

What is the role of man in life? How can men honor God as role models for their family? Genesis 1:27 says “So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” In essence, we were created in God’s image and therefore we should find out what it is that God stands for, in other words what does He requires from us.

While our primary responsibility is to love God with all our hearts, what better example can a man be to his family if he honors God through his life, starting with Paul’s statement of Eph 5:25; “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her. After all, the father must be a role model to his family by example from the heart.

A father must also be a provider as Paul says in 1 Tim 5:8, “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

Since God has put the man as the head of the family, it obviously was not that he be a dictator, but rather a role model after our heavenly Father, so that his family also follows God’s desire for the role of the wife, and the children to become as God so desires for them. What’s more?

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One important responsibility of fathers is to train his children to become honest, responsible and God fearing adults. That means a father must train by instruction and example, like a seed planted at a young age that will produce fruit in its time. It is a most serious responsibility fathers have, so as to bring up his children along God's Word.

Because of our fallen nature, children do not always follow the path they are taught. That's why fathers are enjoined to discipline them. Prov 13:24 says, "He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly." Very importantly, discipline is not to be given in anger or violence, but rather out of love for them, so they become responsible and loving adults.

Heb 12:11 says, "No chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it." The warning to fathers is this: "Chasten your son while there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction." (Prov 19:18) Col 3:21 adds, "Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged."

Let's realize that discipline isn't meant to punish, but rather train and encourage our children.

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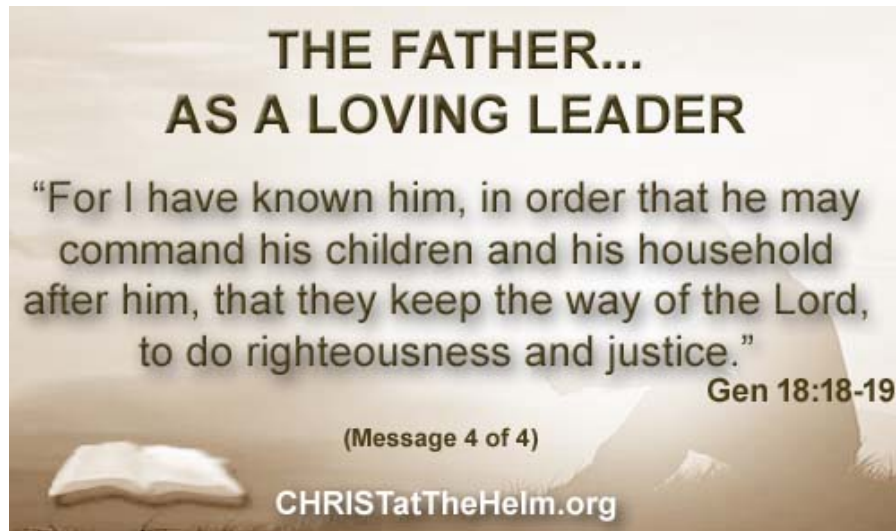
While fathers are to be leading their family by example, they must also have an understanding heart. A father's leadership responsibility implies the desire to lead his family on the path of life to honor God.

If discipline is necessary to correct the behavior of a child, we must remember that it must be carried out with compassion. Psalm 103:13 says, “As a father pities *his* children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him.” In other words, God does use discipline for us, yet is most compassionate as He desires the best outcomes for our growth.

Paul in 1 Thess 2:10-11 said, “You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children.” In essence, he exhorted Christians in the same manner fathers are enjoined to instruct their children to follow the righteous path for their lives. The story of the prodigal son in Luke 15:20 illustrates that, “But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.”

How's our compassionate heart right now towards our family?

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God has decreed that the man be the leader of his family. Why God chose the man to be the leader has to do with His sovereignty and wisdom. However, leadership has its demands and responsibilities, and requires that a man also be himself lead by the Higher Authority of the Word of God.

Deut 6:6-7 shows us the responsibilities fathers have towards their family; “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.” Obviously, fathers must lead by example, therefore requiring they possess the knowledge of the Word of God, and live accordingly so they can teach their children.

Paul in Eph 6:4 put it this way: “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” Psalm 127:3-5 crowns it this way: “Behold, children *are* a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb *is* a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so *are* the children of one’s youth. Happy *is* the man who has his quiver full of them.”

True leadership is carried out through inspiration and compassion!

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