

# God's Word To Fathers – Ephesians 6:4

Outline By: Mark Knowles 06/16/19 AM

***“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:4)***

What a father does for a living to provide a home for his family is not really his main job. A father's main job is his family! God has blessed us fathers with the task of leading our families to eternity with God in heaven. What does God's Word tell us to help us get the job done? Paul gave fathers both negative and positive instruction on how to raise our children in Ephesians 6:4.

## **I. Do Not Provoke Your Children**

The word “provoke” means “to rouse to wrath, to provoke, anger, embitter.” It leads them to resentment and when that happens, they stop paying attention to us. What are some ways we cross the line and irritate our children to the point of resentment?

1. *Overprotection.* We can smother our children never giving them independence.
2. *Favoritism.* Read the story of Joseph to see the danger and struggles that come from favoritism.
3. *Discouragement.*
4. *Cloning.* Children need freedom to be unique.
5. *Neglect.* The most important commodity children need is our time.
6. *Cruelty.* Fathers should never take out their anger or frustration on their children.

In *Ten Mistakes Parents Make With Teenagers*, Jay Kessler commented on some mistakes fathers can make that lead to anger and hurt the parent/child relationship.

*Mistake #1—Failure to be a consistent model. “Do as I say, not as I do.”*

*Mistake #2—Failure to admit when you are wrong. “I’m the adult. I am right.”*

*Mistake #3—Failure to give honest answers to honest questions. “Because I said so, that’s why”*

*Mistake #4—Failure to let your teen-ager develop a personal identity. “You want to be what?”*

*Mistake #5—Failure to major on the majors and minor on the minors. “This room’s a pigsty!”*

*Mistake #6—Failure to communicate approval and acceptance. “Can’t you do anything right?”*

*Mistake #7—Failure to approve your teen-ager’s friends without making any attempt to get to know them. “Where did you find him?”*

*Mistake #8—Failure to give your teen-ager the right to fail. “You did what?”*

*Mistake #9—Failure to discuss the uncomfortable. “Can we talk about something else?”*

*#10—Failure to take time. “I’m busy right now. Come back later.”*

## **II. Do Lead Your Children**

Paul mentions three elements of leading your children. All three are required for the father's leadership to be successful.

1. *Tenderness.* That idea is found in the phrase “bring them up” (Gk.: *ektrepho*). Literally, this means “to nourish up to maturity, to nurture, bring up, rear up, or provide for with tender care.” How can we develop tenderness?

- (1) *Listen to your children and let them know you respect their feelings.*
- (2) *Be big enough to confess and ask their forgiveness when you are wrong or too harsh.*
- (3) *Be touchable—be generous with hugs.*
- (4) *Affirm the children; encourage them in their efforts.*
- (5) *Listen to the input your spouse gives you about the way you treat each child.*

2. *Discipline.* Fathers are to bring up their children in the “training” (Gk.: *paideia*) or “discipline” of the Lord. James Dobson described discipline as the shaping of the will. Among his suggestions for doing this are the following:

- (1) *Define the boundaries before they are enforced. A child needs to know in advance what is acceptable before he is held responsible for it.*
- (2) *When defiantly challenged, respond with confident decisiveness. When a battle of wills occurs, the parent needs to win decisively and confidently.*
- (3) *Distinguish between willful defiance and childish irresponsibility. A child should not be spanked for something that is not willful defiance.*
- (4) *Reassure and teach after the confrontation.*
- (5) *Avoid impossible demands. Never punish for what a child is incapable of doing at the time.*
- (6) *Let love be your guide.*

3. *Instruction.* The word “instruction” (Gk.: *nouthesia*) literally means “to place before the mind.” It refers to verbal instruction or verbal warning. See 1 Samuel 3:11-13 on how Eli failed to do this for his sons.

**4 “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one**

**5 “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.**

**6 “These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.**

**7 “You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.**

**8 “You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.**

**9 “You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.**

**(Deuteronomy 6:4-9)**