

Good and Bad Examples of Fathers in the Bible

by Zac Poonen

This sermon delves into examples of fathers in the Bible, both good and bad, emphasizing the importance of fatherhood and the impact it has on children's lives. It highlights the need for fathers to train up their children in the ways of the Lord, discipline them with love, and set a godly example for them to follow. The sermon also underscores the significance of fathers being responsible, obedient to God's commands, and prioritizing their family life alongside their service in the church.

Scripture: Proverbs 22:6, 1 Timothy 3:4, Ephesians 5:25, Job 1:5, Exodus 4:24, 1 Samuel 2:12, 1 Kings 1:5, Titus 1:6

Topics: "Fatherhood", "Spiritual Leadership"

Description

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Transcript

The Bible gives us not only instruction but also examples, good examples, bad examples. So I thought we could spend a little time looking at some of the examples of fathers. Since today is Father's Day, look at some of the examples of fathers in the Bible, good and bad, continuing on from what we studied a little while ago about our responsibility as fathers.

Well, the first father we can think of, of course, is Adam. And it's very sad to read that his eldest son became a murderer. Of course, Adam didn't have a Bible, he didn't have all the instruction we have, we cannot even compare ourselves with him.

He didn't have the Holy Spirit, he didn't know about Jesus Christ. But yet, I'm sure he knew that murder was wrong. There's a great verse in Proverbs 22, 6, which says, train up a child in the way he should go.

When he is old, he will not depart from it. That means you set his direction from the time he's a child. And as he grows up, particularly when they come into their teenage years, they tend to wiggle and move around a bit, sometimes away from the straight and narrow path, because they think they are adults when

they are still children.

And that can happen during their teenage years, in their 20s. But they'll come out of it if they have had that training in the way they should be going. And when they're old, they will not depart from it.

So don't get discouraged if children go a little bit here and there in their teenage years and 20s. They'll come back. If many don't drift so much, some drift a little.

But we shouldn't be discouraged, because they will come back to it if they've been brought up right. So obviously, Adam didn't take too much care to, you know, a lot of parents I found even in India are very proud of their oldest son, and he was smart, capable, and all that. And well, Adam didn't have any example to follow.

But that was the first sad example of the first son born in the human race was a murderer. But then some years later, see, there are children whose parents were not all that godly, but who still grew up to walk with God. Think of this example in Genesis 5. We read in verse 18 about a man called Jared, who was the father of Enoch.

We don't know much about Jared at all. But Enoch, for 65 years, he didn't walk with God. So obviously, he didn't get much from his father.

But at the age of 65, he had a child, probably first child, maybe he was praying for so many years and never had a child. And at 65 years old, he got a son called Methuselah. And the word Methuselah means at his death, it will come, the judgment.

And Methuselah lived for 969 years. And if you calculate down there, and all the ages are given there, when he was 369 years old, Noah was born. And when Noah was 600, the flood came, Methuselah died just before the flood.

It was a fulfillment. But you know, the thing is, when a child is born, think of this. And God says, name that child, when he dies, judgment will come.

Supposing you had a child like that, and a baby, the name is when he dies, the judgment will come. And every time you call him, hey, come here, when you die, judgment will come. Come here.

And you keep repeating that every day. When you die, judgment will come. Every time your child gets sick, six months old, gets sick, say, hey, is he going to die now? That brought such a fear of judgment into Enoch's heart, that it says here, after that verse 22, he began to walk with God for the next 300 years.

The fear of God. He didn't know anything about the grace of God. That wasn't known in those days.

The fear of God was enough. The fear of God's judgment against sin. And you read in the book of Jude about Enoch prophesying about those things.

And then we see a good example of a father in Noah. We read about Noah, chapter 7, after the ark was constructed. He had preached for 120 years.

And his three sons and their wives had seen their dad preach for 120 years. Nobody get converted. They had a house church, didn't call it a church, a house fellowship, and the house fellowship consisted of eight people.

Noah, his wife, three sons, and their wives. And Noah goes out preaching, preaching, preaching, preaching. Not a single soul is converted.

And every year, there are only eight people in that fellowship. Now, he could have increased the number of that if he had lowered the standards. But we read in 2 Peter, chapter 2, Noah was called a preacher of righteousness.

He preached righteousness. And his children saw that. He preached righteousness.

And because of that, people didn't come. Some of the others may have suggested, this is too high a standard. Noah, you tell people you can't get drunk and you can't commit adultery, you can't murder.

