

# American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 [www.americandecency.org](http://www.americandecency.org)  
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart June 2026

## Fathers, Love Your Duty!

by Steve Huston



It's well-documented that children suffer when there is no father in the home; boys and girls need both a dad and a mom. The many troubles that plague children without fathers in the home follow them into adulthood, hindering them greatly in many ways, including difficulty in raising their own children, which often becomes a hurt which is passed on to succeeding generations.

What of those homes which have both a father and mother in them? The question I ask is: Are they present and engaged? When I was young, the problem most often talked about was "workaholic" fathers; they were part of the family unit but often not home, engaged in work, hanging with buddies or deeply engrossed in television –

having little time for their children and the duty of raising them. This generation's typical battle is lack of engagement due to increased screen time: video games, chat rooms, streaming shows, social media, etc. These distractions attack Christian and non-Christian families alike.

What of a father's God-given duty? What of his intentional godly engagement with his children and then his grandchildren? Is taking them to church and living a "good" life before them enough? No! A thousand times NO! As Charles Spurgeon admonished, "Let no Christian parents fall into the delusion that the Sunday School is intended to ease them of their personal duties. The first and most natural condition of things is for Christian parents to train up their own children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Our period of direct influence and training with them is too short and eternity is too long for us not

to be engaged and loving our God-ordained fatherly duties. Our time on earth is too short and eternity too long to not love God with all that we are and to do all we can to pass on the torch of faith – trusting God's grace to accomplish this tremendous task – building, training, and enabling a new generation of contenders of the faith.

There are many who are diligent in training or educating their children to be successful in sports, academics, or even in social acceptance among great men, but who truly brings up their child in the fear, reverence, and acceptance of God? Too many are lackadaisical on this point. We live in an age of "good enough," which, sadly, neglects the holiness, power, and worthiness of God. Have we forgotten the holy character of God and the purpose of our created being by His hand? "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and

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were created.” (Rev. 4:11) Might we successfully in-grain this into our children’s mind and character; may we remind them of this often.

Yes, God is loving, full of grace and mercy, but He is also full of judgment, wrath, and has made clear His expectations. So, as J.C. Ryle urged, “Train up your children well...train well for earth, and train well for heaven; train them for God, for Christ, and for eternity.” God **will** receive glory from His creation, either through their willing and exuberant life of praise and holiness or through the destruction of those who have made Him their enemy. Let us lovingly encourage and caution both our young and our adult children.

An important, if not often neglected, part of training up children in the way they should go is discipline – meaning both corporal and in becoming diligent. This must be handled with gentleness,

care, and example, lest we exasperate them. It’s done lovingly because a soul is at stake and we desire to see them have an eternal home in Heaven.

John Angell James, a puritan with a real pastor’s heart, gives warning to dad’s that we should carefully heed: “*A father may deliver the best instructions. But if he does not by discipline eradicate evil tempers, correct bad habits, repress rank corruptions, nothing excellent can be looked for. He may be a good prophet and a good priest; but if he be not also a good king, all else is vain.*”

Even the godliest of fathers is still a man, one who is in desperate need of God’s help in all areas, particularly so when it comes to the vitally important task of governing his family. May this small portion of George Swinnock’s “Father’s Prayer” resound with us and find it flying heavenward from our own lips as we fall in love with our God-ordained duty:

“I [pray] that the Word of Christ may dwell richly in my heart and house that my whole family

may have their set meals every day of this spiritual food. How can I expect that children... who know not the God of their fathers, should serve Him with perfect hearts? (1 Chron. 28:9) Alas! How often are their ignorant hearts (like dark cellars abounding in vermin) full of sin! O that I might so talk of the Word of God in my house, when I lie down and when I rise up, that it may be written upon the posts of my house and on my gates (Deut. 6:7-8), that I may so often water the young plants in it that their first acquaintance may be acquaintance with God, and [that] from their childhood they may know the Holy Scriptures and be wise ‘unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus’ (2 Tim. 3:15)...Though others labor to leave their children rich, let my endeavor be to leave mine [godly]. Lord, enable me so to teach them Thy trade in their youth that they may not depart from it when they are old (Prov. 22:6), that their young years well led may be like the sweetness of a rose, whose smell remaineth in the dried leaves.”



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