

THE FATHERS ROLE

Matthew 1:18-2:23

Is our Nation cursed?

Mal 4:5-6 "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."

Poverty...

Children in father-absent homes are five times more likely to be poor.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Children's Living Arrangements and Characteristics: March 2002, P20-547, Table C8. Washington, D.C.: GPO 2003.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse...

"Fatherless children are at a dramatically greater risk of drug and alcohol abuse."

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
National Center for Health Statistics. Survey on Child Health.
Washington, DC, 1993.

Smoking...

Children who live apart from their fathers are 4.3 times more likely to smoke cigarettes as teenagers than children growing up with their fathers in the home.

Source: Stanton, Warren R., Tian P.S. Oci and Phil A. Silva.
"Sociodemographic characteristics of Adolescent Smokers."
The International Journal of the Addictions 7 (1994): 913-925.

Behavioral Problems...

Children in single-parent families are two to three times as likely to have emotional and behavioral problems, as children in two-parent families.

Source: Stanton, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. National Center for Health Statistics. "National Health Interview Survey." Hyattsville, MD, 1988

Suicides...

Three out of four teenage suicides occur in households where a parent has been absent.

Source: Elshtain, Jean Bethke. "Family Matters: The Plight of America's Children." *The Christian Century* (July 1993): 14-21.

Scholastic achievement...

Fatherless children are twice as likely to drop out of school.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
National Center for Health Statistics. Survey on Child Health.
Washington, DC; GPO, 1993.

Crime...

Compared to their peers born to married parents, children born out-of-wedlock were 10 times more likely to become a chronic juvenile offender if male and born to an unmarried teen mother, according to a study in the state of Washington using statewide data.

Source: Conseur, Amy et al. "Maternal and Perinatal Risk Factors for Later Delinquency." *Pediatrics* 99 (1997): 785-790

Sexual Activity...

Adolescent females between the ages of 15 and 19 years reared in homes without fathers are significantly more likely to engage in premarital sex than adolescent females reared in homes with both a mother and a father.

Source: Billy, John O. G., Karin L. Brewster and William R. Grady. "Contextual Effects on the Sexual Behavior of Adolescent Women." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 56 (1994): 381-404.

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A disenfranchised group

(Exo 22:24 NIV) My anger will be aroused, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives will become widows and your children fatherless.

(Psa 82:3 NIV) Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.

(Job 29:12 NIV) because I rescued the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to assist him.

Matthew 1:18-2:23

Point 1

Self sacrifice is critical to fatherhood.

Self sacrifice

(Matthew 1:24 NIV) When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

Man up

(1 Cor 13:11 NIV) When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

The interests of others

(Phil 2:3-4 NIV) Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Point 2

Being a protector/provider is critical to fatherhood.

Protecting the child

(Matthew 2:13 NIV) When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

Save them from themselves

(Prov 23:13-14 NIV) Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death.

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Point 3

Being engaged is critical to fatherhood.

In touch with events

(Matthew 2:22-23 NIV) But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: "He will be called a Nazarene."

Be Proactive

(Deu 11:18-19 NIV) Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Train your children

(Eph 6:4 NIV) Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

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Point 4

Taking advice is critical to fatherhood.

Joseph took input...

- *... he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. (Matthew 1:24 NIV)*

- *... an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." **So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt,** (Matthew 2:13-14 NIV)*

- *... an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead." **So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel.** (Matthew 2:19-21 NIV)*

- *...Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the*

Listen to advice

(Prov 19:20 NIV) Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.

Be discerning

(Prov 15:14 NIV) The discerning heart seeks knowledge, but the mouth of a fool feeds on folly.

What can I do?