

JOB AS A FATHER

I'd like to begin by looking at principles of fatherhood laid out by Paul before considering specific examples. I'm a strong believer in doing so, because the house will fall apart if it's not built on a strong foundation. My initial hope is to get a big picture and "feel" of the role of fathers.

1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted (*urge strongly*) **each one of you and encouraged** (*console, cheer up*) **you and charged** (*insist, urge something as a matter of great importance*) **you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.**

- Exhorted: to urge strongly, appeal to, urge, exhort, encourage
- Encouraged: console, cheer up
- Charged: to urge something as a matter of great importance, affirm, insist, implore

Ephesians 6:4 Fathers, do not provoke (*make angry*) **your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline** (*act of providing guidance by discipline and correction*) **and instruction** (*counsel to avoid or cease improper conduct*) **of the Lord.**

- Provoke: to make angry (BDAG)
- Discipline: the act of providing guidance for responsible living, upbringing, training, instruction, in our lit. chiefly as it is attained by discipline, correction
- Instruction: counsel about avoidance or cessation of an improper course of conduct, admonition, instruction.

Colossians 3:21 Fathers, do not provoke (*to cause someone to react in a way that suggests acceptance of a challenge, arouse, provoke mostly in bad sense, irritate, embitter*) **your children, lest they become discouraged** (*to become disheartened to the extent of losing motivation, be discouraged, lose heart, become dispirited*).

- Provoke: to cause someone to react in a way that suggests acceptance of a challenge, arouse, provoke mostly in bad sense irritate, embitter, (BDAG)
- Discouraged: to become disheartened to the extent of losing motivation, be discouraged, lose heart, become dispirited.

So many men, who have not been led by God and/or a godly father, have a stereotype in mind. Fathers are physically strong men who are tough, work with tools, physically protective of their kids who raise tough boys and princesses. There are elements of this that I don't necessarily disagree with, depending on the context. However, this is not the biblical focus of a father.

When Paul instructed, for example, the church in Corinth to, "Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong." (1 **Corinthians 16:13**), what did he mean by "act like men"? Be brave and courageous, in the spiritual warfare.

It's amazing how my children view me. They don't realize I'm only 5' 7". They don't see my physical limitations. Every now and then they'll ask me what I'd do in certain situations. They love hearing about how I'd protect them. Their little smiles and excitement are sweet to watch. They'll ask if some man is as strong as me. Usually it's some beast of a guy. Jace looks shocked when I tell him other men are as strong (or even worse) - stronger! However, while it is right for a father to love and protect their children, many times those aren't the fights our presence is needed. They need us to fight for them - spiritually. How do we do that? What does that look like? Brothers, if I may: don't worry about how much you can bench press if you have sin weighing you down. Our kids need us to bench a great amount of weight in the spiritual gym, but it's hard to do that, again, if sin is weighing us down. In the spirit of the Hebrew writer, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely," ([Hebrews 12:1](#)).

If you want to hear a soldier's voice, then hear Paul's words: [2 Corinthians 4:8-11, 16-18](#) "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh . . . So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."

It's actually harder than you would think to find positive examples of fathers. Plenty of lessons in the Bible about what not to do from great men of faith, but not so many that seemed to really "ace" the role. Today, we'll look at one man that I believe we can say with confidence, was a good father. While understanding principles is fundamental, it obviously helps to see what it looks like in life. Today, though the passages are few, they speak volumes. Today we consider Job. We're considering, not just who God knew Job to be, but who his children knew him to be and the impact He had on them.

What His Children Witnessed: Job 29, 31

- Before jumping into what would be the obvious text, I'd like to consider a picture of Job's life. I'm a firm believer that, while what you teach your children is fundamental to their spiritual growth, what you do is much more powerful and persuasive. Look through these passages through this lens: what did his children witness their father do?
 - **Chapter 29:**
 - Vs.1-6 Before his children had passed away, he was in his "prime" and in friendship with God.
 - Vs. 7-10 When he had the respect of both his peers and elders.

- Vs. 11-16 He cared for the poor and fatherless when no one else would. He was a blessing to those perishing and brought joy to widows. He acted as eyes and feet to the blind and lame.
- Vs. 17 He protected those who fell prey to the unrighteous.
- **Chapter 31:**
 - Vs. 1-12 Integrity concerning a virgin or another's wife.
 - Vs. 13-15 Integrity towards his servants.
 - Vs. 16-23 Integrity towards the poor, widow, or fatherless.
 - Vs. 24-28 Integrity in wealth and worship towards God alone.
 - Vs. 29-33 Integrity towards his enemies or concealing his transgressions as others do.

A Picture of His Family: Job 1-5, 18-19; 42:15

- Everyone agrees that this family was close. Even when disaster came upon his children, they were with one another. One cannot help but attribute that, in large, to Job. We don't know if these feasts were birthdays or something else, but we don't want to miss the point.
- We see how their father was hands on in his consecrating his children and offering sacrifices on their behalf in case they had sinned. He was consistent - not something done now and again. He was consistent regarding their spiritual well being. This isn't a man who loved family, but didn't bring up "politics and religion."
- The reality is - not all dad's are created equal. Being a father isn't about showing off to others, but our children need to see our genuineness towards God and love for them.
- Inheritance: This may not seem like a small thing, but in those days it wasn't necessarily normal. You see his tenderness towards his daughters in their inheritance among their brothers.

Humble Job: Job 42:1-6

- None of us are perfect. Not even Job. I know his children weren't present to hear his father's words, but do you think his future children never heard about God appearing to Job and the end of the matter?
- Our kids don't need us to be perfect. They need us to be faithful and humble, brethren. If we've sinned, let's not be ashamed to confess it.