

Four Duties For Dads
Ephesians 6:4

Russell Cook
West End Church of Christ
Knoxville, TN

1. All of us need to come back to a biblical theology of parenthood.
2. Before we unpack this verse, I want to begin by giving some background.
3. The Bible calls Christian fathers to a different standard. In this passage, we are given four duties for dads.

I. Fathers Do Not Exasperate Their Children.

- A. The first responsibility is negative. We are told to **“not exasperate our children.”**
 1. The Greek word translated “exasperate” means “to enrage.”
 2. Paul puts it this way in **Colossians 3:21: “Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.”**
- B. There are a few common ways that fathers can exasperate their children:
 1. Overprotection, Overindulgence, Favoritism, Unrealistic Goals, Discouragement, Neglect, and Excessive Discipline

II. Fathers Nurture Their Children.

- A. The word “instead” shows a contrast between what we should not do and what we do.
 1. **Proverbs 29:15** says, **“A child left to himself brings shame to his mother.”**
- B. Parents aren’t raising children; they are raising adults.

III. Fathers Provide Discipline.

- A. The word “discipline” is translated “training” in some of your Bibles and carries with it the idea of a rebuke or a warning. Literally, it means to place before the mind.
 1. **Proverbs 13:24** provides a strong challenge to us dads: **“He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.”**
 2. **Hebrews 12:11** says, **“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”**
- B. It’s important to understand the difference between discipline and punishment.

IV. Fathers Provide Instruction.

- A. The last thing we are called to do is provide instruction “in the Lord.”
- B. We have a problem today of dads not being engaged with their families.

Conclusions:

Dads, if you leave this service feeling discouraged by your own failures and inconsistencies, let me remind you of 3 things:

1. There are no perfect fathers, except our Heavenly Father.
2. We can all be better dads if we will work at it.
3. We do not father alone. That’s why we need to pray daily for our kids.