Just the basic old covenant standards and it was too much for people in those days. I mean, if I have a fight with somebody and the guy fights with me, I'm going to kill him. That's it.

And what's there in, if I'm attracted to another woman, it's not my wife, I'm going to commit adultery with her if she's willing. What is that? That's not adultery. The type of logic today people have, the Bible says the last days will be like the days of Noah.

Well, Noah said, I'm not going to lower the standard at all. Sorry. And his son saw a father who would never lower the standard of righteousness, even if nobody came to join their house church.

What an example. And he held on for 120 years. You know, the world existed because of Noah.

Do you know that everyone sitting here, all of us are children of Noah? We are not just children of Adam. We are also children of Noah because everybody between Adam and Noah was killed or died. When I get to heaven, I want to shake Noah's hand, say, brother, thank you for being faithful.

Not only because of that, because I'm because of that I was born and I could come to heaven, be a child of God, but also because your example has been a tremendous challenge to me through all these years. If the last days are going to be like the days of Noah, God needs families like Noah's also fathers like Noah in the last days who are an example that all three of his sons followed him. And you know how old those sons were? They were.

No, I've been preaching for 120 years and those are all grown up sons. They were not little boys. They are grown up sons who are helping Noah in building the ark.

They are the ones who believed their dad. The first example of an ark is a picture of the church. The only thing I've often said that if I were living in Noah's time, I would invest everything I had in that ark because I know that's the only thing that's going to remain when the judgment comes.

If I didn't do that, I would say I don't believe what Noah is preaching. Do you believe the church is the only thing that's going to remain when judgment takes away the rest of this world? I believe in it. That's why I invest my whole life for the church.

Now you may have your secular job. That's fine. You have to earn your own living.

I'm not asking you to leave your job unless God calls one in a thousand people to leave their jobs, but you may not be among that number. But still, your life must be invested in building the church. I'll tell you that's the only thing that's going to remain.

Give your whole life to it. Don't be like those people who say it's too cold today, it's raining, I don't think I'll go for the fellowship meeting today. Well, Noah didn't bring up his children like that.

Whether it was raining or sunshine, they went to build the ark. They didn't know how long it would take, but they had to complete the ark. But they knew one thing.

Until the ark was finished, the flood would not come. That they were sure of. And so, I praise God for a father like that, who not only earned the respect of his three sons, but earned the respect of his three daughters-in-law.

That they also came into the ark. There are many people who could have brought up their sons well, but they are not able to earn the respect of their daughters-in-law. A good example, Noah.

As a father, he made a mistake later on, we read that he got drunk. And that's sometimes what happens, you know. Sometimes you've done a fantastic thing for God.

Imagine Noah coming out of the ark, and he didn't have anybody else to exhort him or challenge him to humility. And he would say, boy, everybody's dead. And because I was faithful, God preserved me and my family.

Something to be proud of, definitely. But it's dangerous. God resists the proud.

And we read that Noah got drunk. We read that in chapter 9. And took off his clothes and was lying naked. We read that in... He drank wine from his vineyard and uncovered himself, Genesis 9.21. But after the fantastic job that he did, I can say, okay, he didn't have fellowship, he didn't have a Bible, he didn't know about the Holy Spirit or about Jesus.

But it's interesting that in Ezekiel, chapter 14, Ezekiel 14, when Noah... In Ezekiel, Ezekiel lived, you know, maybe a few hundred years before Christ. Or maybe 400, 500 years before Christ. Long after Noah.

And Ezekiel 14, verse 14, when God thinks of the three most righteous people in the world up to that time, he thinks of Noah and Daniel and Job. Noah is number one there. He ignores the fact that the guy got drunk.

Okay, one slip up. God can ignore that. But there was a righteous man whom God could boast about 1500 or 2000 years after he died.

Great example. The other, another righteous man mentioned here is Job. In the same verse.

Daniel, of course, was unmarried as far as we know, so we can ignore him. We are talking about fathers. Noah was one father.

In Ezekiel 14, Job is the other one. What type of father was he? Turn to the book of Job in chapter 1. When God wanted to point out one man to Satan, in the whole earth, a lot of people were religious. And you read about some of those religious people in the book of Job itself.

People who knew about God, Bildad, Zophar, Eliphaz. They could say the right things about God, but they were not like Job. In fact, God was angry with them at the end of, you read in Job 42.

Even though if you read the book of Job, what Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar said, those three men, nothing they said about God was wrong. It's like Jesus said about the Pharisees in Matthew 23. Whatever they say is right.

