### PARENTING – Sons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key #1 – Keep it simple</th>
<th>Key #2 – Avoid the common mistakes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pray: simple yet powerful act</td>
<td>Fixing: this is a person, not a project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listen: people long to feel heard</td>
<td>Preaching: walk alongside, don’t talk down</td>
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<td>Ask: good questions foster healthy conversation</td>
<td>Blaming: no condemnation in Christ Jesus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consider: think slowly and biblically</td>
<td>Solving: you’re not the “answer man” (or woman)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage: uplift rather than beat down</td>
<td>Carrying: be concerned but not overburdened</td>
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### Scriptures

**Hope:**
- **Proverbs 22:6** (train up a child in the way he should go)
- **Proverbs 10:1** (a wise son makes father glad)
- **Matthew 3:17: 17-18** (“My beloved son ... I am pleased”)
- **Proverbs 4:10** (“Hear my words... that your years be many”)
- **Psalm 139:13-16** (uniquely and wonderfully designed by God)

**Help:**
- **Psalm 144:12** (let our sons in their youth be as grown-up plants)
- **1 Corinthians 4:15-16** (I’m your spiritual father; be imitators of me)
- **Deuteronomy 6:1-7** (teach your sons My word diligently)
- **1 Thessalonians 2:8** (I loved you so much, I shared my life)
- **Proverbs 29:18** (with no vision will be a lack of restraint)
- **Psalm 119:9** (how can a young man keep pure?)
- **Proverbs 9:12** (whether wise or scoffing, you alone will bear it)
- **Proverbs 13:1** (a wise son heeds his father’s discipline)
- **Hebrews 12:4-11** (the value of fatherly discipline in this life)
- **1 Samuel 16:7** (don’t look at a man’s outward appearance)
- **Proverbs 19:22** (kindness is desirable in a man)
- **1 Corinthians 13:11** (let no one look down on you because of youth)
- **Joshua 1:9** (be strong and courageous)
- **1 Corinthians 16:13** (act like men; be strong)
- **Galatians 6:9** (Do not grow weary and you will reap in due time)

### Online Helps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Raising a Modern-Day Knight</strong> by Robert Lewis (Paperback)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Boys Should Be Boys</strong> by Meg Meeker, M.D. (Paperback)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Squire and the Scroll</strong> by Jennie Bishop (Paperback)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Four Pillars of a Man’s Heart</strong> by Stu Weber (Paperback)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Raising Kids for True Greatness</strong> by Tim Kimmel (Paperback)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grace-Based Parenting</strong> by Tim Kimmel (Paperback)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Playstation Nation</strong> by Kurt Bruner and Olivia Bruner (Audio CD)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Raising a Modern-Day Joseph</strong> by Larry Fowler (Paperback)</td>
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### Conversation Starters

- Do you pray regularly for your son? With him?
- If you had only three words to describe your son which words would you chose? Why?
- What does your son do that makes you laugh?
- In what ways is your son like you? In what ways are they more like your spouse?
- How much time do you spend with your son? What do you like to do together?
- What are your greatest concerns about parenting a son?
- How would you describe your relationship with your son?
- What are the goals you have for your son as he becomes a man?
- The most important relationship in your daughter’s life is the one she has with Jesus Christ. Has she verbalized her belief in Jesus as her Savior and how is that impacting her development?
- What does being a father (or mother) of a son mean to you?
- Dad, how are you modeling godly manhood? Where could you improve?
- How are you opening your inner life to your son? (1 Thess. 2:8)
PARENTING – Raising Sons

