

The Shelter Your Daughter Needs

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One day my daughter and I were playing in a shallow baby pool with a sprinkler. The sprinkler water came pouring down like rain. I got down on all fours to play with her and then an interesting thing happened. She crawled underneath me and sat down—safe from the falling water. I noticed the look on her face—it was content, peaceful, and confident. Under her dad’s shelter, she knew she was safe. It reminded me of the scene in *A Few Good Men* when Demi Moore’s character is asked why she likes the marines so much.

“Because they stand on a wall and they say, ‘Nothing’s gonna hurt you tonight. Not on my watch.’”

Our daughters need our shelter and protection. We won’t be able to keep them free from pain. In fact, some pain in life will be a purposeful motivator for personal growth. However, in those storms they need a safe place they can call home. They need a shelter with a foundation of love, framed with faithfulness, and covered with moral strength.

Here are 3 areas to provide the shelter your daughter needs.

1. Physical.

There are decisions men don’t think twice about—walking home alone at night or entering a hotel room. For women, these and many more are a measured risk. Women are acutely aware of their physical vulnerability and often live with anxiety and fear. When daughters know their dad is on guard duty and ready as a first responder, it gives them a sense of security. It’s also important for us to teach our daughters about the dangers in the world and how they can best protect themselves. If she does get hurt, we need to be there with a tender touch and a warm hug. It comforts her knowing she is back in a safe place where she can always rest.

What you communicate: “You are protected.”

2. Emotional.

At the core of all women there is a one question, “Am I lovable?” We have a powerful voice in answering that question. If they feel like the answer is no or ambiguous it will cause self-doubt, despair, and a lack of identity. The attack will come from the relentless cruelty of other girls, immature guys they date and, sadly, some adults. Your daughter needs consistent and constant reassurance from you. Let her know that it is impossible to love her more and, no matter what she does, you will not love her less. The answer to her core question needs to be firmly founded and affirmative.

What you communicate: “Yes, you are lovable.”

3. Spiritual.

The media will barrage her with unrealistic pictures of the way she’s “supposed” to look; very different than her own reflection in the mirror. Multiple fronts will attempt to dehumanize her by reducing her to an image or sex object. The real problem is not that this is being communicated to her. The real problem is when she believes it. When she accepts the lie as truth her soul will wear and tear. The reality is, she was sculpted together—hand crafted with significant beauty and purpose. Protect that. Give her plenty of prayer cover so this God-given truth is ingrained in her and never lost. Remind her daily of her magnificent design and precious value.

What you communicate: “You are eternally valuable.”

Post Script: On the day your daughter walks down the aisle to marry, she will be moving out from underneath your shelter and underneath her husband’s. The qualities and character of the new shelter she chooses will depend largely on the way you provide cover for her now.

Sound off: In what ways do you protect your daughter?

Huddle up with your daughter tonight and ask: “How do you know I love you?”

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