But they don't live according to what they said. These were the Pharisees in Job's time. The equivalent of the Pharisees in Jesus' time.

They said everything right. You read chapter 3 to chapter 38. Everything they said was right.

But their lives were not right. God said, I'm angry with them. But Job was different.

When God wanted to point out someone to Satan, Satan said, Oh God, all your people who claim to know you, look at the way they live. God said, Yes. But, Job 1.8, have you considered my servant Job? There's no one like him on the whole earth.

Imagine saying that about a man. I remember when I was a young man, and I read that. And I said, Lord, will you be able to say that about me to Satan? Not that there's no one like him, but at least, maybe there are a lot of other people, but can you include me in that number? That I'm one of those whom you can point out to Satan.

I don't want to be claimed to be the most righteous man on the earth. No. But at least one of the people whom you can point out to the devil and say, Have you considered my servant Zach who lives there? Working in the Navy right now.

I said, Lord, if you can say that about me, I don't care what anybody in the world says about me. I don't bother about whether they appreciate me, or criticize me, or call me the devil himself. I remember when I used to preach in the streets in those days, when I was 23 years old, people would call me the devil.

That's okay. It doesn't matter. A lot of people have called me the devil since then.

But then Jesus said they called him that also. So it's okay. He's the head of the house.

But the point is this. One thing about Job, I don't want to say all the other things. He had 10 children, and they respected him.

And Job was an old man now, because we read those 10 children used to, verse 4, Job 1, 4, each of them had a house of their own. They were not living at home. They were not little boys and girls.

They were in their own house, living by themselves. Grown up people. And when Job said, Come here, my children.

You had a day of feasting. Come here. And they all came.

And Job, chapter 1, verse 5, would offer burnt offerings for them, and pray for them. Job 1, 5. These children had feasted. And he said, perhaps, my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts, so here, Father, I'm offering a sacrifice for them.

That was the way they atoned for sins in those days. He hasn't heard anything. He's saying, perhaps, maybe, I don't know, but maybe it's possible that they have sinned where? In their hearts.

Can you imagine a father being concerned that his son or daughter has sinned in her heart? Wow! No wonder God could point out this man to Satan. In a day when people did not know that man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. At that time in history, for a man to think, perhaps my children have sinned in their hearts, and said something in their, not cursed God outwardly in their mouth.

They never said anything in their mouth. In their hearts, they may have had a rebellious thought against God. Oh God! He didn't know him as Father.

Oh God! Here, please forgive their sin. Here, I'm offering a sacrifice. I tell you, he was a godly man because he was a godly father.

A perfect and an upright man, God said in verse 8, a blameless and upright man who feared God and turned away from evil. He was an exceptional example to his children when you see the way he lived. I'll give you an example of some of the things he did.

Job 31 verse 1. Here's a father as an example to his children. Job 31 verse 1. I made a covenant with my eyes that I should never lust after a woman who's not my wife. This is a hundred year old man.

This man was at least a hundred years old. And he's saying, I made a covenant with my eyes that I will not lust after a woman because that's wrong. Doesn't God see my steps? And verse 9, if my heart has been enticed by some woman who's not my wife, let God judge me.

Verse 11, that would be a lustful crime. It would be an iniquity punishable. And this is all long before the Ten Commandments were written.

I have servants in my home, Job says, and I've treated them well. Verse 13, if they filed a complaint against me, what could I do against God? I don't say, oh, they are my servants, I don't care. They were slaves, but he took care of them.

He cared for the poor, verse 16. And he cared, verse 21, for the orphan. And verse 24, he did not put his confidence in gold.

He did not become proud, verse 25, because his wealth was great. His children saw all this. And when his enemy was defeated, verse 29, he didn't rejoice in that.

I did not exult when evil befell my enemy. Somebody who has hurt you. When evil befalls him, he did not rejoice.

Imagine children seeing that in a father. The father saying, yeah, he hurt us sons, my children, but let's not rejoice over that. Let's never rejoice even if our enemy has fallen.

Can you imagine children growing up with a father like this? Boy. He's a great example as a father. And when I sinned, verse 33, did I cover up my transgression like Adam? Did I hide my sin? No.

So there, we see what made him, made God to declare him as a righteous person. He was a father and a great example as a father. Those are the first two good fathers we see in the Bible.

Noah and Job. And then we come to another in Genesis chapter 18. Abraham lived after Job.

