

Father's Day – Tsegaye's Testimony

Father's Day is celebrated on variety of dates worldwide. Typically it involves gift-giving, and special dinners to fathers and family-oriented activities. I am so happy to celebrate father's day here in Finland with my two beautiful God given children. Unfortunately in Ethiopia we don't have that tradition.

Father's day is not only for real fathers but also spiritual fathers and grand fathers. Above all it is our heavenly Father's day.

What are our responsibilities and duties as human father in raising our children as Christian parents according to our heavenly Father?

What teaches and speaks the Bible about this topic in different verses? I like to share with you some of them.

Show respect, teach respect and earn respect

Ephesians 6:2

“Honour your father and mother”- which is the first commandment with a promise.

In raising our children as Christian parents we have great responsibilities to show the boundaries and set specific limits to our children. When we say No that...they have to believe we mean it.

In Exodus 20 God gave the 10 Commandments.
You shall not...

How can we teach our children discipline? How can we correct them when they are doing wrong? This is part of spiritual leadership and we need to show we love our children as our heavenly Father loves us by drawing the lines of right and wrong. We as fathers and parents need to teach them what is acceptable behaviour and what is not acceptable behaviour.

Hebrews 12:7-11

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

As human fathers we also have to be a good example for our children. Children are in great need of models.

John 13:15

I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

Other important things teaching them and practicing Forgiveness.

Matthew 6:14

For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

My dad has always taught me these two words: caring and sharing. It is very important to teach our children the joy of giving, not only to family members or nearest friends, but also strangers who are in need.

Luke 6:38

Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

It is important to know our children's friends and their parents as well as their teachers. For example, some of our children's friends are non-believers and they try to influence our children. On Sunday when we are going to church they are asking our son or daughter "Why you are going to church? Why don't you stay and play with us!" We have to be careful and hold to the same principles and practices by bring to the church to worship and praise the Lord. I'd like to give special thanks to Emma and Anna who are running the Sunday school. They are doing great work.

It is important to listen to our children and by doing so it will teach them to listen to others too.

James 1:19

My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

It is also good to pay close attention to their questions and give simple answers unless they demand more. For example, some time ago a teacher from a local school killed first his wife then his two children. The teacher was from our son's school. For us it was so difficult to explain the incident for him. We told him that we cannot understand what happened. We shared and prayed with him and kept our hand together.

It is very important to pray with our children daily. Teaching and telling them how praying is important in Christian life. That is our responsibility as fathers and parents.

I'd like to close with my prayer request for our spiritual father to Patrick Dickson, for our worship meeting fellowship.

May God bless you! Thank you.