

How To Be A Good Father

Proverbs 22:6 HCSB Teach a youth about the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Introduction:

It's not enough just to KNOW the characteristics of a good father ... we need to see what we need to do to BE a good father.

1.- LOVE YOUR WIFE (Eph. 5:28)

- **Ephesians 5:28 HCSB** In the same way, husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Your children watch how you treat their mother. They WATCH ... and they are LEARNING and FORMING their concept of marriage from YOU. You are creating a PATTERN, a BLUEPRINT for marriage with your children.

- If they see you show disrespect for your wife ... your son will carry that into his marriage.
- If you verbally or mentally or physically abuse your wife ... your daughter will expect that in her marriage.
- If you treat their mother like she isn't worth very much ... you are degrading the home, the family, and marriage ... which they will carry into their future homes, families & marriages.

BUT ...

- If they visibly see you show love and respect to their mother ... your son will learn how to be a good husband and father himself.
- If you honor your wife ... your daughter will never be satisfied with a man who dishonors her.
- If you cherish their mother as a valuable part of not only your life, but their life ... they will carry that model with them for the rest of their lives.

2.- DON'T EXPECT PERFECT CHILDREN (Col. 3:21)

- **Colossians 3:21 HCSB** Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so they won't become discouraged.

Just like there are no perfect fathers ... there are no perfect children ... AMEN?

Fathers, don't EXPECT your children to be perfect. Don't expect them to meet all of your expectations ... to fulfill all of your goals for them ... to be what you want them to be.

Too many fathers try to live out their own lives through their children. They want their sons to be the football stars that they could never be. They want their daughters to marry into money & success that they never achieved.

Every child is different ... they are not a clone of you (Thank God!). It's natural for a child to make mistakes ... spill their milk ... accidentally break things ... do poorly on a test ... get angry ...

They're not perfect ... like YOU were when you were a kid! ACCEPT your children for who they are ... whether they are clumsy or athletic ... scatterbrained or brainy ... shy or a motor-mouth ... goofy or sophisticated ...

Instead of constantly criticizing their imperfections, acknowledge their imperfections ... and love them. They aren't perfect ... they will never be perfect ... don't expect them to be perfect.

3.- ENJOY YOUR CHILDREN (Ps. 127:3)

- **Psalms 127:3 HCSB** Sons are indeed a heritage from the LORD, children, a reward.

Children are given to us to ENJOY ... not to be a burden ... not to avoid ... not to ignore ... BUT TO ENJOY! In order to ENJOY them, you've got to be with them ... have fun with them ... share your life with them.

None of this: "The QUALITY of time is more important than the QUANTITY of time." The QUANTITY of time you spend with them tells them how important they are to you ... whether they are just an afterthought ... or an inconvenience ... or a disruption in your busy schedule. Don't just give them your leftovers.

Enjoy being a father ... and make sure that they enjoy having you as their father. Spend some time on the floor with them, giving them horsy rides ... take them to fun places, doing fun things ... laugh ... play ... give them some memories of Dad being FUN to be around.

4.- LISTEN TO YOUR CHILDREN (Pro. 1:5)

- **Proverbs 1:5 HCSB** a wise man will listen and increase his learning, and a discerning man will obtain guidance--

Give them your undivided attention ... not with one eye on the TV and the other eye on them. When they have a problem ... when they are worried ... when they are sad ... when they are lonely ... they don't need cartoons, or a video game, or their best friends Dad ... they need YOU!

Get involved with your children, and know what's going on in their everyday life. Listen to them ... even when they're not saying anything, they are speaking volumes. Be the kind of father that they can come to and say anything that's on their mind ... without being criticized for it.

If you listen to them when they're small and their problems are small ... and then they'll come to you when they're bigger, and their problems are bigger.

5.- PROVIDE FOR YOUR CHILDREN (1 Tim. 5:8)

- **1 Timothy 5:8 HCSB** Now if anyone does not provide for his own relatives, and especially for his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Even the LOST provide for their families ... BUT ... you can't be a GOOD FATHER and not provide for your children.

I don't mean that you have to give them everything they want ... that's 1 of the WORST things you can do. We are living in a generation of children whose parents have robbed their children of the blessing of WANTING, WORKING & WAITING for material things. We have spoiled our children by giving them INSTANT SATISFACTION ... and they will carry on this tradition by charging whatever they want and accumulating enormous credit card debt.