In Genesis 18, God says concerning Abraham, it's a great passage of scripture. Verse 17. Can I hide from Abraham what I'm going to do? When God wanted to do something, he told Abraham about it.

He said, Abraham is my friend. So I can discuss certain, I can tell him certain things that are going to happen. And he's going to talk about the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah.

And that's what he told him in verse 20. But why did God decide to warn Abraham ahead and protect him and tell him his secrets? The secret of the Lord is with those who fear him. But one of the reasons is, verse 19.

This is why God, Abraham became God's intimate friend. I have chosen him. Why? So that he may command his children and his family to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice.

Because when he does that, he brings up his children like that. Then the Lord can bring upon Abraham what he has spoken about him. So all the promises of Abraham, I will bless you and you will be a blessing to all the families of the earth, which he said in Genesis 12 verse 3, was conditioned on what? There was a condition.

He had to bring up his children in the way of the Lord. Teach them righteousness and uprightness and justice. And that is the reason why God makes a promise to some child of his today and it is not fulfilled because the guy doesn't fulfill the condition.

So the promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12 verses 1 to 3, I will bless you and all the families of the earth will be blessed was not just unconditional. No. God's promises are never unconditional.

Even the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin has got a condition. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, 1 John 1.7, then the blood of Jesus cleanses us, not otherwise. And so it says here, I have chosen him primarily not to make him a blessing in the whole world.

No, no, no. That will come years later. First of all, he's got to do something else before he becomes a blessing to the world.

And that's what all fathers must realize today. I've chosen him to command his children, not to advise his children. There's a lot of difference between advising his children and commanding his children.

Isaac, you got to do that. It's not a suggestion, Isaac. I'm telling you as your dad, you got to do that.

You got to behave properly in this house. He was a general in the house. He was not a soft person who would allow his son to do whatever he likes.

He would command. What a word. I hope you're a father who commands your children and your children respect you like in the military.

They respect the word of the general and his family. And what would he command them? Not something for his own convenience, but they would keep the way of the Lord. That's what he commanded them.

To do righteousness and to be upright. Abraham commanded his children. And what is the result? Then verse 19, last part, the Lord can bring upon him all that he's promised.

What is that? I will bless you and you'll be a blessing to all the families of the earth. Do you know in Galatians 3.14, remember that verse, Galatians 3.14, this promise of Abraham is for us through the Holy Spirit. I took it.

I took Galatians 3.14 for myself and I said, Lord, the promise of Abraham is for me. Fill me with the Holy Spirit so that I will be blessed, number one, and number two, every family I encounter, either personally or through a message on the internet, will be blessed. That's for you.

That every family you encounter in your life will get something through you. That's God's will. Like David said, goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life.

You know Psalm 23. I follow the Lord as my shepherd, goodness and mercy will follow me. That means, I go to a home and I leave it, goodness and mercy are left behind.

I go to another home and I leave it, goodness and mercy are left behind there. That is God's will for every one of his children. But it depends on your commanding your children.

That's how it came to Abraham. Okay, here is another example of a bad father, just in Genesis. Isaac, Abraham's son, who had such a good father.

I mean, at one time he was obedient. When Abraham said to him on Mount Moriah, build that altar Isaac, he built it. And Isaac says, where is the lamb? No lamb Isaac, you are going to be sacrificed there.

Get on there and let me tie you up. And here is this young, 25 year old young man, telling his 125 year old weak father, okay dad, you are going to kill me? Sure, what do you want me to do? Lie down here, lie down. Which 25 year old son today will do that? When his aged father says, lie down, I am going to kill you because God has told me to kill you.

There you see how he brought up his son in obedience. And he lies down there and Isaac sees this dad lifting the knife. This is no joke.

And suddenly the voice from heaven, don't kill him. Can you imagine the effect that had on Isaac, his son? He said, my dad is a man of God. It's wonderful when situations come in your home.

May not be that type of situation, that's very dramatic. But where something happens and your children exclaim, my dad is a man of God. Even if it's not as spectacular as this.

That is God's will for all fathers. But yet Isaac when he grew up, he back slid, it happens. We read when he became a father and the time came for him to pass the blessing on to, he had twin children, Esau and Jacob.

And God had told him, you must bless the younger one. Jacob is the one who I've chosen, not Esau. But, Isaac ignored that.

We read in Genesis 27, he called Isaac, sorry, he called Esau. Isaac was old, verse 27. He was dim, his eyes were dim, he could not see, he was a little blind.

