

# What is Missing from Good Fatherhood?

*This week and next are guest posts around Father's Day. Earlier this year, I met Kent Evans, Co-founder and Executive Director of the Manhood Journey and Father on Purpose communities, and was immediately drawn to his shared passion for creating better men and better fathers.*

*The first post comes from Director of Outreach, Ryan Sanders, who writes about the motives for becoming a more godly husband and father. Next week, Kent provides his 7 reminders of being a good father.*

*I hope you enjoy both of these encouraging posts and start becoming a father on purpose. **-Rich, your Chief God Buddy***

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I know you. You want to be a better dad – a good father. But you're exhausted trying to do it all. Could it be with all of your running around trying to be better—that you're doing it for the wrong reasons?

In this post, I'm suggesting yes. You could be trying to be a "better dad" for the wrong reasons. Your motivations might be jacked up—and this is killing you. Let me explain.

"You may have to fight a battle more than once to win it."

–Margaret Thatcher

Every dad I talk to wants to know how to be a good dad. But why do you want to be a good dad?

Between the statistics of father absence and the number of disengaged dads who are simply “present” enough to pass the US Census Bureau survey, I see you. Something’s missing from your fatherhood?

## **What’s Missing from Godly Fatherhood?**

Simply put, we don’t know God.

When it comes to fatherhood, in many cases, we either want the wrong thing or we want the right thing for the wrong reasons. We’ve asked over 2,000 dads “What is your biggest challenge?” Many dads tell us they walk around feeling like a failure.

At best, our motives will have us walking around exhausted while trying to do the right thing. At worst, we’ll use our “holiness” for the manipulation of others just to get what we want.

When we really know God, we enjoy a daily reliance on Him. We need to repent daily and be more like David in his reliance on God, The Good Shepherd.

In Psalm 23, David says of the good father:

*The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack. He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He renews my life; He leads me along the right paths for His name's sake. Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff—they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Only goodness and faithful love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord as long as I live.*

– *Psalms 23:1-6*

Read verse 3 again. *“He renews my life; He leads me along the right paths for His name's sake.”*

For His sake. As in, not yours. All of our daily work must point to God—not ourselves—or for what we stand to gain from “doing right”.

Consider your motivations for wanting to be a better dad. Then, consider the following lists of weak motives, biblical motives, and some adjustments if you're in the warning zone.

### **Weak motives for being a good father:**

- To get sex from your wife.
- For your kids to want to be like you.
- So your friends respect you.
- To prove you're better off than your parents were.
- To avoid paying alimony.

- So you don't get divorced like everyone around you.

## **Biblical motives for being a good father:**

- Because you will give an account (2 Corinthians 5:9-10).
- Your child, like you, has a sin nature and must be taught (Romans 3:10-12 and Proverbs 22:15).
- You are convinced that God's way is the best way (Psalm 1:1-13; John 10:10).
- Because you have a goal in mind (Colossians 1:28).
- To give your child a biblical worldview.
- To be a credible leader in the home—"managing their children and their own households competently" (1 Timothy 3:12).
- So that God's name is glorified "that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

I wrote more on this topic in my original post, *The Good Father*, and included some adjustments that you can make if you are in the warning zone.

Brothers, know that I write this while looking through the log in my own eye. Consider your motives when trying to be a father. Could it be you're seeking the right things for the wrong motives?

The Good Father, like The Good Shepherd, not only does he lay down his life for the sheep, but he spends his time loving and teaching His sheep. His sheep hear his voice. His sheep know him, and they follow him.

What is one weak motive you need to crush so you become a more godly husband and father?

If you think you have no weaknesses, re-read Rich's post Summary of the Traits of a GB Relationship and then find yourself a God Buddy who can help you see your blind-spots. Then remain accountable to becoming the best father you can be.

Feel free to comment on these motives and adjustments below.

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