

A DISCIPLESHIP TOOL FOR FATHERS

Open your bible and read John 5:20-27. In John 5, Jesus gives us a picture of the Father and the Son. The Father loves the Son, shows Him His ways, gives life, gives authority, and gives honor. That gives dads a simple picture of discipleship. A father disciplines their child by loving them well, bringing them close, speaking life into them, trusting them with responsibility, and honoring them as they grow.

1. LOVE THEM WELL

"The Father loves the Son..." John 5:20

Your child needs more than correction. They need to know their dad loves them and is glad to be with them.

Psalms 103:13 says, "As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion..." God's heart toward His children is compassionate, and fathers should reflect that heart.

Ask: Does my child mostly feel loved by me, or evaluated by me?

2. BRING THEM CLOSE

"And shows him all that he himself is doing." John 5:20

Children are shaped by what they see up close. They need more than advice. They need access.

Let them see how you read, how you pray, how you work, how you repent, how you serve, and how you follow Jesus.

A simple pattern is:

I do, you watch.

I do, you help.

You do, I help.

You do, I watch.

Ask: What does my child actually get to see in my life?

3. SPEAK LIFE INTO THEM

"...gives life..." John 5:21

Your words can build your child up or wear them down. A father gives life when they speak with warmth, correct without crushing, call out what is good, and remind their child who they are.

Psalms 103 says, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger..." and "he knows our frame..." God is patient and compassionate with His children, and fathers should be too.

Ask: Do my words give life, or bring death? Would my child say that I am a builder or a breaker? Am I Miracle Gro (life giving) or Round Up (life taking)?

4. TRUST THEM WITH RESPONSIBILITY

"...has given... authority..." John 5:22, 27

A child is not just meant to be protected. They are meant to be prepared. Good fathers do not control everything forever. They slowly hand over responsibility and stay close enough to help.

Ask: What real responsibility have I entrusted to my child?

5. HONOR THEM AS THEY GROW

"That all may honor the Son..." John 5:23

Children need honor, not just correction.

Honor sounds like:

"I see growth in you."

"I'm proud of you."

"I trust you with more."

"You are enough."

"I SEE you."

Psalm 68:5 calls God "Father of the fatherless." Even where earthly fathers fall short, God does not. And dads have the privilege of reflecting His heart.

Ask: Does my child hear honor from me?

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR DADS

- Does my child know I love them? (do these words come out of my mouth?)
- Am I bringing them close enough to learn from my life?
- Do my words give life?
- Am I trusting them with real responsibility?
- Am I honoring them as they grow?

THE CHARGE TO FATHERS

Love: Tell your child you love them and tell them something you love about them.

Bring close: Invite them into something meaningful you are doing.

Speak life: Say one specific, life-giving thing over them.

Trust: Hand them one real responsibility.

Honor: Tell them where you see growth.

Your child does not need a perfect father. They need a present one. A loving one. A father who brings them close enough to see what life with God looks like. And when you fail, repent and begin again. Because one of the most powerful things a father can show a child is what it looks like to walk humbly with God.