And he told Esau, come here. He said, I don't know the day I'm going to die, verse two, but I want to bless you with the birthright. And in his mind, he knows God told him, not Esau, but Jacob.

But he ignores it. He ignores what God told him. He says, no, God's made a mistake.

Esau is my favorite. Why was Esau his favorite? Because Esau could make good deer curry. Verse four, he made a savory dish such as I love.

You know, that's the thing that made the difference between these two. After they were born, we read about that, that verse, Genesis 25, 27. Esau was a skillful hunter.

And verse 28, Isaac loved Esau because he had a taste for the type of deer that he killed and cooked into a dish and gave it to him. But Jacob was making ordinary vegetable soup and Isaac said, I don't like that. I like what the nice mutton curry that Esau brings.

And so he got it so many times from Esau that one day he says, Esau, I'm going to give you the blessing. I'm sure God made a mistake. And so he calls Esau.

But, you know, you can't cheat God. And even though Jacob, what Jacob did was wrong, putting on all that skin and pretending to be Esau. Jacob would have had a great experience there if he had said, Lord, I'm going to trust you to give me the blessing because you said it.

I don't know how you're going to do it. God would have done something to make sure Jacob got the blessing. But you know how sometimes we do something to help God and it's in a crooked way.

There are a lot of Christians who do that to try and help God. You don't want to help God. I'll tell you that.

If God's promised something, you'll get it. But the fact is God prevented Esau from getting the blessing because it was not meant for him. Isaac was a bad father.

If you love your children because they do something earthly in a good way cook good food your son or daughter and not because they are godly something's wrong with you as a father. Now Jacob when he grew old he was also blind. Now see the contrast.

It's a very interesting contrast. Jacob is also blind. Genesis 48 and verse 8 Joseph brings his sons to his name is now Israel Jacob's name and Joseph says and he says who are these? These are my sons.

And so listen to this. He had twins. Joseph also had twins.

Manasseh was the older one. Ephraim was the younger one. So what does he do? He brings Joseph Joseph brings his two sons twins verse 13 to Israel to be blessed by the grandfather.

And he brings Manasseh with his left hand so that Israel's right hand which is the hand of blessing will be on the older son. And he brings Ephraim with his left hand so that Ephraim will get a blessing with Israel's left hand. And Israel even though you know it says that verse 10 just like his father Isaac the eyes of Israel or Jacob were also so dim he could not see.

He was blind. And he was having two twins in front of him just like Isaac his father had two twins in front of him and chose the wrong one. But this guy Jacob even though he is blind and Joseph brings Manasseh there in front of his right hand it says here Isaac stretched out his right hand and crossed it laid it on Ephraim even though he is blind.

And Joseph is disturbed and he gives him a great blessing. And Joseph said in verse 18 no no no no dad you are doing it wrong. This is not my firstborn my firstborn is here place your right hand on Manasseh.

His father said no my son I know I am blind but my spiritual eyes are open. I know that Ephraim is going to be greater than Manasseh in the years to come. His younger brother will be verse 19 greater than and if you read the history of Israel later on in the remaining thousand years it was Ephraim that became greater.

The blessing of a father who knew God how did Jacob become different from his father Isaac I'll tell you Isaac had no problems in his life. He grew up into wealth. His father was a millionaire and he received all that oh I feel sorry for children whose fathers are so immensely wealthy that from childhood they can have all that they want not like those other deprived children.

