

# Fathering 101

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## INTRODUCTION:

For me, being a father has had many challenges and complications: In 1960 we moved from New Zealand to India. In 1977 we moved from India to the USA. At that time we had four children who were 18,16,13, and 11 years old.

In India our children were in a boarding school that was a mixture of British and Asian culture and values. They were in school 10 months per year. We had to do our parenting in 2 months of every year, not 12 months, as most parents have.

I am not boasting when I say this, but be assured the guidelines I've given you **do really work**. My wife and I can truthfully say that our children are our closest adult friends, succeeding in life, know the Lord, and are children of whom we are very proud.

We live in complicated days; we are faced with difficult situations.

There are blended families, with children who are his, hers, ours.

Fathers are married, divorced, single, separated, and some are absent.

IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS, please don't feel guilty, or a failure.

I'm here to give you HOPE!

GUIDELINES: As we look at these guidelines, even if you are not a father, you will be able to glean some principles that will encourage and enrich your personal relationships.

## GUIDELINES

### 1. Maintain a Close Relationship with the Lord:

**“Be an example” (1 Tim 4:12).**

BE CHRISTLIKE. The only example of their Heavenly Father your children have is YOU!

Young people can readily see through adults, especially when adults do not practice what they preach. Be a good example of what a Christian IS, and not just of what a Christian SAYS.

### 2. Maintain a Close Relationship with Your Wife:

**“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her” (Eph 5:25).**

**“Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them” (Col 3:19).**

Let your children see love and romance, and the fact that you have dates with your wife.

Your children are learning how to treat a member of the opposite sex by observing how you speak to your wife; how you interact with her.

Be an example of grace, patience, and manners. Treat your wife like your princess; that’s how they will treat their wives when they get married.

Remember, you are the only living example of CHRIST and HIS CHURCH. How He loves His Church, and gave Himself for it, is what they see in your home in your relationship with your wife.

### 3. Maintain a Close Relationship with Your Children:

**“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” (Eph 6:4 -- *The Message*).**

Don’t hesitate to tell your children you love them.

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You live a BUSY LIFE ... but make time for your family.

Do not let your job or outside interests rob you of those premium moments that can enrich your life and the lives of your family.

Choose recreational activities in which your wife and children can be included.

#### 4. Practice the Art of Listening:

**“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God” (Jas 1:19,20).**

Show your children that you really care by listening patiently to them. This does not mean you have to agree with their viewpoint, but it DOES mean you heard what they were saying in an atmosphere that was not sparked with emotional outbursts.

In discussions in which one or both parties are angry, neither is really hearing the other person.

#### 5. Discipline with Love and Encouragement:

**“Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged” (Col 3:21).**

**“Fathers, do not provoke or irritate or fret your children -- do not be hard on them or harass them; lest they become discouraged and sullen and morose and feel inferior and frustrated; do not break their spirit” (Col 3:21 -- *Amplified*).**

**“Discipline your children; you’ll be glad you did -- they’ll turn out delightful to live with” (Prov 29:17 -- *The Message*).**

Never ever punish physically, or verbally, at the peak of your anger. DON’T RAISE VOICE. Emotional outbursts make young children afraid, and cause older children to want to leave home.

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Don't only rebuke children for their failures.

Praise them for their accomplishments. Encourage them for their good attitudes and manners.

Verbal praise and a hug works wonders for children (& adults too, I think).

### 6. Encourage Your Children to Excel in Seven Areas of Life:

**“Seek to excel” (1 Cor 14:12).**

**(i) Relationship with God**

**(ii) Family Life**

**(iii) Church Life**

**(iv) Education**

Take a genuine interest in their studies. Read to them from a young age. Be extremely careful and restrictive about TV ... how much and what they watch.

**(v) Music**

**(vi) Sport (health)**

**(vii) Financial Responsibility**

Many parents who grew up in humble circumstances are tempted to try to give their children everything they never had as a child ...

We can, and should, teach them at an early age, the value of

- \* Hard work
- \* Credit and debt
- \* tithes and offerings
- \* Being generous

### 7. Nurture Each Child's Individual Personality:

**“Train up (‘catechize’ - *King James Version* -margin) in the way he should go [and in keeping with his individual gift or bent], and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Prov 22:6 -- *Amplified*).**

No two children are alike.

Resist the temptation to compare one child with another.

Note the unique gifts and interests in each child, and encourage their development. Study motivational gifts (Romans 12:6-8), and learn to recognize them in your children.

## CONCLUSION:

How does your HEAVENLY FATHER treat you?

Let us seek to be LIKE HIM!