<table>
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<th>LISTEN</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Listen for key or repeated words that they use to express their concerns</td>
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<td>• Listen for what emotions they are expressing towards self, spouse, son, or others</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Listen for who they see as the source of any problems—self, spouse, son, or others</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Listen for a willingness to accept responsibility for any relational difficulties between parent and son</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Check your understanding level often by rephrasing what you think you are hearing</td>
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<th>ASK</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Are you involved in a Bible-believing local church?</td>
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<td>• Do you have a group of men who will help you build into your son’s life?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Have you taught your son a biblical definition of manhood?</td>
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<td>• How are you sharing spiritual principles with your son?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Dad, are you opening up your inner life to him? (1 Thessalonians 2:8)</td>
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<td>• How are you teaching your son the importance of setting priorities?</td>
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<td>• Are you following God and inviting your son to follow you?</td>
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<td>• Dad, are you modeling how to treat women well by how you treat your son’s mother?</td>
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<td>• Mom, are you modeling godly womanhood that will teach your son what to look for in a wife someday?</td>
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<td>• In your home how do you monitor media intake to insure that he is not becoming ensnared by the world’s seduction?</td>
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<td>• Does your son have your permission to be who God designed him to be? And does he feel your pleasure in that?</td>
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<td>• Does your son show signs if taking initiative or is he more passive, even on things that are important?</td>
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<td>• How are you celebrating your son’s inner character rather than just his athletic abilities or physical attributes?</td>
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<th>CONSIDER</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Consider prayerfully what the person is saying before attempting to offer specific guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• As the mentor, what role do you need to play right now in the life of this person?</td>
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<td>• Consider whether God’s authority currently plays a role in the person’s life. Potential questions for this:</td>
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<td>• Consider how to wisely introduce a biblical paradigm where the person has not done so. For example:</td>
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<th>ENCOURAGE</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Esteem them for reaching out to a mentor in the area of parenting sons</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage your person to get involved in a local, Bible-believing church for spiritual growth and accountability</td>
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<td>• Encourage them to say “I love you” as often as their son can stand it</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage dads to consider connecting with other men in a Men’s group</td>
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<td>• Encourage dads to do projects with their sons, like washing the car (and his bike), painting a fence, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage them to invite God into conversations with their son(s) through prayer every day</td>
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<td>• Encourage dads to include their sons in recreational activities; do “guy stuff” together to reinforce masculinity</td>
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<td>• Encourage them to model obedience and humility by admitting their own mistakes in parenting</td>
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<td>• Remind them that the relationship they have with their son(s) is more important than any list of rules</td>
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<td>• Remind them that it is important to develop a vision and strategy for the kind of people you want your son to become</td>
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<td>• Encourage them (along with their spouse) to develop a parenting mission statement to guide parenting decisions</td>
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<td>• Encourage them to be responsible for the spiritual/moral development of their sons and not leave it up to the church</td>
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<td>• Remind dads that it is important to model the type of Christian man you would like your son to become (“imitate me”)</td>
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<td>• Remind moms that it is important to model what a godly Christian woman/wife looks like</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage them to look to God’s Word for principles to address the son’s behaviors and decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Remind them that perhaps the most important thing they can do for their son in the home is to love their own spouse</td>
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“Settle upon a manhood definition that you and your son can pursue together. You cannot call your son to a vision you cannot define. And remember, the deeper your commitment to personally pursue this vision yourself is, the better for your son. It must be real to you in order to be real to him.” (Robert Lewis, *Raising a Modern-Day Knight*, p. 61)

“We often view spiritual training as an event. God expands it to include a lifestyle! The father who has committed himself to these ideals and has placed them upon his own heart is continually looking for opportunities to teach them to his son.” (Robert Lewis, *Raising a Modern-Day Knight*, p. 72)

“Life is more than a job. Sons need to hear this from a dad. They need to see this in his life. Nothing satisfies the human heart as fully as service for the kingdom—in one’s area of giftedness.” (Robert Lewis, *Raising a Modern-Day Knight*, p. 76)

“If you are serious about moving your son to manhood, begin asking the Lord to lead you to a small community of men. Seek out a group of fathers with sons who will band together with you in the adventure.” (Robert Lewis, *Raising a Modern-Day Knight*, p. 151)

“I believe the greatest relational longing that a man has is the need for a heart connection with his father. When that connection is gone—whether it has been severed or was never established—it launches him into a passionate search for the love, approval, and affirmation of a dad.” (Crawford Loritts, *Never Walk Away*, p. 26)

“Biblical manhood was never intended to be burdensome. Instead, real manhood was designed by God to be liberating and a means of great reward.” (Robert Lewis, *Raising a Modern-Day Knight*, p. 58)

“Typically what passes for masculine training in most homes is vague and hit-or-miss. We assume sons will somehow ‘get it.’ But most don’t.” (R. Lewis, *Raising a Modern-Day Knight*, p. 10)

“The tragedy is that so many men have left [discipline] to their children’s mothers. Not only is this unfair to the mother, but it robs the child of the security and self-esteem which come from being disciplined by the father.” (Kent Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Man*, p. 52)

“If we view fatherhood as a series of problems and solutions, we miss the first and most important principle: successful parenthood depends on who you are more than on the techniques you know.” (Dan Doriani, *The Life of a God-Made Man*, p. 84)

“I cannot stress enough how important it is for you as a parent to both recognize and honor who your child is and what gifts and abilities he or she possesses. Don’t overlook or play down talents that seem odd or undesirable to you. Play up your child’s gifts!” (Robert Lewis, *The New Eve*, p. 106)

“We have yet to meet a child (or an adult, for that matter) who feels deeply loved when he is given only occasional bursts of ‘quality time.’” (Dennis and Barbara Rainey, *Growing a Spiritually Strong Family*, p. 33)

“You might have heard the old adage: it’s not quantity time that matters; it’s quality time. But really, that’s a partial truth. It is quality time that matters, but quality time can only happen when plenty of quantity time is available.” (Stephen Arterburn and Sam Gallucci, *Road Warrior*, p. 52)

“As you parent you must never back off from giving affection. When your sons and daughters are teenagers, it may feel awkward—but don’t stop. They still need your loving touch.” (Dennis Rainey, *Growing a Spiritually Strong Family*, p. 35)