Isaac was like that. He had a golden spoon in his mouth from day one and he grew up as a failure. Jacob was not like that he had trials his brother tried to kill him and he almost lost the birthright from his father and he had to run away for his life and there he was looking after sheep out in the open and drenched in the dew and in the hot sun and he wanted to marry someone his father-in-law cheated him a lot of trials and finally God himself broke his hip bone and he had to limp with the staff for the rest of his life he had to walk as a young man he became a cripple almost and imagine the shame of a young man when compared to the age he died he was relatively speaking a young man even when he was 60 and walking can you see a young 25 year old walking with a stick that's a picture of Jacob he went through trials and in those trials he experienced God and that's why even when he was blind his spiritual eyes were open what an example to be a father like that even if you made a lot of blunders in your life like Jacob did but to have your spiritual eyes open so that by the time you come to the end of your life you are not spiritually blind you are a father who knows how to bless your children it's a great example now I want to turn you to another some bad example another one in 1 Samuel in 1 Samuel you know the story of the high priest the high priest was the number one person in Israel the top person the spiritual leader of Israel was a man a man called Eli and he got that position because he descended from Aaron that's the only reason he got it not because of any personal ability because of family connections sometimes you know people get some position because of family connections and they think they are great spiritually but that's how Eli became but he didn't know how to bring up his children it says here in verse 1 Samuel chapter 2 verse 12 the sons of Eli were worthless men and in the margin it says sons of the devil he was the leader of Israel and his children are called sons of the devil they did not know the Lord and when people brought the sacrifice to offer verse 13 these two sons would put a three fork into it verse 13 and 14 and pick out the best part of the fork and say this is for us and before verse 15 before they burned the fat you know the tasty part the priest servant would come and say give some for Eli's sons and the man would say no we must burn the fat to the Lord and then you can take what you like no Eli's sons have said we got to take the fat out first because that's the tasty part of the meat offerings were given to the Lord stealing from that it was like Judas Iscariot and the sin of the young men were very great and not only that we read in verse 22 they were committing adultery with some of the women who came there and this is the leader just like a lot of pastors today whose children are wayward all types of financial and sexual irregularities and what does Eli say when he hears all this look at the soft way the soft way that some fathers speak to that thoroughly disobedient children verse 23 oh sons why are you doing all these evil things no my sons verse 24 the report I hear about you is not so good not so good you know if a man sins against another God will judge him God will mediate for him but if a man sins against the Lord what will happen ok try and do it better tomorrow and every day it was the same old story and God was violently angry and so God told Samuel who was a little boy one day one Samuel 311 I'm going to do something at which the years of everybody

in Israel will tingle when they hear it the day I carry out my judgment against Eli's house why because I've told him verse 13 chapter 3 verse 13 that because his sons brought a curse on themselves and he did not rebuke them but Lord he did say to his sons oh sons why are you doing this please don't behave like this that's not a rebuke he should have said get out of here you sons of mine don't come you're a disgrace to the name of the Lord don't you ever come to this house again no he didn't rebuke them those gentle words with you which you correct your loving son and daughter and they don't obey and you remind them next day hey son didn't I tell you yesterday you should try and do this why haven't you done it my girl why are you behaving like this that's Eli what happens a curse comes upon that family and they removed from their position now Samuel was the one who conveyed this message to Eli he's the one God spoke to okay when Samuel grows up and his children Samuel is the judge of Israel the most powerful man in Israel now and look at the mistake he made it says in 1 Samuel 8 when Samuel was old he appointed his two sons as judges they were not the most godly people in Israel but they were Samuel's sons you know this favoritism that people show to their sons when they are not godly I've seen it in so many cases of some preacher who promotes his sons in the Christian organization I've seen this in India so many times the father says I'm the one who sent reports to America and got so much money and built up this huge organization and now why should I hand it over to some man my sons deserve it this is my inheritance what rubbish taking God's money and calling it your inheritance and that's what Samuel you know I'm the judge here and my sons but Samuel your sons are not so God-fearing like you no no they'll be alright and it says here they judged and verse three his sons Samuel did not walk in his ways it's not just that they did small things they took bribes they dishonestly they cheated took God's money and they perverted justice they took a bribe and condemned the innocent person and all it the news went around Samuel's sons are wayward who is this guy Samuel the one who had told Israel his sons were wayward you know it's possible to preach against other people's faults and have the same fault in your own home and they came to Israel Samuel they were fed up they said the elders came to Samuel verse four and five said your sons are not walking in your ways make us a king we are fed up with these judges so that's a bad example another bad example even though Samuel was a godly man very godly man in fact later on in Ezekiel we read about Moses and Samuel as great prayer warriors but in the Old Testament it was like that you know sometimes people's children did not walk in the ways of the Lord he must not be an elder he must not make a man an elder who was not brought up his children properly so if Samuel were in the living today I would not appoint him as an elder in a CFC church I say sorry Samuel you may be a wonderful man but you have not brought up your children properly you cannot be an elder in this church we don't go by Bible knowledge and we must have children who believe because it says in 1 Timothy 3 if a man cannot bring up his few children in the ways of the Lord how is he going to take care of a big church he's got 3-4 children at home and they're not coming up in godly ways he's going to be an elder in a church completely out of the question that's what it says in 1 Timothy 3 you read that passage sometime but it was not so in the old testament because they did not have the Holy Spirit and therefore you know you permit a lot of things in the kindergarten that you don't permit if a PhD student gets something wrong that's more serious if a kindergarten student says 2 plus 2 is 5 that's forgiven that's how it was in the old testament they were kindergarten children okay 1 Kings chapter 1 David was old and advanced in age he was about to die and he was appointing Solomon to be the next king but he had another son through another wife was 5 Adonijah the son of Haggith 1 Kings 1 verse 5 he exalted himself says I'm going to be the king I don't have to discuss this with my dad he's dying he's old I don't care what he thinks I am going to be the king how in the world did this guy ever get that idea and he prepared himself chariots and horsemen and 50 men to run before him and he conferred verse 7 with the general of the army Joab he said if I get the general of the army on my side I'll definitely be the king and they also went along with him what was the reason listen to this his father David

