

The 10 Commandments of Fatherhood

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Proverbs 20:7 (NKJV)

The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him.

There is nothing easy about being a father, especially nowadays. But, an authentic look at history reveals to us that God already gave all the tools and resources needed to be a great father. The fact is that dads have been throwing their hands up in the air, giving up the challenge of playing their role. Fortunately, we don't have to reinvent the wheel.

People may view Scripture as some ancient, out-of-date text that has nothing to say about modern day life. Think again. There is a lot to get and it may actually change the way you think concerning fatherhood.

So, let's check out these 10 instructions for being a father.

1. Be the “First Teacher” of your children

It's our responsibility to “train up a child in the way he/she should go.” Not the school, not the government, not TV, but you—as a dad.

Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

2. Dads need to demonstrate a good life

Scripture teaches that “who we are” and “how we live” is like a “letter from God.” Our kids read that letter, every day.

2 Corinthians 3:2-3 (NKJV)

²You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

3. Fathers need to Provide for their family

A father provides protection, more than rent and food. As dads, it's our responsibility to make sure our family's needs will be all well supplied. Be encouraged and look for ways to give to your family even when it is financially hard.

1 Timothy 5:8 (NKJV)

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.

4. Good dads discipline their children

The one who loves their children, Scripture says, “is careful to discipline them.” This is also about “proactive leadership” in our homes.

Proverbs 13:24 (NLT)

Those who spare the rod of discipline hate their children. Those who love their children care enough to discipline them.

5. Dads spend time with their children, and it's not empty time

Dads must engage their children in the kind of deep, heart-to-heart conversations that wisely impart in their existence. Schedule some regular “conversational walks” with your children, one on one. Family time that counts.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷You 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.

6. Compassion is a “dad” characteristic

A father has compassion for his children as God has compassion for us, His beloved.

Psalms 103:13 (NLT)

The LORD is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him.

7. Fathers, let your actions speak louder than your words

Father must be like role model for their children. Words are empty if there is not attitude. Instruct them to not only be “hearers” of God’s word but “doers” also.

James 1:22 (NLT)

But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.

8. Don’t provoke your children

What the Scripture suggests, is to raise them to be young people of faith and not to discourage them with negative words.

Ephesians 6:4 (NLT)

Fathers do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.

9. Dads never give up on their kids

The story of “The Prodigal Son” (Luke 15:20-24) is the story of a father who never gives up hope and is ready to receive his child back with open arms. We can discipline, we can hold accountable, but we must never give up.

Luke 15:20 (NLT)

²⁰“So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him.

10. Dads pray for their children

King David prayed for his son, Solomon. Children who know without any doubt that their dads pray for them every day own a deep sense of love and security.

1Chronicles 29:19 (NLT)

Give my son Solomon the wholehearted desire to obey all your commands, laws, and decrees, and to do everything necessary to build this Temple, for which I have made these preparations.”