“Good fathers exhort and encourage and implore their sons; great fathers drive home these messages with their own spiritual, moral, and social integrity ... In a thousand different ways, a son absorbs his father’s values by witnessing actions, behaviors, and attitudes. The real legacy we leave in our sons’ lives is what we have lived out before them.” (Robert Lewis, *Raising a Modern-Day Knight*, p. 161)

“There is a cause and effect between encouragement and confidence. Kids who hear well-timed and well-placed affirmation from their parents are more easily convinced of the truth the Bible says about their intrinsic worth.” (Tim Kimmel, *Grace-Based Parenting*, p. 83)

“We need to let our children know they can come to us at any time about anything. After the first few times that they come to us and hear us assume responsibility and apologize for our actions against them, they’ll know they can trust us with their emotions.” (Tim Kimmel, *The High Cost of High Control*, p. 172)

“When we model qualities of our Father in heaven by allowing the love of Jesus Christ to flow through us and into our children, we’re succeeding as parents. We do not propose a complicated, deeply theological set of practices to make this happen. Our advice is simple and summarized by three ‘T’s: time, touch, and talk.” (Dennis and Barbara Rainey, *Growing a Spiritually Strong Family*, p. 32)

“Our children hunger to know that they are loved unconditionally, through failure and success, no matter what they say or do. And, while few would ever admit it, they are dying to experience the security and comfort that come with appropriate boundaries.” (Dan Allender, *How Children Raise Parents*, p. 26)

“Every young man needs a comprehensive view of life that begins with this fundamental proposition: True satisfaction in life is directly proportionate to one’s obedience to God. In this context, moral boundaries take on a whole new perspective: They become benefits, not burdens.” (Robert Lewis, *Raising a Modern-Day Knight*, p. 69)
Prayer Prompts

- If they have not mentioned God or faith in their message(s) so far, let them know that you believe that prayer is powerful and that you would like to pray for them right now. You may want to say, "Would it be okay if I prayed for you right now?"
- Include prayers for both the person and their daughter(s)
- Don’t feel compelled to pray for everything all at once. Short prayers over time are a powerful encouragement.
- Assure them of God’s presence, power and love.
- Make it personal by using their name and the name of their daughter(s) at least once in the body of the prayer.
- Incorporate Scripture in your prayer whenever possible, especially if your person is a believer.

Special Considerations

- Young boys need more active play than girls. This is a normal and necessary part of being a boy. Give them space (indoors and outdoors) where they can be active.
- Boys learn more from watching and doing than from words. Demonstrate how to do a task—walk along side them as they do it rather than just giving verbal instructions.
- Boys love heroes. Help them to understand that the character of their heroes is more important than their physical powers (during the superhero stage) or athletic ability. Use the heroes they choose to teach lessons about God and godly character.
- Boys play rough and will act out fight scenes. Let them be boys, but also teach them that fighting isn’t the best way to solve our differences with one another.
- Boys and girls both have a full range of emotions, but boys will more readily express anger than hurt or disappointment. Help your son learn how to deal with anger in an appropriate way. Model anger management and role play how to deal with situations where they are likely to become angry.
- Boys are likely to be more competitive than girls—especially in sports. Winning and losing in these activities presents teachable moments. Be sure to model good sportsmanship. Teach that there is honor in a good effort even when you lose. Give praise for good effort and understanding when he doesn’t do his best. Perfection is not the goal.
- Boys tend to be their own worst critics, so be his encourager.
- As your son grows, respect his uniqueness and the choices he makes that are different than the ones you made. If you were hoping for a jock but your son’s interests lean toward music, for example, don’t be disappointed. Instead, encourage him to be who God created him to be. Don’t live your life vicariously through him. This puts pressure that he’s not equipped to handle.
- Sons need one-on-one time with Dad.
- Be purposeful in training your pre-adolescent son in manhood—character, responsibility, handling disappointment, how to treat a woman, etc. Don’t just talk to him, mentor him. (e.g. Moses and Joshua)
- Sons need to know that their parents (especially dads) love them and are proud of them. When your son hears “You’re mine, I love you, and I am proud of you” often, it builds his confidence and gives him security. (Matthew 3:17; 17:5)
- Share stories with them of what you were like when you were their age.
- Teach your son how to overcome fear and show courage and initiative in the face of injustice.
- Share with him how you came to faith in Jesus Christ and what God is doing in your life now.
- Start praying with your son regularly when he is young and don’t stop as he grows older.
- Be involved in your local church. Talk with your son about what was shared in the sermon or what you learned in your adult class. Let him know how you plan to implement what you learned.
- Fathers, be the spiritual leader in your home. Reject passivity and teach your son to do the same. (1 Samuel 12:36)
- It is never too late to start telling your son that you love him and are proud of him. Do it today and repeat it often!

See Also

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Going Deeper

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