

# A Good Husband and Father

*by Bryan Gibson*

We're not interested in the world's description—only God's. Here is God's description of a good husband and father.

He has the same resolve that Joshua expressed many years ago—"But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15). Leading his family to heaven is number one, and his leadership reflects that. To set the proper example, he does just as Ezra did—he prepares his heart to seek the law of the Lord, to obey it, and to teach it (Ezra 7:9-10).

He rules his house, using Christ's rule as a pattern (Hebrews 4:14-16). That being the case, he doesn't rule in a selfish way, but in a way that takes into account the needs of everyone in the family (Ephesians 5:23; 1 Timothy 3:4-5, 12; 1 Peter 3:7; Philippians 2:4; Matthew 20:25-28). As careful as he is to avoid becoming too harsh or selfish, he also knows that he can become too soft. He is not afraid to make the tough decisions, decisions he is convinced are right, but may not be popular with the rest of the family.

He loves his wife, not just "in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18). Again, Christ is His pattern—the love He has for the church (Ephesians 5:25). With Christ as His model, he sacrifices himself for her (1 John 3:16-17); he doesn't put more on her than she can bear (Matthew 11:28-30); he strives to meet her every need (Philippians 4:19); he shares his possessions with her (Ephesians 1:3, 7; 2:7); he is kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving (Ephesians 4:32); and he loves her through even the worst of times (Romans 8:35).

He loves his children, and so he does the very best thing for them—he brings them up "in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). He provides for their every need—physical, emotional, and above all, spiritual—just like his heavenly Father does for His children. He is firm in his discipline, not afraid to use the "rod" (Proverbs 3:11-12; 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15, 17), but he is careful not to go too far. He doesn't want his children to become provoked or discouraged (Colossians 3:21), and so he balances correction with praise.

He is a good provider (1 Timothy 5:8). He doesn't "overwork to be rich" (Proverbs 23:4), but he knows it takes money to live, and so he works hard and is dependable in his work (Ephesians 6:5-8). He understands that it's his job to provide for his family, not someone else (1 Thessalonians 4:10-12). Circumstances may arise when he has to ask for help, but he knows that it's much more satisfying to eat the labor of his own hands (Psalms 128:2).

He knows what a big job he has, so he prays for God's help, with the full assurance that he will receive it (1 John 5:14-15). He prays daily, earnestly, and fervently (2 Timothy 1:3; Colossians 4:2, 12), because this is the most important job he will ever have, and he wants to get it right.