

The Do's and Don'ts of Dads

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[0 : 00] If you have your Bibles, I want you to turn to 2 Samuel 18. Put a finger there, and then 1 Chronicles 22.

Hardest job in the world is being a parent. You can't clock out. You better not. And the rewards of it come a lot later sometimes than you anticipate.

But I don't believe there's anything that America needs more than Christian parents, particularly men of God, who will lead their families in God's will.

I believe we live in a country that's feeling the effects of men who've played enough of their games and it's time to get in the game and be an active participant that makes a difference for the sake of Christ.

That is for men of God. Now we need men to be an active part in the church. We need men to lead in the church.

[1 : 18] We need men of God, not men consumed by their own power, not by their own way, but consumed with the Holy Spirit of God.

And we need men of God in the workplace. We need to be salt of the earth and flavoring our world for the cause of Christ, preserving a godly heritage and healing a warped people and to be light in the world, shining light in the midst of darkness through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If you ought to know what the hope of America is, I'll tell you what it is. It's the gospel of Jesus Christ. The only thing that will save us is salvation itself. And people living out their faith outwardly and openly.

We need to make a difference where God has planted us. Get in the game and see lives change. But what you do at work is not my first concern.

It matters. I promise you. My concern, and the one God bore into my heart in preparation for this, is men, what you do at home. My concern is who you are for your wife and your kids.

[2 : 29] Do you model a godly leadership example to respect? Or are you the old guy that's sitting on the bench watching it all go by? And I believe, as I've told you through the life of Abraham, that God has placed people's lives in Scripture for us to learn from their mistakes.

And to learn from their triumphs. But what a waste it would be to have all of this information about the lives of all the people that are mentioned in Scripture and not learn from them.

And I believe a lot can be learned from King David. King David of Israel was immensely successful at a lot of things. He was a successful king.

He was a successful general. He was a successful financier. He was a successful writer. He was a successful builder.

When he was king, he brought Israel to its greatest years. As a general, the borders of that country grew beyond anything they had ever known. As a financier, he amassed a great treasury.

[3 : 37] As a writer, he wrote most of the book of Psalms. As a builder, he established Jerusalem. And he dreamed of building the temple.

And when God chose his son Solomon to build it instead, David donated close to \$100 million to the cause.

He was a great man. But in his most important role, he had a lot of failures. And the evidence of that is seen over and over again.

41 chapters of the Bible deal with David's life. 15 of them deal with his childhood and his rise to prominence. 26 of them deal with his reign.

And 16 of those 26 deal with his troubles. He fell in love with another man's wife and had her husband killed in battle. His eldest son raped his own half-sister.

[4 : 38] One of his other sons killed the guilty son. And then that son left the country to escape his father. Two years later, he came back to overthrow his father, David.

And David fled for his life. While he was gone, Absalom disgraced his father's household. Embarrassed him. And David fought back.

And in the fight, Absalom was killed. And the spiral of sin all came down on top of David. And there's a passage in 2 Samuel 18, verse 33, that just stands out to me.

When it all came on top of David, in our passage, he is mourning his son. And it says this in 2 Samuel 18, verse 33. And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept.

And as he went, he said, oh, my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom. But I had died instead of you. Oh, Absalom, my son, my son.

[5 : 51] Men, you can't control the actions of your children. And the older they get, the harder it is. But surely David realized that when he said these words that he could have done a lot more. And so based on the life of David as a father, I want to give you some do's and don'ts this morning, men.

First is this. Do make time for your children. A lot of things that David had to do. He ran a country. He fought for a country. He expanded the borders of a country.

It's hard to run a country in its greatest years. But if it takes all you've got, it's taking too much.

David didn't make time for his family.

But you don't have to be running an empire to run short on time. Because there's a lot in this world that grabs at us. But if it takes all you've got, it takes too much.

Whoever told dads that making a living was enough was a messenger of the evil one. The greatest thing you can do for your kids is offer yourself.

[7 : 08] Do make time for your children. Second thing is this. Don't live an inconsistent Christian life. Don't live an inconsistent Christian life. Sadly, David is known as much for his mistakes as his victories.

And even with all of that, with God's forgiveness, David was still able to accomplish many things. But his sins didn't come without a cost. And when we sin, don't be mistaken, if we repent, God will wash us clean.

He holds it against us no more. But the ramifications are there. What you do and the damage you cause in the midst of your sin sticks.

I mean, you get mad and kill a man. Yes, God will forgive you for that. That man's family may forgive you for that. But the man's still dead.

The ramifications are still there. If you commit adultery, you may be able to sustain your family.

[8 : 15] You may not lose everything. But the trust has been breached. It stings.

It sticks. The ramifications are there. The things that shame David's life show his inconsistency. It's not what you preach unless you practice it.

