be gone

I listed 6 things earlier that she needs from her dad and maybe you're feeling a bit overwhelmed by all of that. But, what she needs most of all from you is time ... your attention and focus on her to the exclusion of everything else.

Jesus said, "give her what she wants" and what she wants is you.

Why? "'Cause all too soon the clock will strike midnight and she'll be gone."

3. The testimony of Steven Curtis Chapman.

Steven Curtis Chapman and his wife adopted a little girl from China, Maria. Tragically, on May 21, 2008 little 5 year old Maria died when she was struck by a SUV at her home. I'd like for you to hear his testimony regarding that event.

[Play interview.]

I hesitated to play this because it is so emotionally difficult. I think what prompted me to go ahead with it was to hear Mr. Chapman express how his faith helped him deal with this tragedy.

Each of us face life's troubles in our own way ... I pray that you are doing so informed by your faith in a loving and forgiving heavenly father.

A closing prayer ... "Dear God, our perfect example of Fathering. Help us follow Your example as best we can. In the day to day mix of work, family, faith, and friendships we ask You teach us how to redeem our days wisely. In Jesus' name, amen."