

A Father's Challenges Gen 25.20-34 and others

Overcoming the failures of the past

Jacob was a wheeler dealer who could manipulate circles round most people.

But by the time he left Laban's household Jacob's oldest children would have been teenagers. It's pretty sure that Jacob's kids knew about their dad's reputation.

Adult children we have choices about how they respond to their fathers' failures.

Follow in his footsteps or take warning?

Jacob's oldest sons seem to have picked up their father's habit of deceiving people. But his younger sons, who grew up after he had submitted to God's will in his life, seem to be different.

It's important that dads let their kids see the difference that following Jesus makes in their lives. We all shape our kids, whether we like it or not, and they need to understand how your faith informs your decisions about what you do or don't do.

Providing for their families in the present

Most dads want to create a sense of security in the home. But how do you do that when even your own job isn't secure?

Blessing and inspiring their children for the future

Gary Smalley wrote a book some time ago called *The Blessing* in which he encouraged contemporary fathers to pass on a spiritual blessing to their children in five practical ways.

Meaningful touch

Jacob embraced and kissed and laid his hands on his sons and grandchildren. It's important for fathers to express their love for their kids physically.

Verbal affirmation

Children long to hear their dads say, "I'm proud of you." "You did that well." "I love you."

Attaching value

We bless our children by letting them know that they are valuable to us. It means we look them in the eye when we talk to them, and we stop and we listen to them.

Picturing a positive future

We can bless our kids by helping them dream and envision a good future.

Active commitment

There has to be a willingness in the parent to sacrifice for the child, to pray, to spend time in helping develop their gifts, to spend money for lessons and for higher education.

Resent imperfections or extend forgiveness?

All of our kids will have to extend forgiveness to us at some point; many already have. So we need to be forgiving towards our fathers for where they fell short.