

Host: Young girls, and the women they become, are looking for the answer to two key questions. And men have the answers. They just don't know it.

Welcome to Champions Arise. I'm your host_____.

We'll get to those questions shortly, but please note that this discussion is part of a fascinating series of programs that are looking into the world of adult children of divorce. It has been very encouraging to see that adults with divorced parents aren't broken or failures. Once their issues are identified, intentional steps can be taken to heal themselves, their relationships and, ultimately, break the cycle of divorce.

Our coach, Kent Darcie, the founder of Adult Children of Divorce Ministries, is going to take us into an area where men have tremendous power to heal... or destroy. Today our topic is Father Hunger in adults from broken homes. Every man needs to hear this important message. Please stay with us.

Music Theme out

Host: Coach, welcome back. I'm excited to look at this topic, but also a little apprehensive. I'm confident that I speak for our male listeners when I say that I like having power, but I'm a little concerned with the "heal or destroy" reference.

Coach: Yes, that does sounds intimidating, but it's absolutely true when speaking about Father Hunger. However, power, and its use or misuse, was discussed in our session on anger as well. It's not a coincidence that we're doing this teaching directly after the anger session.

Host: How are they connected?

Coach: When parents divorce, both boys and girls, guys and gals can have anger and father hunger issues. But with guys, anger tends to come out in more negative or destructive ways. With girls and women, Father Hunger tends to come out in more negative or destructive ways. Here's an illustration.

A few years ago I was staying at a big campground. One day I was standing along one of the roads when this couple walked by. This is what I saw: the teenage boy is walking at a brisk pace and he is angry. About eight steps behind him is, who I presumed to be, his girlfriend. He's walking and yelling, and every few steps, he would turn his head and call her every name in the book. And she just continues to follow him; head down, not saying anything.

As I'm watching them, and I'm the father of a *daughter*, I'm thinking "why is she *following* this guy?"

In hindsight, with the research I've done, while I can't say this as a fact, I would guess that those two young people were children from broken homes; the boy, filled with anger, followed by a girl with Father Hunger.

Host: Such a tragic story. So what exactly *is* Father Hunger?

Coach: Simply put, and in the context of this series, it is the hunger we have for our fathers when they leave after the divorce. And this affects girls and boys. For example, I had a wonderful relationship with my dad growing up. He was my hero. We spent time doing all sorts of things together. Words can't describe how special that was to me. After the divorce, time with my dad dwindled from seeing him every day, to having brief visits three to five times a year. I missed him *terribly*. Being left with my mom and two sisters—three women, *who I love dearly*—but three women, left a huge vacuum for me as a teenage boy. I was hungry for my dad's time and attention. My father hunger was one of the things that contributed to my anger. But for girls and women it makes them vulnerable. As men, we have the privilege of being used by God to help women and girls with their Father Hunger.

Host: Or ignore God's purpose for our manhood and harm them.

Coach: That's right, and that is why we're going to look deeper into this issue because it goes much further than simply missing our dads. Drs. Tom and Beverly Rodgers, Authors of *“Adult Children of Divorced Parents, Making your Marriage Work,”* give great insight to the Father Hunger issue. they write, *““Children often see divorce as a form of rejection. Neil Kalter PhD, at the University of Michigan says that young girls experience the emotional loss of father egocentrically as rejection of themselves. Many girls attribute this rejection to not being pretty enough or smart enough to please their father and engage him in regular frequent contacts. This causes intensified separation anxiety, denial, and avoidance of feelings associated with loss of father, **and object hunger for males**. Many of these girls lose their virginity at a younger age and have higher rates of promiscuity. Sixty-three percent showed subjective psychological problems defined as anxiety, sadness, pronounced moodiness, phobias, and depression.”¹*

These words are from a poem by a teenager named Jamie.
“She's a lot little girl. Alone, torn. She hasn't heard from Dad in months. Months turned to years. Until that little girl faded to be nothing but a memory in the back of a drunken man's mind. Birthday's passed with no regard or gifts, not even a letter. She's scared. With every breath in her body she wants to find him”^{1a} That is the face of father hunger.

Host: That takes my breath away. I've seen this in girls... and women too.

Coach: A drive to feel worthy is very common among female children of divorce and can continue into their adulthood if it's not dealt with. The bottom line is girls are looking for the answer to two primary questions. Am I beautiful? And am I special?

Host: Am I beautiful and am I special?

Coach: Yes. And when I say beautiful, I am not talking about supermodel beauty. Kevin Leman describes what we mean by beauty in his book, *“What a Difference a Daddy Makes*. He writes, *“young women need masculine approval that is freely given, not earned. A mother just is not able to give a daughter what she really needs – a male who delights in her, who adores her, who affirms her, and builds her up regardless of whether she's a klutz, wears a size fourteen*

dress, or is just plain old average. A daughter should never feel “average” when she sees her reflection in her daddy’s eyes.”²

That is what women are looking for. When a girl’s heart asks, “am I special?” they are asking, am I worth your attention? Am I worth defending and protecting? Am I worth staying in the marriage for? Remember, the research shows, many girls take their dad’s departure as his rejection of them, not their mom.

