

**The Faithful Father's Toolbox:
Equipping Dads for Spiritual Leadership**
Ephesians 5:21-33

Introduction: This Father's Day we want to encourage and uplift dads and granddads by exploring six spiritual tools God gives us to lead our families with Christlike love and leadership. While our focus today is on our men, this is a message that applies to everyone

1. Initiative: “Do I give direction and take responsibility for my primary relationships?”

- A. Initiative means taking spiritual responsibility in the home.
- B. It's about leading in prayer, setting the tone, and acting when needed.
- C. Some biblical examples include Joshua (Joshua 24:15) and Abraham (Genesis 18:19).
- D. Jesus (our ultimate example) took the ultimate initiative by coming to seek us and save us, and He “gave Himself up” for the church.
- E. In smaller ways, we fathers imitate Christ when we *proactively* love, protect, and guide our families.

2. Intimacy: “Do I experience intimacy with God and others through open conversations?”

- A. Intimacy involves open communication and heart-level connection with God (James 4:8, Luke 5:16) and family (Ephesians 6:4, Psalm 27:4).
- B. It includes listening, vulnerability, and creating space for meaningful conversations.
- C. A biblical example - Job showed spiritual intimacy for his family by praying for his children regularly in case they had sinned (Job 1:5).
- D. We need to remember, intimacy isn't a *weakness*; it's a strength of secure leaders.
- E. Remember, the key is being present, and willing to share life beneath the surface.
- F. God will honor those efforts by drawing your family closer to Him and each other.

3. Influence: “Do I exercise biblical influence by encouraging and developing others?”

- A. Every father has influence. We are to use it to build up and point our families to Christ.
- B. Examples: Paul (1 Thessalonians 2:11–12), Mordecai and Esther, Timothy's heritage (2 Timothy 1:5), Moses' words (Deuteronomy 6:7–9).
- C. Dads and granddads let's be sure we use our influence to point our family's to Christ.
- D. How wonderful if one day it's said, “I first learned about Jesus from my granddad” or “My dad's integrity at work showed me what a Christian should be.”

4. Integrity: “Do I lead an honest life, unashamed of who I am when no one is looking?”

- A. Integrity is consistent, godly character in public and private.
- B. Biblical examples: Job (Job 1:1), Daniel (Daniel 6:4), Zechariah (Luke 1:6).
- C. Proverbs 20:7 highlights the blessing of a father who walks in integrity.
- D. Integrity is *whole-life consistency* and by God's grace, we can live with integrity that makes our family proud and, more importantly, pleases God.

5. Identity: “Am I secure in who I am in Christ, or am I defensive?”

- A. Our identity must be rooted in being a child of God (Romans 8:16–17; 1 John 3:1).
- B. Jesus led with confidence because He knew who He was (John 13:3).
- C. Insecurity leads to defensive leadership; Christ-centered identity fosters humble leadership.
- D. Remember, *God called Jesus His beloved Son before Jesus began His ministry*.
- E. We too need to hear, through Scripture, “*You are My beloved son; with you I am well pleased...*” [in Christ]. (Mark 1:11) Lead from that affirmation. It's a game-changer.

6. Inner character: “Do I exhibit the fruit of the Spirit in my life, including self-discipline?”

- A. The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23) reflects our growth in Christlikeness.
- B. Challenges refine our character (John 15:5), and godly fathers grow through each season of parenting.
- C. So, how do we exhibit the fruit of the Spirit? Well,
 - 1. First, by *staying connected to the Spirit!* Galatians 5 also says “*walk by the Spirit*” and keep in step with Him.
 - 2. We must abide in Christ (John 15:5).
 - 3. We must stay rooted in prayer, Scripture, fellowship, the Spirit produces His beautiful fruit.

Conclusion: God equips faithful fathers with spiritual tools to lead their homes. No dad is perfect, but every dad can grow. God is the ultimate Father, and He is faithful to finish what He started in you (Philippians 1:6).