verse 6 had never pained him the Bible says had never caused him any pain he never spanked him once he never disciplined him and he never even crossed his word by saying why have you done that never in his whole life had David asked him when he did something wrong why have you done that oh it's okay son don't worry it's okay it's okay and why was that because Adonijah was a very handsome man he was and David liked good-looking women and he liked good-looking men and his son was good-looking the most handsome of all his children he had favorites father sometimes partial towards their favorite children sometimes it's a favorite daughter or a favorite son and nothing happens but years later the father is dying then the nature of that child comes out train up a child in the way you should go it's a wrong way when he's old he will not depart from that wrong way that works both ways whichever way you train up your child so I'll give you another example and that's going back to Moses in Exodus there's only one place where we read about Moses and his interaction with his wife and children when God met with him in the burning bush and said go back to Egypt and be my prophet we read in Exodus chapter 4 that Moses took the staff the Lord told him verse 17 Exodus 4 17 take your hand in your staff and you will perform signs in Egypt with this you are the one I have trained for 80 years Moses 40 years in Egypt 40 years in the wilderness I trained you I saved you when you were a little child from being killed by Pharaoh and being eaten by the crocodiles when your mother put you in the river Nile I trained you protected you to be the prophet of God now go to Egypt Moses is 80 years old and Moses departs Exodus 4 18 and tells his father no let me go and he takes his wife and two sons with him and on the way we read here verse it says here verse 20 he took his wife and sons and mounted on a donkey and returned to the land of Egypt but on the way before they reached Egypt they had they halted verse 24 at the lodging place it was a long journey to Egypt halfway they stopped on the way the Lord met Moses and tried to kill him the man he had trained for 80 years the only man alive who had qualified to deliver Israel from Egypt God is trying to kill him it'll take him another 80 years to train another man to be deliverer Lord why are you trying to kill him this is the man you chose because he has not circumcised his children according to my law how can he be the leader if he has not obeyed my command but Lord that's a small thing circumcision look at all the other qualities he has he's humble he's broken he's a broken person I don't care if he doesn't obey it's a small command it doesn't matter if it's a leader he's cut off from Israel if he's not circumcised and why is it Moses did not circumcise his children because his wife was not an Israelite and they had a dispute when Moses said hey this the eighth day we must circumcise the child his wife said rubbish you're not going to take any child of mine and circumcise it and Moses at that time was a hen pecked husband he was living with his wife's father and he had to keep quiet and now his children are grown up and he says here but his wife knew immediately the reason my husband is dying he's almost about to breathe his last and Zipporah the wife verse 25 quickly took a knife and cut off her son's foreskin and threw it at Moses feet this is what we were arguing about all along isn't it this God of yours once circumcised you're a bridegroom of blood to me so God left him alone that's how he escaped he was a failure as a father we don't read much about Moses as a father but he was a great leader and one good thing about him when he finally had to hand over his leadership he did not give it to one of his sons he listened to God God said give it to Joshua he gave it to Joshua so there are examples of good and bad fathers in the Bible and this is an example for us in I want to show you that verse in 1 Timothy chapter 3 which I quoted the importance of being a good father if you want to be a leader of God's people in the new covenant and one sense you may not be an elder in a church but you are an elder to many other younger people than you in the church and you have to be an example to them and in 1 Timothy 3 we read qualifications for an elder or overseer verse 2 he must be the husband of one wife he must not be a divorced person who has got two wives they can be believers in the church but they can't be elders or have responsibility of ministry and verse 4 he must be one who manages his own family well keeping his children under control with all dignity that is when the children

