

American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont, MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org
Encouraging Christians to guard their hearts February 2019

The 5 Duties of Every Dad

by Dave Willis



"Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes." Nehemiah 4:14

I love being a Dad.

It's by far the hardest job I've ever had, but despite the diapers, tantrums, spills, stains, arguments, and backtalk, I wouldn't trade it for the world! I love my kids more than I can describe in words, and I recognize that they are a gift from God. They bring me joy each new day, and raising them is one of the most sacred duties that could ever be entrusted to me.

Because I love them, I want what's best for them, but I'm painfully aware of

my own flaws and inadequacies. I desperately want to get fatherhood right, but we live in a world with so much temptation and chaos that it's hard to know where to start.

Thankfully, God knew how tough parenthood would be so he gave us a roadmap to follow. The five principles below are taken straight from the Bible and I'm convinced that if we will apply these to our own lives, our families will thrive! These principles could apply to Moms too, but I'm focusing this one specifically to my fellow Dads.

5 sacred duties of every dad:

1. Live a life worth imitating.

Every Dad (including me) wants our word to be the final word. We want our kids to behave simply, "Because I said so!"

The problem is that our kids are watching our actions much more closely than they're listening to our words. Watching my toddler try to put on my

deodorant or my nine-year-old practicing shaving with my razor reminds me that my kids are going to want to do what I'm doing (whether it's good or bad). That raises the bar for me!

Make sure your words and your actions are lining up and choose to live a life of integrity. Your kids will base their ideas of integrity on your example, so eliminate any habits from your life you wouldn't want your children to have someday. ...

"I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received." Ephesians 4:1

2. Love their Mom.

One of the greatest gifts you can give your children is the security that comes from seeing their mom loved and protected by you. How you treat your wife will set the relational tone for the entire home and will ultimately teach your boys how they should respect (or disrespect) women and you are teaching your daughters what they should expect

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from men.

Loving your wife also means protecting your purity. We live in a sex-saturated culture and we need to prepare our children to overcome temptation. Looking at porn or checking out every woman who walks by is a violation of your vow to be faithful and it will undermine the sacredness of your marriage. Practice purity and your kids will be much more likely to do the same.

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” Ephesians 5:25

3. Discipline them.

There’s much more to discipline that just punishment (although punishment is sometimes an important aspect of it). Our children are hungry for healthy boundaries and they’re looking to you to protect and enforce those boundaries. It’s not our job to be a domineering drill sergeant, but it is our job to make sure there’s order,

structure, positive affirmation for wise choices and negative consequences for poor choices.

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4

4. Love them unconditionally.

There are a lot of messed up adults in the world who have “Daddy issues,” because they were raised in an environment where their fathers’ love was either absent or conditional and based upon performance (which isn’t really love). By your words and your actions, make sure your children are constantly aware of your love for them. They’re not perfect and neither are you, but love is perfect, so show your love as often as you can.

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.” 1 Peter 4:8

5. Follow the only Perfect Father.

If these were in order, this would actually be number one! The only perfect Fa-

ther is God, and He models unconditional love for us and then calls us to do the same for our kids. The more you love God, the more capacity He will give you to love your family. When you’re following Him, you will always be headed in the right direction! We’re not perfect, but God is, and He’ll be by your side every step of the way.

“Choose this day whom you will serve...But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15

None of us will get all this right all the time, so when you blow it, own it. Apologize and move forward with grace and confidence. On those days when you feel like you’re not getting through, remember that the process is slow, but the impact you’re having will endure for generations to come. Keep creating new memories, praying, striving, encouraging, disciplining, enjoying and loving those kids and remember that each moment with them is a gift!

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