
What Kind of Father Should I Be? God the Father is Our Example

When I became a father the first time, I wondered “what have I gotten myself into.” Don’t get me wrong, children are a blessing and I would not change being a father for anything. I think when I was holding little baby Thomas for the first time, the responsibility of being a father finally hit me. Suddenly I was responsible for this little life who could not take care of himself.

Often times, with the numerous broken families that we see today, people often say that children don’t have a good role model of a father. I grew up with a father who loved me and who wanted the best for me, but there were ways where he could have been better.

That is probably true of all of us with our fathers and all of us as fathers.

However, we do have a perfect example of what a father should be. God describes Himself as our Father. As we look at things that are true of God the Father, we can learn how we should act as fathers to our children.

I. The Father Loves Us.

John 3:16 ¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

God’s love is shown to the whole world, as He gave His Son to die on the cross for our sins. It is the ultimate sacrifice that He paid for us.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 ¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

Love – desiring what is best for others even at cost to oneself.

God has loved us and His love motivates Him to act on our behalf. God loves us greater than anyone else has ever or will ever love us.

1 John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

1 John 4:7-11 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Fathers – We are to be loving our children. This involves sacrifice on our part in order to do what is best for them. As God sacrificed Himself and gave good things to us through that sacrifice, so we should sacrifice ourselves for our children.

II. The Father Gives to Us.

James 1:17 ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of

turning.

Matthew 7:11 ¹¹ "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!

Good gifts – what God gives to us are good things.

Jesus assumes that even those of us who are evil (perhaps the whole human race) know how to give good things to our children. We ought to give good things to our children. We must remember that good things are not always the things that our children will appreciate most at the moment.

Fathers – we should be givers of good things to our children. Sometimes this can be hard, because the good things our children need are not what they want and are not always the most pleasant. We must get beyond ourselves to do what is good for our children.

III. The Father Provides for Us.

Matthew 5:44-48 ⁴⁴ "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, ⁴⁵ "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶ "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ "And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more *than others*? Do not even the tax collectors do so? ⁴⁸ "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

God provides for both the just and unjust. God especially provides for his children.

Psalm 37:25-26 ²⁵ I have been young, and *now* am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread. ²⁶ *He is* ever merciful, and lends; And his descendants *are* blessed.

Matthew 6:31-32 ³¹ "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

God knows our needs and provides for our needs. He is faithful to us.

Fathers – we should be providers for our family. We understand that God is the ultimate provider. However, we must be diligent to provide for our children's physical and spiritual needs. It is our job and our duty.

IV. The Father Comforts Us

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 ³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

This is perhaps something that we don't think of fathers doing. When a child gets an "owie", we usually think of them running to mommy. Our heavenly father comforts us when we go through tribulation. We as father can be comforters when our children are having hard times.

1 Thessalonians 2:10-12 ¹⁰ You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; ¹¹ as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, ¹² that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

Thessalonians 2:16-17 ¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

Comforting often goes with exhorting and charging, which is why fathers should be comforters. We are often good at the exhorting and charging, but not always as good at comforting. Paul's example of exhorting, comforting and charging is that of a father to his own children.

Fathers – we should be comforters to our children. Of course we must comfort them in the truth. We must reassure them of God's control, of His love, of His provision, etc.

V. The Father Chastens Us.

Hebrews 12:5-10 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.

We talked about this last week. God chastens us because he loves us and because we are His children. We need to be chastening our children as fathers, like God, because we love them and because they are our children.

Fathers – are we chastening our children as God chastens us? We need to discipline and instruct our children so that they grow into the men and women that God wants them to be.

VI. The Father Judges Us.

1 Peter 1:17 ¹⁷ And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear;

Judge - κρίνω (pf. κέκρικα ; aor. pass. ἐκρίθην, inf. κριθῆναι ; fut. pass. κριθήσομαι) judge, pass judgment on (midd. and pass. often stand trial, go to law); condemn; decide, determine; consider, regard, think; prefer

1. to separate, put asunder; to pick out, select, choose
2. to approve, esteem:

3. *to be of opinion, deem, think:*

4. *to determine, resolve, decree:*

5. *to judge; a. to pronounce an opinion concerning right and wrong;*

16677 κρίνω impf. pass. ἐκρινόμην; fut. κρινῶ; 1 aor. ἔκρινα; pf. κέκρικα; pf. pass. κέκραμαι; 1 aor. pass. ἐκρίθην; 1 fut. pass. κριθήσομαι; from a basic meaning *divide out or separate off*; (1) as making a personal evaluation *think of as better, prefer* (RO 14.5); (2) as forming a personal opinion *evaluate, think, judge* (AC 13.46); (3) as reaching a personal or group decision *resolve, determine, decide* (AC 16.4); (4) as passing a personal judgment on someone's actions *judge, criticize* (MT 7.1); often in a negative sense *condemn, find fault with* (JA 4.11); (5) as a legal technical term; (a) in a human court *judge, condemn, hand over for punishment* (JN 7.51); passive *be on trial, be judged* (AC 25.10); middle/passive *go to law, sue* (1C 6.6); (b) of God's judging *judge, administer justice*; with an obviously negative verdict *condemn, punish* (2TH 2.12); (6) Hebraistically, in a broader sense *rule, govern* (LU 22.30)

κρίνω ; ἐπικρίνω: to come to a conclusion in the process of thinking and thus to be in a position to make a decision

Discernment is an important trait for a father. Sometimes we need to take time and to judge what is going on. Especially with our children, we need to understand what is going on and react accordingly.

Fathers – we must try to be a fair judge of our children; discerners of what is going on in their lives.

VII. The Father Forgives Us.

Luke 15 – Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32 ¹¹ Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. ¹² "And the younger of them said to *his* father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls *to me.*' So he divided to them *his* livelihood. ¹³ "And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. ¹⁴ "But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. ¹⁵ "Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed wine. ¹⁶ "And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him *anything.* ¹⁷ "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸ 'I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹ "and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." ' ²⁰ "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹ "And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²² "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on *his* feet. ²³ 'And bring the fatted calf here and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴ 'for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry. ²⁵ "Now his older son was in the field. And

as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ "So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷ "And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' ²⁸ "But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ "So he answered and said to *his* father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. ³⁰ 'But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.' ³¹ "And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. ³² 'It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.' "

Our tendency as humans is to hold grudges. We need to be able to forgive and forget when our children return to us.

Fathers – we must be ready to forgive our children as they realize their sin and turn from it. We cannot hold grudges against them. We cannot hold their mistakes over their heads.

VIII. The Father Teaches Us.

2 John 1:4 ⁴ I rejoiced greatly that I have found *some* of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father.

God the Father teaches us through his word. As fathers we should be teachers of our children. There are many ways which we can do this. One way which we can help is through the starting block time. This gives some suggestions as fathers of how we can teach our family some of the things which we have been taught in the services.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 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.

Fathers – we must step up and be teachers of our children. We are charged with their instruction and training.