



IN HIS IMAGE

SERMON BLOG

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In His Image: Understanding God's Blueprint for Fatherhood

The statistics paint a sobering picture of fatherhood in America today. 23% of children in the United States live with a single parent, significantly higher than the global average. About 18.3 million children live without a father figure at home, with 80% of single-parent households headed by mothers. Roughly 41% of children are born to unwed mothers, increasing to 53% for women under 30.

These numbers aren't just statistics—they reflect real consequences. Children from fatherless homes face higher poverty rates, academic difficulties, behavioral and mental health issues, increased risk of homelessness and suicide, and higher rates of criminal activity.

What Does a Godly Father Look Like?

Genesis 1:26 tells us that God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." As fathers, we are to reflect God's qualities. But what does that look like in practical terms?

The parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15 gives us a perfect example. The father in this story represents God Himself, providing us with a blueprint for godly fatherhood.

How Can Fathers Be Providers Like God?

The text shows us that the father had an estate and wealth. As men, our first instruction is to be providers. We must have the resources to take care of our families properly.

This means:

Working hard for our families

Sacrificing our wants for our family's needs

Doing what is required regardless of circumstances

Preparing for our family's future

Adjusting our lifestyles when necessary

Having vision and planning ahead

There's a critical distinction between "getting money" and building wealth. Getting money is temporary, while wealth is generational. As fathers, we should focus on creating lasting resources for our families.

What Does It Mean to Train Your Children?

The prodigal son "came to himself," indicating he knew better than what he was doing. This reveals he had a foundation of knowing right from wrong—he had been trained.

Fathers must train up children in the way they should go. Training involves teaching particular skills or behaviors through practice and instruction over a long period of time. This is different from simply telling children what to do.

This is why living in the same home is so important. Training takes place over time, while telling is a one-time thing that doesn't work as effectively.

Why Is Stability So Important in Fatherhood?

The prodigal son returned home because there was structure and stability there. His father hadn't moved while he was gone—the son went back to the same place he had left.

As men, we must provide structure and stability in our homes and lives. Constant moving and changing represents instability, which can be viewed as untrustworthiness. Our children need to know they can count on us to be there.

How Should Fathers Show Love and Compassion?

When the father saw his son returning, he ran to him, embraced him, and kissed him. He showed compassion because he knew his son had already experienced the consequences of his actions.

As fathers, we cannot punish children who have already lived through the punishment of their mistakes. Instead, we must:

Love them

Embrace them

Show compassion

Let them know it's going to be all right

Retrain if necessary

Guide again if needed

The father didn't celebrate his son's mistakes—he celebrated his son's growth and return. We must be encouragers who celebrate progress and growth in our children.

When Should Fathers Discipline vs. Protect?

In the parable, the father disciplined the older brother who was prideful, while celebrating and protecting the younger brother who returned with humility and repentance.

This teaches us that discipline isn't always about the actions but about the mindset behind them. We must understand our children's mindsets to know when to discipline and when to protect.

Sometimes we need to discipline our children for their actions while also protecting them from others who may have wronged them. It's about balance and wisdom.

What Does Being Involved in Your Child's Life Look Like?

Being involved means:

Attending their events

Knowing their teachers

Knowing their friends

Understanding their activities

Building relationships with their guidance counselors

Tracking their academic progress

If you're not living in the same home as your children, you must go above and beyond to stay involved and informed about what's happening in their lives.

How Does Marriage Impact Fatherhood?

The statistics show that marriage makes a difference. Living under one roof makes a difference. Having one last name makes a difference.

In the 1960s, about 67% of people in our communities were married. Now it's about 25%. This regression has led to fewer homeowners and less stability.

The divine order according to Scripture is:

God as the ultimate authority

Christ as subordinate to God and head of the church

Man as the head of the wife, mirroring Christ's relationship with the church

Wife submitting to her husband's leadership (not inferiority, but a divinely appointed role)

Children obeying their parents

This doesn't mean inequality—it means different roles. We must play our positions within the family structure.

Life Application

As fathers, we are called to live in God's image, reflecting His qualities in how we lead our families. This week, consider these questions:

In what ways am I providing for my family beyond just financial support?

Am I actively training my children or just telling them what to do?

Do I provide stability and structure that my children can count on?

How do I balance discipline and protection in my parenting?

Am I fully involved in my children's lives, especially if I don't live with them?

Am I fulfilling my God-given role in my family according to Scripture?

Whether you're a father, a father figure, an uncle, a mentor, or a man of God, your actions should reflect God's character. We have work to do, but by following God's blueprint for fatherhood, we can overcome the statistics and raise children who thrive.