

BE THE BEST FATHER YOU CAN

Joshua 24:14-18 Deuteronomy 6:4-12 Luke 15:11-32

Introduction: Remember the old T.V. series, "Father Knows Best?" Robert Young always wore a suit, no matter when or where he was and he always knew exactly what to do no matter what the situation? What about the "Nelson Family" with Ozzie, Harriet and their two sons? Things were always handled in a gentle manner and worked out just fine. Then there was the "Bill Crosby Show" where he was always the perfect father with the perfect solution. Model fathers? The kind of fathers that please God? There are television show fathers and such are nothing like reality. However the Bible gives some examples of fathers which are real, logical and their good examples can be followed.

I. SOME FATHERS MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE

Adam who had Cain, Abel, and Seth

Noah who had Shem, Ham, and Japheth

Abraham who had Isaac and Ishmael

Isaac who had Jacob and Esau

Jacob who had Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Isachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, and Joseph

Eli who had Hophni and Phinehas

David who had Absalom and Solomon

All of these fathers had good sons and bad sons. All of these fathers were good fathers some of the time and not so good fathers some of the time. What kind of father does God want? What is a "model" father?

II. WHAT GOD WANTS FATHERS TO DO

1. God wants a father to speak for his family. (Joshua)
 - A father should recognize his responsibility for his family.
 - Like it or not, God has placed on the father the total responsibility for the entire family.
 - It is the father who is to make the final decisions for the family.
2. God wants a father to set the example for his family. (Joshua)
 - A father should be obedient to the Lord in all ways and see to it that his family is also obedient.
3. God wants a father to plan for his family and provide for them. (Joshua)
 - A father is to care for his family himself, raising his children himself.
4. God wants a father to teach his children about God and God's Word, himself.
 - A father is to teach his children about the love of God.
 - A father is to teach his children to respect others.

5. God wants a father to love his children unashamedly. (Parable of the two sons)
 - A father should not be ashamed or embarrassed to hug or kiss his children openly or to tell them that he loves them.
 - It is a well known fact that children do better in school when they know they are loved at home and are told that they are loved by their father.

6. God wants a father to respect and trust his children. (Parable of the two sons)
 - A father should value his children's decisions and give them freedom to choose.

7. God wants a father to allow his children to "grow up." (Parable of the two sons)
 - A father should watch his children face their own consequences for their own actions.

8. God wants a father to forgive his children when they do wrong. (Parable of the two sons)
 - A father should always have room at home for that wayward child.

9. God wants a father to be involved in his children's lives. (Parable of the two sons)
 - A father should be interested in what his children are interested in.
 - A father should encourage his children in their interests and not force his own interests upon them.

10. Finally, God wants a father who will represent HIM before his children and teach them about HIM, so that they will never wonder about God. So that they might say, "God is just like my dad..."

CONCLUSION:

1. Dad, in your own opinion, what kind of father are you? What kind of father do your children think you are?

2. Fathers, like it or not, God has placed the responsibility of your entire family upon your shoulders.
 - You are to provide for their material needs, their physical needs, their spiritual needs, their educational needs.
 - You are to be a role model for your children to see and follow.
 - You are responsible for speaking for your family in what they do or don't do.

3. Fathers, want some help?
 - Spend some time on your knees and get some advice from God.
 - Spend some time with your wife and children. Do things as a family.
 - Spend some time talking with God about what is best for your family.
 - Spend some time in God's Word looking at some of the fathers and their situations.

4. Fathers, don't turn your responsibilities over to your wife! YOU are accountable to God, not your wife.