sermon notes

Sunday 4th October 2026
Ps Dave Connell
FORMED TO RECEIVE - *Forming Generations from the Inside Out*

Key Scripture — Proverbs 4:1>4
"Listen to my correction, my sons, for I speak to you as your father. Let discernment enter your heart and you will grow wise with the understanding I impart. My revelation-truth is a gift to you, so remain faithful to my instruction. For I, too, was once the delight of my father and cherished by my mother—their beloved child. Then my father taught me, saying, "Never forget my words. If you do everything that I teach you, you will reign in life."

Vs 10 >14
"My son, if you will take the time to stop and listen to me and embrace what I say, you will live a long and happy life full of understanding in every way. I have taken you by the hand in wisdom's ways, pointing you to the path of integrity. Your progress will have no limits when you come along with me, and you will never stumble as you walk along the way. So receive my correction no matter how hard it is to swallow, for wisdom will snap you back into place—her words will be invigorating life to you."

1. Fathers Are Called to Form

Fathers form many visible things in their children:

- Character & Behavior
- Values & Disciplines
- Identity & Mindsets

But there is a deeper calling: One of the primary callings of fatherhood is spiritual formation.

- A father helps construct an inner altar for the presence of God within the next generation.
- We are not merely raising sons who know how to behave; we are forming sons & daughters who know how to recognize, respond & host the presence of God.
- The greatest inheritance we give our children is not simply what they know, but that they have become capable of hearing & receiving from God.

2. Generational Lineage: David > Solomon > Sons

In Proverbs 4, Solomon takes his sons back into his own childhood: *"When I was a son with my father... he taught me."*

Standing inside this passage are three generations: David > Solomon > Solomon's Sons. Solomon's core message is simple:

"I learned to listen before I asked you to listen."

- A father cannot merely demand listening; he must model listening.
- Before children hear what a father says, they observe what/who he listens to — whose voice carries weight in his life, whether he accepts correction, and how he honours God's Word.

3. The Sequence: God Formed David First

Before David formed Solomon, God formed David.
Psalms 119:34, 36-37 TPT
"Give me an understanding heart so that I can passionately know and obey your truth. Cause my heart to bow before your words of wisdom and not to the wealth of this world. Help me turn my eyes away from illusions so that I pursue only that which is true; drench my soul with life as I walk in your paths."

- David was not just praying for answers; he was asking God to form within him a receptive heart...a listening heart
- GOD ---> DAVID ---> SOLOMON ---> HIS SONS
- Jesus teaches in the same parable of the sower Matt 13:
- The potential of a life to produce 30, 60, 100 fold fruit is a heart that can receive the ways of the Kingdom.
- That heart is the one that listens & fully understands vs the one whose ears are hard of hearing
- What moves across generations is not just a set of rules—it is a posture of heart.
- We can only reproduce in our children what we have first allowed God to form within us.

3. Formation vs. Information

Most parenting focuses on information or compliance: giving answers, warning about mistakes, and setting rules.
While good... information is not enough.

Wisdom can be shouting in the streets (Proverbs 1 vs 21-22) yet remain completely unreceived.

- Solomon did not just give his sons wisdom— he first formed within them the capacity to receive it...the discipline to listen

4. The Greater Inheritance

We cannot prepare our sons & daughters for every future scenario, temptation, or decision they will face.... Nor can we be beside them forever.

- **Human Limit:** You cannot give them an answer for every situation.
- **Fatherly Calling:** You can form the kind of heart to which God can speak answers.
- **The ultimate goal of a father:** *"My son/ daughter has learned to build an altar in their own heart...& hear God for themselves."*

6. The Inner Altar...Gods Presence

Presence is Operational, Not Just Emotional

- We often limit God's presence to emotional feelings—goosebumps, quiet moments, or stirring music.
- God certainly touches our emotions, His presence is far more than a sensation.
- The Presence of God is recognized by what begins to operate.

"And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD." — Isaiah 11:2
"the Spirit of Yahweh will rest upon him, the Spirit of Extraordinary Wisdom, the Spirit of Perfect Understanding, the Spirit of Wise Strategy, the Spirit of Mighty Power, the Spirit of Revelation, and the Spirit of the Fear of Yahweh." Isaiah 11:2 TPT

- **Wisdom:** God's order entering human confusion.
- **Counsel:** God's direction invading uncertainty.
- **Might:** Divine strength operating in human weakness.
- **Revelation:** the revealing of hidden things
- **Fear of the Lord**: a deep reverence... (the beginning of wisdom)

Where these fruits operate, the presence of God is actively at work.

We must raise a generation that recognizes God by His fruit and authority, not just by atmospheric goosebumps.

7. Fathers Are Altar Builders

Our primary job as a father is to help build an inner altar within your children—a heart conditioned to bow before wisdom, respect truth, and fear the Lord.
When they eventually leave your home, your physical presence fades—but the internal capacity formed within them remains.

Response: Form in Me What I Want Formed Through Me
Before asking, "What am I forming in my children?" every father must ask: *"What is God forming in me?"*

Personal questions
1. Is there a part of my heart that needs to bow?
2. Am I modelling a listening heart?
3. What of God's presence do I need to draw on & activate