Your kids aren't listening near as much as they're watching. You can't teach more character than you have. I mean, it's basic things. Any advice without example is tragic.

And it's usually rejected, honestly. Three of the four sons of David demonstrated their father's sins. A failing dad says one thing and does another.

Makes one commitment while breaking the other. You don't want to be a failure as a Christian father. And you will if you say you love Jesus, but you live like you don't.

[9 : 15] They know the difference. If nobody else does, the household knows the difference. Don't live an inconsistent Christian life.

Third thing is this. Do discipline your children. Somebody's going to get their feathers raised down here. It's all right. We live in an age that doesn't support discipline.

Because it's really not our fault. It's always something else. But we have a hard time figuring out what's wrong with our society.

At the same time, we have a hard time with discipline. When a child misbehaves, you discipline that child. Years ago. Years ago.

I love what Tommy Bowden said. I heard him say. He said, we didn't have time out when I was growing up. Time out was the time I went to the next room to get a belt for my dad. And he said, you can do it any way that works.

[10 : 27] But I was raised giving a spanking. I raised mine like that. And I just want you to know it can still be done like that. I don't believe in beating kids.

But I do believe in finding out what works. And make sure your child knows what's right and wrong. And that there's ramifications when they do wrong. 1 Kings 1, verse 6.

Says that when dealing with his son, Adoniah. It says his father had never rebuked him by asking. Why do you behave as you do?

Did you get that? David, for whatever he was caught up with, never questioned the actions of his child.

The message, which I do not consider a translation of scripture. But it does help us to understand it sometimes better.

[11 : 41] Says his father had spoiled him rotten as a child. Never once reprimanding him. Adoniah went on to try and overthrow his dad.

So, men, if you want to be a sorry dad, never bother disciplining your children. Never give them direction. Never enforce their need to follow your direction.

David's son Solomon said it best in Proverbs 29, verse 17, when he said, discipline your son and he'll give you peace. He'll bring delight to your soul. Do discipline children.

Fourth thing is this. Don't miss the opportunity to pave the way for the next generation. David messed up a bunch.

But one thing he did was quite a testimony. As David drew near to the end of his life, God told him that he would not be the builder of the house of God.

[12 : 42] David built a nice place for himself. And when he got in that house and enjoyed all the amenities of that new house, he got convicted that he needed to build God's house.

And when he began to try to work toward that, God told him that he was not to be the one to build it. That his son was to be the one to build it.

And I want you to notice what he does. It's in 1 Chronicles 22, beginning in verse 1. It says this. Then David said, Here shall be the house of the Lord God, and here the altar of burnt offering for Israel.

David commanded to gather together the resident aliens who were in the land of Israel. And he set stone cutters to prepare dress stone for building the house of God.

David also provided great quantities of iron for nails for the doors of the gates and for clamps, as well as bronze in quantities beyond weighing, and cedar timbers without number.

[13 : 56] For the Sidonians and the Tyrenians brought great quantities of cedar to David. But David said, Solomon, My son is young and is inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the Lord must be exceedingly magnificent of fame and glory throughout all lands.

I will therefore make preparation for it. So God provided materials in great quantity. So David, excuse me, provided materials in great quantity before his death.

Then he called for Solomon, his son, and charged him to build a house for the Lord, the God of Israel. David said to Solomon, My son, I have it in my heart to build a house to the name of the Lord my God.

But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, You have shed much blood and have waged great wars. You shall not build a house to my name, because you shed so much blood. Before me on the earth. Behold, a son shall be born to you who shall be a man of rest.

I will give him rest from all of his surrounding enemies. For his name shall be Solomon, and I'll give him peace and quiet to Israel in his days. He shall build a house for my name.

[15 : 05] He shall be my son, and I'll be his father, and I will establish his royal throne in Israel forever. Now, my son, the Lord be with you, so that you may succeed in building the house of the Lord your God, as he has spoken concerning you.

Only may the Lord grant you discretion and understanding, that when he gives you charge over Israel, you may keep the law of the Lord your God. Then you will prosper if you're careful to observe the statutes and the rules of the Lord commanded Moses for Israel.

Be strong and courageous. Fear not, don't be dismayed. With great pains I have provided for the house of the Lord, a hundred thousand talents of gold, a million talents of silver and bronze and iron beyond weighing, for there is so much of it.

Timber and stone too I have provided. To these you must add. You have an abundance of workmen, stone cutters, masons, carpenters, and all kinds of craftsmen, without numbers, skilled in working, gold, silver, bronze, and iron.

Arise and work. The Lord be with you. David paved a path for the next generation to be able to worship and serve the Lord in a greater capacity than he was able to do.

[16:27] He gave generously to a project that he would never see. I want us to always get an understanding of that in the house of the Lord.

