

Bad Dads of the Bible: Honorable Men Who Made Horrible Parenting Mistakes

The Bible, God's Word, is filled with many honorable men upon whom God poured his favor. But it may also be noted that these men also made some horrible mistakes when it came to raising their children.

That led Roland Warren, former president of the National Father Initiative, to write his book, titled "Bad Dads of the Bible: 8 Mistakes Every Good Dad Can Avoid," nearly 10 years ago. While it made its impact then, it's still a narrative that many Christian fathers can take to heart, especially when celebrating Father's Day this Sunday.

It's a subject that, on Friday evening on the Trinity Broadcast Network, Warren will talk about with his guest on a Father's Day special titled "What Good Dads Do." Dr. Tony Evans, former Tennessee Titans wide receiver Chris Sanders, former NFL offensive lineman Ed McGlasson and others will appear as guests and will unpack the things that good dads do to lovingly guide their children in a culture that can be challenging to Christian values.

And make no mistake—every father will make mistakes, and big ones—along his journey as the leader of his home, no matter if he is a Christian or not.

"Many have this notion that if you're a good Christian, then you're automatically a good father," Warren, now the president and CEO of Care Net, the nation's largest network of pregnancy resource centers, told Charisma News. "That's not necessarily the case, especially with some of these well-known men of the Bible." Over the course of their journeys, Abraham, Isaac, Saul, Eli, Jacob and others messed up—and messed up badly—many

times.

“Isaac, for example, turned a blind eye to sibling rivalry with Jacob and Esau,” Warren says. “King David was paralyzed by his past because he didn’t step in when Amnon raped his sister. He didn’t take responsibility for that and do something about it. Eli missed the mark tremendously when he failed to step in and discipline his children. Noah failed to tame his children’s talents to use them for the Lord. Each one of these stories is viewed through the lens of fatherhood.”

But one of the biggest questions fathers in America must ask themselves is how do I not let my past mistakes paralyze me? Warren says one needs only to look at and study the relationship that Jesus had with God the Father and the good things he did for Jesus.

“When you look at God’s relationship with Christ ... God was a heavenly Father who listened to Jesus,” Warren once told in a podcast. “Jesus talked about that in The Lord’s Prayer. The angels came and protected Jesus and warned Joseph before Herod could get to him. He comforted Jesus ... in the story of the Garden of Gethsemane. He met Jesus at his point of need after he fasted for 40 days and 40 nights. There were angels there.

“Those four things, if you’re a dad, should be a priority,” he says. “You should be listening to your kids. You should be protecting your kids. You should be comforting your kids, and you’re meeting them at their needs. That’s what nurturing really is.”

And as a Christian father, one who is still in the home and part of the family unit, it’s those four crucial elements you should never take for granted with your children. And why?

Take this horrifying statistic into consideration. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 18.4 million children in America, or about 1 in 4, live without a biological, step or adoptive father in the home.

Many Christian leaders have pointed to fatherlessness as one of the reasons the youth of America are abandoning churches in our culture today and opting for lives of selfishness.

“Often, kids have a hole in their soul in the shape of their dad,” Warren says. “Many of those fathers are unwilling to fill that hole, and that leaves children with a wounded soul. That’s why you see so many of the social ills like teen pregnancy, poverty, drugs, crime ... it’s the why behind the what. There’s a breakdown in the family, and it’s generally because of the exit of the father. You don’t see that or say that about mothers because there aren’t many mothers that exit the family unit.

“There’s a river that runs through all of these things, and there are consequences,” he adds. “We need communities of fathers who hold each other accountable. You cannot honor a father who is not honorable. One of the bad mistakes Saul made was that he made it difficult for his children to be honorable simply because of his behavior. He was not honorable. So, from a spiritual perspective and from a social perspective, there are tremendous issues and challenges for fathers.”

Warren says this timeless weapon can help shield your kids from today’s damaging culture.

From Scripture, we receive the encouragement that the men who made these horrible parenting mistakes learned from them and atoned for them.

So, take to heart that even godly men of the Bible messed up, just as you have. But they also made up for it, and you can too. God truly loves fatherhood and fathers, so trust in God the Father to help you make the right choices for your children. {eoa}

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