

Fatherhood

Taken from a Christian Ethics Project

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Scriptures

1. ⁴Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Eph 6:4
2. O my people, hear my teaching;/ listen to the words of my mouth./ ² I will open my mouth in parables, /I will utter hidden things, things from of old- / what we have heard and known,/ what our fathers have told us./ We will not hide them from their children;/ we will tell the next generation/ the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD,/ his power, and the wonders he has done./ He decreed statutes for Jacob/ and established the law in Israel,/ which he commanded our forefathers/ to teach their children, so the next generation would know them,/ even the children yet to be born,/ and they in turn would tell their children./ Then they would put their trust in God/ and would not forget his deeds/ but would keep his commands./ They would not be like their forefathers—/ a stubborn and rebellious generation,/ whose hearts were not loyal to God,/ whose spirits were not faithful to him. Psalm 78:1-8
3. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) 1 Timothy 3:4-5
4. ²¹Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged Colossians 3:21
5. If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! Matthews 7:11

Early Church Quotes

“No one had anything but praise for my father who, despite his slender resources, was ready to provide his son with all that was needed to enable him to travel so far for the purpose of study. [...] Yet this same father of mine took no trouble at all to see how I was growing in your sight or whether I was chaste or not.” St. Augustine Confessions 2.3

““God," so far as the human mind can form an idea, is the name of that nature or substance which is above all things. "Father" is a word expressive of a secret and ineffable mystery. When you hear the word "God," you must understand thereby a substance without beginning, without end simple, uncompounded, invisible, incorporeal, ineffable, inappreciable, which has in it nothing which has been either added or created. For He is without cause who is absolutely the cause of all things. When you hear the word "Father," you must understand by this the Father of a Son, which Son is the image of the aforesaid substance. For as no one is called "Lord" unless he have a possession or a servant whose lord he is, and as no one is called "master" unless he have a disciple, so no one can possibly be called "father" unless he have a son. This very name of "Father," therefore, shews plainly that, together with the Father there subsists a Son also.” Rufinus

“A Commentary on the Apostle’s Creed” 1.3 http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/NPNF2-03/Npnf2-03-45.htm#P9592_2686511

1500-1700 Quotes

“The fatherhood is recognized by the childship of the child. And what is that spirit of a child – that sweet spirit that makes him recognize and love his father? I can not tell you unless you are a child yourself, and then you will know.” C.H. Spurgeon “The Fatherhood of God” Spurgeon’s Sermons Vol. 5, p.107

“Not long after I first began to experience these things [a sweet burning in my heart; an ardor of soul, that I know not how to express], I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father’s pasture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looking up on the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious majesty and grace of God, that I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together; it was a sweet, and gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness” Jonathan Edwards, Personal Narrative
<http://www.jonathanedwards.com/text/Personal/PNarrative.htm>

Modern Quotes

“Finally, a word to my father. [...] At the dinner table [...] we would hear about the victories of the gospel. Surely it is more exciting to be the son of an evangelist than to sit with knights and warriors.” John Piper Desiring God Preface p.12

“So we may say that the role of the Father in creation and redemption has been to plan and direct and send the Son and Holy Spirit. This is not surprising, for it shows that the Father and the Son relate to one another as a father and son relate to one another in a human family: the father directs and has authority over the son, and the son obeys and is responsive to the directions of the Father” Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology 14.4.1

My Position: Fathers should ultimately point their children to our Father in heaven. The most important thing an earthly father can do is make much of our Heavenly Father.