

It's Not Father's Day (But You're Still the Dad)

Part 4: Teaching Moments

God assigned the primary role of leadership and discipline in the home to fathers. Of course, mothers are not excluded, just not given the primary responsibility. God's expectation is for parents to teach their children about God and to train them according to God's word.

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)

The purpose of all instruction and discipline is to instill useful principles in the minds and hearts of our children for good living. More specifically, our goal as parents should be to instill within our children a sense of reverence for God toward a lifetime of devotion to Him in preparation for Christ's return.

What can a Christian parent do to carry out this instruction???

While some families may choose to have periodic organized times for devotional or Bible study, we must all take advantage of the daily opportunities that arise. The following are just a few examples of unforced, natural teaching moments.

When fixing the car you may have an opportunity to mention federal and state regulations which you may not like, but that you follow because you honor the laws of the land as scripture teaches.

When teaching your daughter how to keep a checkbook you might have an opportunity to say something about God's blessings and the value of honoring Him in a weekly contribution or by financially assisting someone in need.

In the evening while on a fishing outing you might pause to enjoy the majesty of God's creation.

After hosting friends for an evening in your home you might say something about God's teaching on hospitality or fellowship.

After an exhaustive, yet ultimately successful search for an important lost item, you might be able to impress upon the heart of your child God's undying love and compassion for the lost. Consider also what might be taught when that valuable item is never found!

When your children observe excessively poor behavior in other children, you might be able to teach something about discipline.

When finances are tight and you cannot participate in a desired activity, you might be able to teach something about financial responsibility or contentment.

After experiencing a major disappointment you might be able to teach something about the nature of this life and the enduring hope of everlasting life with God.

After having applied effective discipline you might have a opportunity to reinforce your love for your child, in spite of the wrong that was done. In that moment you might also be able to teach about God's mercy and forgiveness.

If we intend to discipline and instruct our children in the Lord, we must have the teachings of God on our heart. So, we must be people who use God's word to govern our lives. In addition, we must be constantly aware of teaching opportunities. Then, when those situations arise, we must take advantage of the opportunity.

And finally, if we are to discipline and instruct our children in the Lord, we must insure that the things being taught are already being demonstrated in our own lives.

Mark Stinnett