

Christian Fathers

Bernie Kamps

One of the goals of Christian fathers is to rear their children to the point of maturity, when he no longer is the controlling and ruling factor in their lives, but they control and rule their own lives through their own new man and the grace of God. In the book titled *The Family* by Palmer and Alexander, on page 94 and 95, they write:

“Last of all among parental provocations is the unwise retention of authority when it should gradually give way to persuasion. The youth of sixteen cannot be ruled as a boy of six years and the parent has missed his chance who is not able, quietly and by degrees, to substitute influence in the place of authority. Of course, wisdom and tact are required in effecting the change.”

Being an example is the key for a Christian father. Loud words, threats, strong verbal instruction reaching demolition decibel levels only serve to drive your lovely children away.

As we get started in this article discussing Christian fathers I will be directing my comments only to the father. I have been asked to keep my article narrow in scope. Much can and should be said of godly mothers, but we will leave that field for someone else to cultivate and sow.

God has been pleased to place the fathers as the head of the home. God in so doing, has placed a staggering responsibility upon us, as well as a sacred trust. He has also given us a truly rich calling and equipped us with His Word and Spirit. Being a Christian father is a pleasure. The requisite of a godly example is a motivation to a sanctified walk. The Lord in His wisdom uses this walk as a pathway to help enter in at the strait gate.

In order to teach, you must be taught. In order to demand obedience, one must obey his own Lord. We who are or will be fathers, contemplate for a moment our calling. We must guard God's sons and daughters from the enemy. Let us make sure we do not invite him into the home. Do not allow Satan to influence your offspring, but guard them with a vengeance! The temptations of the world are great. Equip them to do battle. Do not become unfocused and weak in your home, and do not allow the world to entice with its music or fornication on the television. Put away your music of ten or twenty years ago and demand a life of sanctification for yourself and your children. Live a life of living sacrifice even as Job, who prayed daily for his children. Jehovah will protect His teens from godlessness through quiet conversation, rules, discipline and discussions of why some temptations are just too great even to get close to them. Godly fathers put their arms around their children and explain why the sensitivity to even the appearance of evil is so important. (I Thessalonians 5:22)

The value and importance of praise and encouragement by a father must be recognized and exercised. Fathers must actively build a close and sweet relationship with their children. They should enjoy one another's company. If children only hear commands and reprimands similar to the military, a father fails. If he gives his children firm direction in love, as well as encouraging words with frequency, God blesses. Scripture warns fathers of provoking their children to wrath. A father can be guilty in two ways. First, as a tyrant, and second, being inconsistent. Abraham Kuyper writes in his book, *When Thou Sittest in Thine House*, page 120:

“You can mirror God’s fatherhood in our own fatherhood before your children in a beautiful and striking way, but you can also do it in an unsightly and false way. Then arise those bitter conditions that you do not entice honor and love from your children, but rouse antagonism in them, strife between dislike of your person and the honor which they owe you as their father. The Holy Apostle calls this provoking one’s children. To demand you must honor me and meanwhile give them occasion to despise you, or at least have no respect for you.”

Christian fathers cannot be selfish or walk in spiritual laziness without reaping grief and pain on himself and his children. Yet God is good to those who are faithful in His vineyard. The reward of a covenantal walk is a home filled with godly children and grandchildren united in one hope. Sons and daughters who communicate freely with their father, who respect and honor him, who love him, who forgive him of his faults do so because they know that their father desires to walk a sanctified life, and he had taught them to forgive by example. Fathers and would be fathers pray for the grace to be faithful examples.

Bernie is a father of 6 children and a member of Grandville Protestant Reformed Church.

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