

A Father's Role

"Father's, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged." –

Colossians 3:21

Ephesians 6:24 says, "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." But, unfortunately, a lot of fathers are missing in action these days. It was unheard of in first-century for a father to abandon his responsibilities in his home. Nowadays, it seems to be almost the norm. We are losing fathers at an unprecedented rate in our culture. One expert said we are in danger of becoming a fatherless society.

Why are fathers so important? To a large degree, a child's view of God is based on their view of their father. You will see a lot of times that people compare their relationship with their earthly father to the one with their heavenly Father. I know this puts a lot of pressure on men, but it's the truth: dads are earthly representatives of God. And God is loving. God is caring. God is nurturing. At the same time, God is just, righteous, and holy.

So what are we to do? We are not to provoke them. In fact, the word *provoke* speaks of a repeated pattern of treatment that causes the child to have anger and resentment that boils over to outright hostility. Instead of provoking them, we are to bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. This could also be translated "to nourish and feed." Another translation says, "Let them be kindly cherished."

So help your children come to Jesus and develop their own relationship with God. And re-member that fathers are representatives of God to their kids – that is why their role is so vital in the home.

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