



12 Successful Fathering Tips

1. Growing yourself spiritually, then applying what you learn in your life.
 - a. Parenting is a hard job and monumental responsibility.
 - b. You are the primary influencer of your child's brain and life.
 - i. You aren't the only determiner, but you will set the course they are likely to follow into their adult years, then they choose to stay on that course or find a better one.
 - c. With God's help, guidance, empowerment, and instruction manual, you have the best chance at success as a father.
 - i. Winging it on your own, is so much harder.
 - d. Being a role model is so much easier when you are spiritually growing and mature. See Tip #6
 - e. Teaching them a Godly perspective when making decisions is so much easier when you are growing. See Tip #5
 - f. Helping them calm down when they are upset is so much easier when you are at peace and calm because of what God is doing in your life. See Tip #4
2. Be committed to a growing and healthy marriage.
 - a. Kids need a loving family.
 - b. Kids do much better with 2 parents in the home providing stability.
 - c. Your relationship with your wife is the primary relationship kids watch to develop their own understanding of relationships. They had some information from the relationship you are in with your child, but your marriage is where they get to see how you practice what you preach what you want "on stage" with your child.
 - d. Even though parents stay married, sometimes it seems like they are divorced as a father is only active in the child's life for minutes of the week.
3. Relationship is more important than Obedience.
 - a. If God had a choice between the 2, He would much rather have relationship with us than obedience.
 - i. Obedience without relationship was the Pharisees
 - b. Jesus encourages Mary's wanting to connect with Jesus and have relationship and discouraged Martha's obedience to doing chores when she could have been relating to Jesus
 - c. The sinners on the Crosses next to Jesus were very disobedient, but one really wanted relationship with Christ, and was with Him later that day.
 - d. If you had a choice of having the perfect kid who doesn't care at all about you, doesn't want to be with you, and doesn't share anything with you, or having a child who loves you, hangs out with you, is sad when your sad, but not quite perfect at chores or homework and has occasional struggles.
 - i. Which one would you choose to have
 - e. Unfortunately, even though relationship is much more important than obedience, we often communicate to our children that obedience is more important than relationship!
4. It's not just quality time, but more significantly, it's quantity of time that really counts.
 - Increasing the quantity of time you spend with your child increases the probability that you will have quality of time, both by increasing the odds of having more time with them, but more importantly I doing a better relationship that makes it easier to have quality time with your child.
 - Regarding quality time, you and your child might have a different definition of what quality time means. Quality more often means real and genuine tension in connection.
 - The more you are around your child, the more connection, attention, love, instruction, role modeling, affirmation, and respect you can give them.
 - Give them lots of words of affirmation.
 - i. Tell them you love them, value them, and enjoy hanging out with them.
 - ii. Continually tell them what they're good at and take interest in the things they're interested in.
 - iii. Don't lie to them. We can always find something to be positive about.



- iv. When giving them correction criticism, do it from a perspective of wanting to help them be more successful in enjoying life and communicate that motivation to them in your word, attitude, tone of voice, and body language.
 - v. Make significant effort to have dinner together as a family every day.
 1. No newspapers, magazines, TV's, phones, screens, computers, or any other distractions.
 2. Everybody gets a chance to talk and share about their day.
 3. Everybody eats together, and then he should have at least 15 to 30 min. of discussion and sharing.
5. Help your child learn to tolerate and embrace their negative feelings as a warning system God gave them, letting them know that there is a potential problem, whether not seeing things accurately.
- So if your child comes to you, and states, "Daddy, I'm really angry!"
Your reply should be, "Son, I'm glad you're warning system is working well and letting you know that there's a problem somewhere. I'm glad you trust me enough to share your feelings with me and bring me in to help you find and solve the problem you are getting warned about. Let's put our heads together like teammates and figure it out. If I'm making the problem, I want to take responsibility and change. If you're the one making the problem I hope you would want take responsibility and change. If it's something else, then let's solve it together. That's what I'm here for."
 - Negative feelings are a great warning system, but a TERRIBLE Decision-making system. But until they learn, children (and a lot of adults) make most of their decisions based on emotion.
 - Pain of some sort is our main driver of most of our decisions but especially are wrong or dysfunctional decisions.
6. Think out loud as you are assessing situations and making Decisions.
- a. We make 80,000 decisions each day. Most are automated, but many are need your attention and thoughtfulness.
 - b. You want your child to grow up to be good decision makers but they will never get a decision making class in school and not usually a clear and accurate one at home either.
 - c. They don't magically become good decision-makers on their own.
 - d. They use what they observe from you, other family members, their peers, and media.
 - e. But they done get to 'see or hear' the inner workings of the mind. They usually see the situation and your response, but the steps in between are not clear to them.
 - f. When they graduate from high school, no magic lighting bolt from the sky strikes them and endows them with good decision-making skills. They must be learned, usually role model, then practiced a lot to become good.
 - g. You need to know the decision-making process, so you can be a good decision making yourself, and then think out loud to your child will hear that same process and have a better chance of earning it in using it.
 - h. East decision has 6 components and these are the 6 components. They spell out the word SPEARS.
 - i. Situation – the scenario that needs a decision
 - ii. Perspective – the lenses you use to view the situation. Hopefully it isn't just your initial quick view or a me-centered view. Ideally, your are using a Godly perspective of the situation.
 - iii. Emotion – depending on your view, you will have a feeling. In order to think clearly, process the situation and options, you need to keep you emotions under control.
 - iv. Assessment – options with pros and cons thought through with a clear, unemotional head.
 - v. Response – the decision you make
 - vi. Summary Thought – reviewing whether your decision appropriately meets your short and long-term needs in a healthy way
 - i. Problem-solve out loud as you go through these steps sees what you wrestle with (don't share everything, but share what is age appropriate) so your child will learn these elements, their sequence, and how to problem solve in a healthy way.
 - i. You will also build a stronger bond with them by sharing out loud and being more transparent regarding your struggles and your courage to navigate them well.



