

## How Father's Day Began

*"Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Exodus 20:12*

The idea of honoring your father began with God. He made it one of the Ten Commandments. The most basic way to honor your father is by obeying him – *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right"* (Ephesians 6:1). Honoring your father is a constant, year-round matter.

The modern celebration of Father's Day is credited to Mrs. Sonora Smart Dodd, of Spokane, Washington. While listening to a Mother's Day sermon in 1901, she thought it would be great to set aside a day to honor fathers. She approached her pastor about having a church service dedicated to fathers on June 5<sup>th</sup>, her own father's birthday. That date was too soon for the pastor to arrange, so he spoke a few weeks later, on June 19, 1910. From then on, the State of Washington celebrated the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. Soon, the tradition spread across the United States and throughout the world.

Mrs. Dodd's father, William Jackson Smart, a Civil War veteran, was widowed when his wife died while giving birth to their sixth child. Mr. Smart was left to raise the newborn and his five other children by himself on a rural farm in eastern Washington State. After Sonora became an adult, she realized the strength and selflessness her father had shown in raising his children as a single parent. Sonora wanted to honor him for the courageous, sacrificial, loving man he was.

Traditionally on Father's Day, children would make special desserts and enjoy spending the day visiting with their father. Families also attended church together.

We praise God for godly fathers and we honor you today.

*Pastor Dave Harness Sr.*