Too many fathers think they can BUY OFF their children with THINGS ... and thus relieve themselves of the guilt for not being the kind of father they ought to be ... that they can BUY their way out of Biblical fatherhood.

My father didn't make much money when I was growing up ... we had to prime the pump to get our water, walk 100' to the outhouse, and took a bath in a wash tub in the kitchen in hot water heated on a wood stove. I never went to a barbershop until after I was married. We didn't have a telephone until I was in Jr. High School.

Did my Daddy PROVIDE for me? You bet he did! He provided me with everything I needed, and taught me the blessing of WANTING, WORKING, and WAITING for material things. PROVIDING for your children by giving them TOO MUCH, is just as bad as NOT PROVIDING for them by giving them TOO LITTLE.

6.- TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN (Eph. 6:4)

- [Ephesians 6:4 HCSB](#) And fathers, don't stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

We must teach and train our children to respect authority in the home ... or they won't respect authority at school or in the world. We need to teach our children that there are BOUNDARIES ... rules & regulations ... a line that they will not cross.

Your children are going to test you. They are going to see how much they can get away with. They are going to see if you mean what you say ... if you're going to take a stand, or if it's just an idle threat.

AND ... every time you back down from Godly instruction, you will have to draw the line further & further away from God's standard. If you're not careful, after awhile, THEY will have become the authority ... and you will become the one in submission to them.

Train your children to respect authority. Earn their respect ... be consistent ... discipline them with love ... or they will never respect the authority of God in their life.

7.- PRAY FOR YOURSELF (1 Chron. 16:11)

- [1 Chronicles 16:11 HCSB 11](#) Search for the LORD and for His strength; seek His face always.

You don't have all the answers to their questions ... you can't solve all their problems. You don't have all the wisdom, love and patience to be the father you ought to be. Without God's help, you can never be the father God wants you to be.

You need help! You can't do it by yourself ...

8.- PRAY FOR YOUR CHILDREN (Ps. 55:17)

- [Psalms 55:17 HCSB](#) I complain and groan morning, noon, and night, and He hears my voice.

You can't be with your children all the time ... God can. You can't protect them wherever they go ... God can. You can teach them right from wrong, but you can't be there when it's put to the test ... God can.

Pray for your children! Lift them up to God to do for them what you can't do. As parents, we aren't perfect, and we make mistakes. If we had to do it all over again, we would do things differently. Maybe we've done the best we could ... we did what we thought was right ... we raised our children the best we knew how.

NOW ... PRAY FOR THEM ... because your Heavenly Father loves them as much as you do

... and He has more experience than you do. Pray that God the Father will take your well-intended efforts at fatherhood ... and use them to bring your children into His loving arms.

9.- BE A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL (Pro. 22:6)

- [Proverbs 22:6 HCSB](#) Teach a youth about the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

You are a role model for your children ... like it or not ... good or bad ... they will, to one degree or another, model their lives after you. You have inherited some of your father's characteristics ... your children are inheriting some of yours.

Whether you know it or not (or mean to or not), you are influencing the lives of your children, and your children's children.

You ARE a role model ... a good father will be a GOOD role model.

10.- PREPARE YOUR CHILDREN (Pro. 23:24)

- [Proverbs 23:24 HCSB](#) The father of a righteous son will rejoice greatly, and one who fathers a wise son will delight in him.

You are preparing your children to leave home ... PLEASE! Some day, they'll take what they've learned from you, and begin to apply it out in the real world. You've only got approximately 18 years to get them ready.

Preparing them for life away from you is only part of the picture. If you haven't spent your time preparing them for eternity, you have failed as a father. God didn't give you your children just to prepare a doctor, a teacher, or a plumber. God gave your children to Christian fathers to prepare them for eternity.

You can't choose which eternal path they will take ... but you CAN choose to show them the way to Heaven ... OR ... you can choose to just ignore their spiritual destiny. They have to decide for themselves the path they'll take ... but you can have a Godly influence on their choice.

Conclusion:

It's not easy being a good father ... AMEN? BUT ... it's NOT IMPOSSIBLE, either. It takes hard work, hard praying, and making hard decisions. You can't do it alone. God doesn't expect you to. God doesn't want you to. Don't leave Him out of your adventure in fatherhood.