And this is the problem. Too often girls seek the answers in the wrong places. Because the father, or another Godly male, isn’t there to fill her ears with safe Godly truth, she will *listen* when the boy, or male teacher, coworker, or boss, says that she is beautiful and special. Unfortunately, because they are not Godly men of honor, they tell her she is beautiful and special... *if*.

Host: If she will put up with the junk..... if she will have sex with him. But why can’t the girls see how they are being used by these guys?

Coach: I think Proverbs 27 verse 7 sums it up. “*A person who is full refuses honey, but even bitter food tastes sweet to the hungry.*”³ These girls, and women are hungry. This is why, as men, we are looking at how father hunger affects women.

Host: Now I see what you meant by the power to heal or destroy.

Coach: Yes. We must see ourselves as tools in God’s hand *for healing*. This is tough for those of us who went through our own parent’s divorce. As we’ve discussed, there may be anger and other issues, but we must commit ourselves to being part of the solution. Here’s three ways we can do that.

First, help the women in your life see themselves as God sees them. Psalm 139 verse 17 says “How precious are Your thoughts about me, O God! They are innumerable! I can’t even count them.”⁴

The word “precious” here is *yaqar* (yaw-kar’); in the Hebrew. It means “to esteem, to be prized, to be valuable, to be precious, to be costly, rare.”^{4a} They must understand that regardless of their past, this is how God sees them. Precious. And that is how we, as men, must treat them.

The second way we can bring healing to women is to help them to replace Satan’s lies with God’s truth.

Women, who are dealing with Father Hunger, believe they aren’t special. Psalm 139 verse 17 says they are.

Satan tells women they will never have a solid father in their lives. But God’s word, the Bible, says in Psalms 68 verse 5, “A Father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling.”⁵

Satan tells women they are alone and unprotected.

Psalms 28 verse 7 says, “The LORD is my strength, my shield from every danger. I trust in Him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.”⁶

Psalms 10 verse 14 says, “The helpless commits himself to You; You are the helper of the fatherless.”⁷

Women with Father Hunger are searching for the type of love the Bible says they already have. Romans 8 verses 37 through 39 state, “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”⁸

Host: Those are great truths for women, *and men*, to hold on to. And the third way men can help?

Coach: Be a safe haven for women. Do this by striving to be the men God desires us to be. If your parents are divorced, learn how that has impacted you. Those who are married are commanded to “love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”⁹ And every man must treat every woman and girl as the precious, valuable, treasure God has created them to be.

Host: That is quite a challenge. Coach, this discussion on Father Hunger has been quite an eye opener. Would you please pray for our listeners?

Coach: Absolutely. Heavenly Father, I pray that you would bring healing to our men who come from broken homes. Also, if their father is gone, I pray that You would be their Father. If the relationship is strained, please bring forgiveness and reconciliation.

And I pray for any man who realizes now that he has misused the power You gave him for healing. Give him the strength to humble Himself before you, seek Your forgiveness, repent. From this day forward, by the power of Your Holy Spirit, may he build up and protect the women you have brought into his life.

Finally Lord, for any woman that is listening, help her to accept how special she is in Your eyes. Help her to believe the truth found in the Bible instead of Satan’s lies. Take away any shame she may feel for things she’s done in her vulnerable state. And bless her with Your amazing and unending love, forgiveness, and grace. We pray this in the precious name of Your only Son, Jesus. Amen.

Host: Amen.

Music Theme in

HOST: Today’s teaching on Father Hunger is part of a series of programs that are looking at various ways adults are still affected by their parent’s divorce. To learn more, go to our website www.championsarise.org and click on “Breaking the Cycle of Divorce.”

We trust this program has been informative and encouraging to you. Join us next time as we continue to look at issues that affect adults with divorced parents.

I'm _____, for _____. Thank you for being with us here at Champions Arise. May God bless you and keep you in His care.

Music Theme out

¹Tom and Beverly Rodgers, Adult Children of Divorced Parents; Making our Marriages Work, Resource Publications, 2002, pg 11

^{1a}Jamie Johnson, She's a Lost Little Girl.

²Kevin Leman, What a Difference a Daddy Makes; Zondervan, 2000, pg. 119

³[NLT]

⁴New Living Translation, copyright 1996

^{4a}PC Study Bible, Biblesoft

⁵[NIV]

⁶[NLT]

⁷[NKJV]

⁸[NKJV]

⁹[ESV]