are at home well once they leave the home and get married you are not responsible for them but at least when they are at home to be an elder you must keep them under control with all dignity because reason verse 5 if a man cannot take care of the few 3 or 4 children he has got at home how can he take care of the church of God 100 people sitting there you can't even bring up 4 children in a godly way he is trying to lead 100 people in a godly way in the training ground you have failed you failed in training when I trusted you with 4 little children are you going to take care of 100 children all the people in the church are your children no you are not qualified and that's Paul's instruction to Timothy make sure when you appoint elders that you don't appoint someone whose children are wayward Titus is another co-worker of Paul Paul writes to Titus in chapter 1 in verse 5 of Titus when I left you in Crete I left you there so that you will appoint elders in every church in every city in Crete where there are small churches that have been planted go and appoint elders but when you select an elder make sure that he is the husband of one wife we can welcome people who are married children who believe this is even a higher standard they must have some faith and not accused of dissipation or rebellion you know children who are misbehaving and drunkards I don't mean the little naughtiness that all children have but a father who has control over his children all children are naughty they disobey and do so many stupid things at home but if the father is strict with them you can make out you know some of the one of the things I noticed in the churches in India I've seen sometimes a child in a family there are many children in a family and one child is really rebellious and all the children are like that now you can't say that's because one child turned out like that no that's definitely the father that was wrong and then when I see another house where a child is really godly and all the children are godly so that doesn't you can't say that's because some children are like that no it's because of the parents that's what the bible says but it's very difficult for most parents I found through the years to say the fault is with me could Adam acknowledge the fault was with him no he blame somebody else and so parents always blame their children ah it's because they are like that they are like that it's the easiest thing in the world to put the blame on somebody else but god puts the blame fairly and squarely on the parents so you see the importance of being a father especially in the new covenant it's not a question of just being qualified to be an elder it's just seeing that god places such importance on the family life very very important you see the church is built like this let me use an illustration I've used many many times the foundation of the church is god loves us so much god so loved the world he gave his son I must build my life on god's perfect love for me which gave even his son and if god did not spare his own son but gave him up for me how will he not freely with him giving me all things and that assurance is on which I build my foundation of my life for the whole life so the church is built on that and on top of that the first story or what you call the first floor is a personal walk with god the church is a three story building the first story is I keep a conscience clear before god and men every single moment if I hurt somebody I said it right immediately if I sinned in my thought against god I confess it immediately I keep my conscience clear 24 hours of the day 7 days a week 24 7 that's the first story I'm talking about building the church only such people can build the church who walk like this every day on top of that the second story is a family life a man who lived who was able to live with his wife seeking with all his heart to love her like Christ loved the church caring for her the wife may not be godly that Bible doesn't say an elder must be a man who's got a godly wife I know personally know elders who don't have godly wives but they're still qualified to be elders and in fact the way they behave with their godly wife is a great example of their patience John Wesley was a great man of God but he had a very evil wife one of the mistakes he made in his life was he had a bad wife I remember meeting another God fearing man not CFC church this is somewhere else in another church but he was a God fearing man but his wife was going to some other church claiming to be born again but going to some Pentecostal church but this man was in a good small house fellowship and I asked him how's your wife how's your relationship with your wife he says she never comes to my church if she goes

to some other Pentecostal church and I said how is she at home oh it's very bad it's hell bad he says she flings and she's angry she flings plates and cups and all at me I have to duck my head and protect myself but when it's all over and all these things shattered on the floor I say to her you're still the queen in my heart I said brother you're really a Godly man you deserve to be an elder in any church I'll never forget that when I heard that from that man what an example so but his children must be God fearing and I've seen remarkable examples of a man who had even wife was not men who had wives who were not really converted or wholehearted but who brought up their children in the fear of God so it's no excuse saying my wife's not whole hearted that's why my children are wayward no if you're a Godly man think of Job you know his wife was so bad we read that each in chapter 2 she even told her husband that she told her husband to commit suicide but with such a wife he brought up 10 children in a Godly way so don't ever make an excuse that my wife is not serious that's why my children are wayward no a man can make up for that with a Holy Spirit is able to help a father to be a wonderful father to bring up Godly children there's no excuse for not bringing up our children in a Godly way especially if you've got if you're converted you're a father when your children are young you're a very blessed person so let's bow before God and ask God for his mercy upon us and see the examples of these good and bad fathers and say Lord help us to be like the good ones Heavenly Father as we bow before you we thank you for your mercy upon all of us we've all made so many mistakes as fathers not one of us can say we've been a perfect father from day one but you've been tremendously merciful help us to live in repentance and to follow you and serve you all the days of our life we pray in Jesus name Amen oh I didn't complete what I was saying the first floor is first story is our personal life second story is our family life where we live with our wife in a Godly way and bring up our children the third story is the church where we build the church thank you

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