

Our Father Is Our Example
International Bible Lesson
Ephesians 5:21-6:4
Sunday, December 30, 2012
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“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4—KJV).

“Parents, do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. Instead, raise them with Christian discipline and instruction” (Ephesians 6:4—GNB).

“And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4—NRSV).

The beginning of a new year gives people an opportunity to think about some behaviors they might want to change; however, any time of the year is a good time for fathers to think about how they can better treat their children. Some fathers might think only about their children’s material needs and desires; however, the best gift any father can give their children is “the discipline and instruction of the Lord” that can last beyond a lifetime and even into eternity. This gift of discipline and instruction requires fathers to know the Lord, to know the love of Jesus in their hearts, to seek the Lord’s will for their families and themselves, to study the Bible for divine guidance and teaching, to honor the Lord in their worship and work, to pray for their families and their protection, to ask the Lord Jesus for the wisdom to lead their children rightly by word and example, to ask the Holy Spirit to give them the grace, love, and power to discipline and instruct their children in the love and truth of God.

Our heavenly Father serves as the best example for all to follow. In love for us, our heavenly Father sent Moses, the prophets, Jesus, and the apostles to discipline and instruct us in His ways. His Son, Jesus, perfectly represented His Father, and what Jesus said and did to instruct us serves as the earthly example for all fathers and their children. Many times, children will imitate their fathers, and the example and teachings of a father can be passed on to their grandchildren and great grandchildren.

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Thinking Further

1. What does it mean to be subject to someone? What does it mean to be “subject to one another”? What reason does Paul give for why Christians ought to be “subject to one another”?

2. Why do you think some people reject the Biblical role of wives that Paul described in Ephesians?

3. What does “be subject . . . as you are to the Lord” mean to you?

4. How do you think Jesus Christ being the Savior of the church has an effect on how He relates to the church as “head of the church”?

5. How should husbands love their wives?