

# Dads

The Apostle Paul wrote to the disciples in the church in Thessalonica:

## 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 TPT

**11** And you know how affectionately we treated each one of you, like a loving father cares for his own children. **12** We comforted and encouraged you and challenged you to adopt a lifestyle worthy of God, who invites you into his kingdom and glory.

The Apostle Paul was like a father in the faith and he spoke to the church as a representative of the Heavenly Father (1 Corinthians 4:15).

Notice that the Apostle Paul displayed *affection* and *loving care*. He comforted them. He didn't discourage but instead *encouraged* them. Additionally, Paul *challenged* them - he confronted and provoked them toward a godly life.

Wouldn't we all be better off and blessed if our fathers at home and in church acted in these ways shown in the example of the Apostle Paul?

You don't have to be a perfect dad to be a great father to your children.

You don't have to have a perfect father to be a great son or daughter and a person with faith in our Heavenly Father.

Holidays like Father's Day or Mother's Day sometimes become about us as children. They test us as children. We may not have had *good* or *perfect* parents but we have a chance to honor them and be good to them.

The Bible offers stories of those who have great dads and terrible dads but there was only one perfect Father.

# Imperfect Dads

There are a number of people in the Bible who had imperfect dads.

## David

It's possible that David, who was called "a man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:22), was illegitimate (Psalm 51:5).

This is possibly why Jesse only presented David's seven brothers to the prophet Samuel and left David in the field (1 Samuel 16:10-11).

Jesse treated David as less than the others, God did not. He may have reasons to treat one of his sons differently, as less than the rest of the family. But God didn't exclude David from greatness. Instead, He chose him!

David was a type of Jesus to come. They accused Jesus of being illegitimate (Joseph wasn't his biological father). They rejected Jesus, but God chose Him (Acts 4:11).

## Jonathan

Jonathan was the king's son, but his father was unstable and untrustworthy, and extremely violent.

King Saul tried to kill his son, Jonathan, twice (1 Samuel 14:42-45, 1 Samuel 20:30-34).

Despite the fact that Saul was a violent, abusive, cursing, imbalanced, and angry dad Jonathan died honoring him, fighting the Lord's enemies and protecting David, his friend.

Jonathan was able to overcome all of Saul's flaws. God, the Heavenly Father, watched over him and preserved him.

## New Testament Dads

There are behaviors which present us a picture of what a person's dad was like.

The dad of the rich young ruler probably was materialistic and status drive.  
The dad of the woman at the well was probably cold, distant, disapproving, and absent.  
The dad of the Good Samaritan was likely compassionate and decisive  
The dad of the Gadarene Demoniac may have been ashamed and embarrassed. Maybe he told people that his son was dead because he felt powerless to help.  
The dad of the Prodigal Son offered unconditional love and held faith that God would one day restore him to the family.

## God, The Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ

God is a “family man” from the beginning and we are told and taught by Jesus to call Him our Father. God isn’t just a Creator or Righteous Judge. He is our Father.

### Romans 8:15-16 TPT

**15** And you did not receive the “spirit of religious duty,” leading you back into the fear of never being good enough. But you have received the “Spirit of full acceptance,” enfolding you into the family of God. And you will never feel orphaned, for as he rises up within us, our spirits join him in saying the words of tender affection, “Beloved Father!” **16** For the Holy Spirit makes God’s fatherhood real to us as he whispers into our innermost being, “You are God’s beloved child!”

## Conclusion

There were dads that were honestly terrible. Even the dads who we might call good dads can not compare to our Heavenly Father. Despite how good a dad he was, the father of the prodigal son still had a son who ended up in the pigpen.

No matter how perfect or imperfect our dads were, we all need to be born again. Only the Heavenly Father has the power to deliver and save and satisfy our soul. He is the only one who can deal with our sin and our proclivity to sin.

Every earthly father has limitation but our Heavenly Father is perfect and complete in every way. He can give what our dads could not. He can do what our earthly fathers could not.

## **John 1:12 NKJV**

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God,  
to those who believe in His name