Lord, we work hard. We give generously. We do what we do. Sometimes for projects that we may never see.

And thank God for those who've come before us and done it as well. Do you realize that if previous generations hadn't seen the need to have a place like this to worship, we wouldn't be in this place. But they made sacrifices. Made efforts to do that for the next generation. Some of those people that gave generously knew they'd never see it.

They knew they may never be able to witness it, but they gave generously. I want to tell you on a note, a burden I shared with the deacons last month, we're analyzing how we can ramp up and renovate our preschool and children's area to do an even better job of reaching the next generation.

[17:39] Before we pick up a paintbrush or renew a square carpet, it'll all come back to you for approval. But right now, I want you to begin to pray that God will give us clear vision and provide through our building fund the resources that we need to do it right for the next generation, for the honor and the glory of God.

I don't believe what we do in God's name ought to be halfway. I bet when you do projects at home, you try your best to make it right.

And so what we do for the Lord, let's do it to honor the God. Let's do it done right. And he deserves our best. I just ask you to pray.

I'm so thankful for your generosity. I shared a burden with you a couple months ago, three months ago probably, that in the plans of all the renovation that was done on the front of the church and making handicap accessibility throughout the building and providing new bathrooms and all the things that were done, we were mighty close to not being able to borrow any money.

And on top of that, we were able to buy a small used bus to help us in our ministry as well through that fund. And you continue to give.

[19:11] And I am thankful that we will be able to make the final payment. Unless it's something we don't expect, we'll be able to make that final payment without ever borrowing a dime.

But I'll tell you about this project as well as any other. It is not the project to end all projects. And so I encourage you, as God enables you, and as God allows you to give generously, it's never wrong to continue to tithe.

It's always right to do that. And you can always feel free to give above the tithe because I'll tell you what we do. If we take in a surplus at the end of the year, that'll roll over, allow us building fund capacity for future projects.

That's how it works. So you give to the tithe, you give to everything, quite honestly. But if God enables you and burdens you to give in another cause, I want you to know we got things cooking. We got things in the works that we'll present back to you before we ever do it. But we want you to know we're moving forward. And I want to ask you to give generously as God allows you to do that.

[20:30] We'll clarify that vision in the future. But I just couldn't help but think as I read about David and I read about how he prepared for his son, everything that was needed, and then he just said, arise and work.

The Lord be with you. There's something to that, folks. God honors such as that. And I thank God for previous generations, the one before that made sacrifices that we have, and it's now our time. Let's pave the way for the next generation for the honor of God. Men at home, in this church, in this community, don't fail to pave the way for the next generation.

If you want to mess up at being a dad, don't make time for your children. don't lead them by example through a life filled with Christian commitment.

Don't bother to discipline them. And don't leave a legacy paving the way for them to worship. But if that's your decision, don't ever look at your society, don't ever look at your church, and don't ever look at your family and ask the question, why?

[22:02] Because God's placed us here to make a difference for his cause and for his kingdom. With every head bowed and every eye closed, it is my persistent burden that one or more may faithfully attend worship and never give his or her heart to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so each week, I encourage you to secure your personal relationship with Christ by asking him to forgive you of your sins, to come into your life, and to change you from this day forward.

I am thankful that not only will he give you an eternity to live in in heaven with him, but I'm thankful that he'll give you such an uptick in life as Christ put it, life and life more abundantly when you give your heart and life to Christ.

No better way to celebrate Father's Day than to surrender your life to the Father. You've never done that, you do that. Maybe you have, but your life does not reflect that.

There's areas of your life that does not reflect that. You need to make that right today. You can do it where you stand, or you can do it at this altar, or you can do it with a pastor praying for you.

[23 : 19] Either way, I just want you to do what God tells you to do. Maybe God's drawing you to be a part of this church. You've been around, and you've seen what God's doing in the midst of our church.

He's blessing us with a hand of favor, and I'm thankful for that. You want to be a part of that. Feel led to be a part of that. You come, we'll guide you in that. You might be here, and you've made a personal decision for him, but you've never made that public through baptism.

That is the first step of obedience, of being a believer. And it'll be a hindrance in your life if you've never done that. So I encourage you to be obedient and follow the Lord. I don't know what God's telling you, but I know you'll never be satisfied unless you do what he tells you.

So let's just surrender to him. Lord Jesus, I ask that you'll bless every home in this place. I ask, dear God, that you'll give each one of us the direction of how we need to fortify, stabilize our families, oh God, in you.

Each one of us, dear God. Lord, I ask today that you'll help us to hear your voice personally, Father, and that we'll respond to you in obedience as you speak to our hearts and lives.

[24 : 25] Lead us right now, dear God. Help us simply to follow you and to trust you. In Jesus' precious name, amen.