

# A Father's ABCs

(author unknown)

*Always trust your children to God's care . . .* All parents must trust the care of their children to the Lord. All children are a gift from God. We love them, enjoy them, guide them, and correct them, but we cannot protect them 24 hours-a-day all of their lives. We must trust them to God's care.

*Bring them to church . . .* Dad, you need to bring your children to church, not just send them! To be seated in church with one's father is a blessing indeed!!

*Challenge them to high goals . . .* Dad, if you do not expect anything from your children you are doing them a disservice! Reasonably challenge your children to achieve academic goals and spiritual goals.

*Delight in their achievements . . .* The Scripture says, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 11:25). A Father's words has much power in the lives of his children! Appropriate compliments and taking careful notice of your children's achievements by verbalizing your approval will be like those "apples of gold!"

*Exalt the Lord in their presence . . .* Dad, why is it that you have a comfort level with conversation about dozens of subjects, but you find it difficult to talk about the Lord in the presence of your children? A day should not pass without you making clear references to the Lord in your conversation with your children! Exalt the Lord in their presence. If you want them to come to know the Lord, then you must exalt him in their presence!

*Frown on evil . . .* Dad, be careful that you do not glorify evil in the minds of your children! Let your children know your displeasure with all forms of evil and expect them to turn from it!!

*Give them love . . .* Express your love verbally and often. No child should grow up under the pressure of attempting to "earn" a Father's love!! Love should be unconditional and based upon pure grace! By the way, children have a unique way of spelling the word love. They spell it "t i m e."

*Hear their problems . . .* One of the hindrances of strong family life is the absence of Dad in the home. Of course, normally dads are working to provide either all or a substantial part of the family income. But the wise dad *makes* time for his family. He stays in touch and knows what is going on in the lives of his children. Children need to know that they can come and talk to dad about their problems because he is available!

*Ignore not their childish fears . . .* Reassure your children and teach them to have great confidence in the Lord. The Lord is the answer to all of our fears!

*Joyfully accept their apologies . . .* You must not discourage your children when they are repentant!

*Keep their confidence . . .* Always be truthful with your children. Model honesty before them. They need to know your word is full of integrity!

*Live a good example before them . . .* There is power right here!! It is highly unlikely that your children will do as you say if your own life does not model the convictions you desire them to walk in!!

*Make them your friends . . .* A father must not neglect discipline in an attempt to be a “buddy” with his children, but with that said, how can a child have a relationship with a Father who is not friendly to his own child? A child should understand that the best friend he has in the world is his own parents!! Now, children may not always act as though they believe that, but in their heart they should know it is so!!

*Never ignore their endless questions . . .* The point here is that we should not “brush our children off.” If your children have spiritual questions that you cannot answer, then make it a matter of seeking the Lord together! But do not make the mistake of ignoring their questions!

*Open your heart to their love!*

*Pray for them by name . . .* No dad can be the father the Lord intends him to be if he does not pray for his own children by name. Especially pray for their salvation!! Start when they are young and serve notice on Satan that he cannot have your children!!!

*Quicken your interest in their spirituality . . .* Some dads make it their business to help their children with a career. Others take a great deal of interest in the hobbies of their children. But do you watch over the spiritual growth of your children? Does it bother you to notice that your children have no interest in the Lord? What are you doing to develop your child's walk with the Lord? Make it your top priority to take an interest in winning your children and training them to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ!

*Remember their needs . . .* Watch over your children to provide for them to the best of your ability.

*Show them the way of salvation . . .* How? Teach them the promises of God! Dad, you can do that by opening the Bible with your family and reading it together. Take the book of St. John and teach it diligently to your children! And trust the power of God's word to lead them to salvation!

*Teach them to work . . .* Remember, a strong work ethic is foundational to prosperity! Get them working at home at an early age and make them responsible for helping the family function properly. There are chores to do, and a child needs to learn to carry their own weight!! Later, starting with appropriate work as young teens, move them into the work force.

*Understand they are still young . . .* Even an eighteen year old is still young! Your children will make mistakes as they are growing and learning. You must exercise a lot of patience toward your children. They need a lot of mercy. Mercy doesn't make excuses for bad behavior, but it does empower you to put them back on their feet after they have fallen down!!

*Verify your statements . . .* Know what you are talking about.

*Wean them from bad company . . .* This is huge!

*Xpect them to obey . . .* Honor for parental authority is a command from God!

*Yearn for God's best for them . . .* Fervent prayer for children is essential to godly parenting.

*Zealously guide them in Bible truth! (3 John 4)*