7. Be a good role model.
 - a. Your children observe you very sharply.
 - b. If you say one way is right, but they see you doing the opposite (like taking the extra \$5 at the checkout and not informing the store of the mistake, or yelling at your wife or kids when you tell your kids not to yell, or you don't follow through on the commitments or little 'promises' you make but expect them to), this will incredibly undermine any voice you want to have in their life. They will doubt your intentions with them.
 - c. Being a good role model keeps you on your toes and helps you avoid complacency or lazy functioning physically, relationally, psychologically, and spiritually.
8. Don't assume other people will teach your kids what they need to know spiritually or psychologically.
 - a. You and your wife will be the major influences of your child's self-esteem, confidence.
 - b. The more you teach and instruct your child in the basics of life, the more they will look up to you and value your opinion.
 - c. Make a couple specific times per week to teach them the spiritual truths and tie those truths into their daily life activities so they can see the application of their faith to guide daily life management.
 - i. In that SPEARS decision-making process described above, teaching them these truths help them develop Godly lenses to see them taking the events around them.
9. Put in the work now when there are little kids.
 - a. It will help you bond with them, and them with you.
 - b. It makes your job a lot easier each progressive year of their life.
 - c. It also makes their teenage and adult years much more rewarding and pleasurable.
 - d. If you don't put in the effort now, it will sap you of so much energy as life will be more stressful because of their struggles and your distance from them.
 - e. If they are older, it's never too late to apologize, and ask them what they would want to see different in their relationship with you.
 - ii. Then go over these elements if they are old enough, or just start doing them if they are too young to understand.
10. Be a leader in the house.
 - a. As a man of the house, your role is to be the leader.
 - b. Leaders serve the people that they are responsible for, just as Jesus served us.
 - c. Leaders also make decisions, decisions that are in the best long-term healthy interest of the family and the individuals they serve.
 - d. Leaders are stable and consistent. They don't vacillate based on their emotions or the winds of popular opinion.
 - e. Leaders solicit, take in, and evaluate input and feedback from the rest of the family in order to make good decisions.
11. Give them lots of words of affirmation.
 - a. Tell them you love them, value them, and enjoy hanging out with them.
 - b. Continually tell them what they're good at and take interest in the things they're interested in.
 - c. Don't lie to them. We can always find something to be positive about.
 - d. When giving them correction criticism, do it from a perspective of wanting to help them be more successful in enjoying life and communicate that motivation to them in your word, attitude, tone of voice, and body language.
12. Children need SARCASM – God is the only one that can fully give all, but as their Earthly father, you are responsible for helping your child grow these and pointing them to God for full measure of these.
 - a. Self – to know who they are, that they are unique, their style, personality, character, skills
 - b. Ability – some areas they have special gifting for that they can be excited about and enjoy



- c. Relationships – need to be connected, valued, and helpful to others
- d. Consistency – change is disrupting and wastes time and energy that should go to normal life
- e. Adoration – unconditional love by their parents
- f. Safety – growing up is filled with hurts, letdowns, losses, deaths, change, mild and occas major traumas, so helping with as much relational, emotional, and psychological safety as possible is important.
- g. Meaning – knowing why we are here and having a purpose or role in the family and society.