

How to Be an Imperfect Father

WHERE ARE THE PERFECT FATHERS IN SCRIPTURE?

God's Take on Earthly Fathers (Hebrews 12:3-11):

³ For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. ⁴ You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. ⁵ And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; ⁶ For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." ⁷ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? ⁸ But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. ⁹ Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected *us*, and we paid *them* respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of His holiness. ¹¹ Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Godly Characteristics that All Men Are to Shoot For (1 Timothy 3:1-7):

This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; ³ not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; ⁴ one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in submission with all reverence ⁵ (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); ⁶ not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil. ⁷ Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

WHAT'S A FATHER TO BE?: 5 BIBLICAL ROLES

Role #1: I Am To Be A Husband To the Mother of My Children

a) By Understanding the God-Designed Joint Venture

So God created man in His [own] image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:27-28)

b) By Loving Her Sacrificially (Eph 5:25)

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her

c) By Cleansing Her Continually (Eph 5:26-27)

that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Role #2: I Am To Be A Protector Of My Family

a) I Am to Protect My Wife (Ps 68:5)

A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows, [Is] God in His holy habitation.

b) I Am to Protect My Children

Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow. (Isa 1:17)

Role #3: I Am To Be A Provider For My Family

a) Of Necessities

If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! (Matt 7:11)

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Tim 5:8)

b) Of Health (Mark 9:17-27)

Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit."

Role #4: I Am To Be An Example To My Children

a) FACT: My Children Are Looking!

Children's children [are] the crown of old men, And the glory of children [is] their father. (Proverbs 17:6)

b) ACT: Be Their Example, and Prompt Them to Observe It!

My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways. (Proverbs 23:26)

c) Examples of Examples:

Paul

Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. (Phil 3:17)

For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. (2 Thes 3:7-9)

Timothy – Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. (1 Timothy 4:12)

Christ – For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: (1 Peter 2:21)

Role #5: I Am To Be A Teacher To My Children

The Purposes Of My Teaching:

a) To Point My Children To God (Deut 6:1-25; Psalm 78:1-8)

"Now this [is] the commandment, [and these are] the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe [them] in the land which you are crossing over to possess, 2 "that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. 6 " And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. (Deut 6:1-2,6-7)

b) To Protect My Children From Sin (Psalms 78:1-8; Prov 5)

Give ear, O my people, [to] my law; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. 2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old, 3 Which we have heard and known, And our fathers have told us. 4 We will not hide [them] from their children, Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, And His strength and His wonderful works that He has done. 5 For He established a testimony in Jacob, And appointed a law in Israel, Which He commanded our fathers, That they should make them known to their children; 6 That the generation to come might know [them], The children [who] would be born, [That] they may arise and declare [them] to their children, 7 That they may set their hope in God, And not forget the works of God, But keep His commandments; 8 And may not be like their fathers, A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation [that] did not set its heart aright, And whose spirit was not faithful to God. (Psalm 78:1-8)

My son, if sinners entice you, Do not consent. (Prov 1:10)

c) To Correct My Children from Error (Eph 6:4; Hebrews 12:5-11)

And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)

d) To Immerse My Children in Wisdom

The Processes of My Teaching:

- Purposeful (Prov 23:24-25; Isa 38:19; Luke 1:59)
- Merciful (Psalm 103:13; Col 3:21)
- Verbal (Prov 4:1)
- Continual (Deut 6; Eph 6:1-4; 1 Thes 2:10-12)

The Pattern of My Teaching (Prov 2:1-17; 3:1-18; 4:1-20; 5, etc.)

Dads, we are to work diligently to be perfect fathers. You will not measure up in any given area on any given day.

The key is not perfection, but direction. We must keep on keeping on in the right direction, despite our failures.

Are you heading in the direction God wants for fathers? Are you seeking to practice the roles of godly fatherhood?