

**“Fathers, don’t exasperate your children by coming down hard on them.  
Take them by the hand and lead them in the way of the Master.”  
Ephesians 6:4**

## sermonnotes

### Introduction

This is our last sermon on in our series “All in the Family.” I hope it has prompted us to see our lives and our families as part of God’s plan to build His kingdom here on earth, and shown us our families are integral parts in the expression of God’s loving mercy to a dying world. It is very important that we take care of our families, but it is also important that we do the will of God here on earth. There has been a great crisis in fathering in our country.

- Half of Seattle are between ages 20-44, yet there are fewer children under age five per capita than any US city except San Francisco.
- 1/3 of children are aborted nationally.
- Up to 1/3 of all births do not have a father listed on the birth certificate.

There have been recent feminist writings that even suggest that there is no real function of a dad in a home and that they are not needed to raise emotionally healthy children. Yet other statistics seem to severely mitigate these claims. As for us men that are called by God to be godly leaders in the home, we can no longer leave our children to teachers, day-care workers, or youth pastors to do our job. We have abdicated our roles in the lives of our children and forced our wives to become “super-moms,” creating imbalanced socialization and anemic boys. Our passage today reminds us that fathers are not excused from raising the children they sire, and when they act as though they are, they exasperate their children and create angst ridden and angry adolescences.

### From The Head...

*“Fathers Do Not Provoke/Exasperate Your Children to Anger”*  
“Provoke/Exasperate” = (parorgizo) our word “paroxysm” derives from this word, and has the idea of violent outburst or convulsion. Father’s in the time of this writing had all the authority in the world, including accepting or rejecting their children. When a child was born the baby was laid before the father, and if he picked the child up, the child was accepted into the family--if he didn’t (which was his right), the baby was orphaned and often left to die. This was not uncommon, especially for female babies. Thankfully, fathers do not have that power in a child’s future anymore, but the fact remains; dads still play a huge part in the life of their children.

63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes

--U.S. D.H.H.S., Bureau of the Census

85% of all children that exhibit behavioral disorders come from fatherless homes

--Center for Disease Control

80% of rapists motivated with displaced anger come from fatherless homes

--Criminal Justice and Behavior, Vol. 14, p. 403-26

71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes

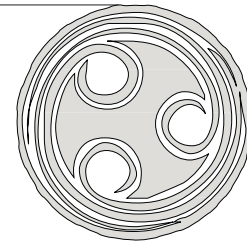
--National Principals Association Report on the State of High Schools

70% of juveniles in state operated institutions come from fatherless homes

--U.S. Dept. of Justice, Special Report Sept., 1988

85% of all youths sitting in prisons grew up in a fatherless home

--Fulton County Georgia jail populations & Texas Dept. of Corrections, 1992



Translated, this means that children from a fatherless home are:

- 5 times more likely to commit suicide
- 32 times more likely to run away
- 20 times more likely to have behavioral disorders
- 14 times more likely to commit rape
- 9 times more likely to drop out of school
- 10 times more likely to abuse chemical substances
- 9 times more likely to end up in a state operated institution
- 20 times more likely to end up in prison

Whether we know it or not, our voices matter and we do shape our children. We exasperate our children when we are absent in their lives. We saw in our segment on women as mothers that the women's prime role is one of nurturing and taking care of her family, but the dad's main role with his children is discipline and instruction.

*"But Bring Them Up In the Training/Discipline and Instruction of the Lord"*

"Bring them up" = (ektrépho) First it is the dad's responsibility to "mature, nurture, and feed his children." Proverbs 23:24 reminds fathers of the joy of rearing wise children. This will take a plan:

Psalms 24:3 = By Wisdom – Understanding – Knowledge a House is Built  
Raising a family with a missional goal takes a missional blueprint. What are your plans to "bring them up?" Our children's problem is not rap music and the liberal media, our problems begin in the fact that we have all too many families that live hopelessly and purposelessly without a plan and a reason for their existence.

*"Training/Discipline"* = (paideia) The word carries the idea of instruction in religious and life matters, with discipline as a means to accomplish the objective. The idea is that the father is responsible to teach their children well and prepare them for life (see Deuteronomy 6:1-4; Proverbs 22:6). It is in this role that the father is most like his heavenly Father (see Hebrews 12:4-10). This form of training includes correction, reproof, and discipline. We as dads aren't to be absent, allowing our children to figure it out by themselves. We need to teach our boys how to be men and our daughters how to be respected by men.

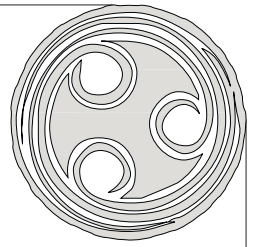
*"Instruction"* = (nouthesia) From mind (noús) and, to place tithemi. To warn, admonish, exhort. (Acts 20:31; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Colossians 1:28; 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 14; 2 Thessalonians 3:15). This word is similar to train/discipline, but this word has more of the idea of an appealing to the rational faculty of a child by encouraging as well as admonishing them logically (not frantically, sarcastically, or hurtfully) to understand the wisdom of godly living. The former is bent more on teaching and training, while this word admonishes the dads to encourage and exhort.

Dads, our role is clear: be your kids teachers and storytellers! This can only be done in proximity, and with a full plan to be that in your kid's life. It begins by loving God, and living under the fear and admonition of the Lord and results in loving their moms as Christ loved the church. It then moves to loving your children enough to be able to encourage, confront, and discipline your children. This is done as they observe your life more so than it is what curriculum you use in family bible studies. Our kids want to believe that there is hope in this world, and they can witness that when they see their dad living out his faith in real tangible ways. As we began this study we said that it is not the family that guarantees stability and brings hope to this world, but it is a family led on a mission by a strong father who loves his family enough to lead, sacrifice, and demonstrate hope by giving an account of the hope that lies within you (see 1 Peter 3:15). Weak men make for weak dads, and in our generation we need men to step to the plate of challenge and by faith allow God to begin to work on the rough areas in our lives. And as a final note on the issue of family mission, we need to stop our insular "safety net" lives while the world goes to hell. We need to expand our idea of family and seek God's face as to how we

... To The Heart

can be dads to those that do not have one. The above statistics are often all too real, and we are called by God to care for the widows and the orphans, so that hope can be expanded into the lives of the many that go to sleep hopeless on a nightly basis.

## sermonnotes



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