

The Influence of the Father

1. What are some of your earliest good memories of your Father?
2. Ephesians 6:2-3 “Honour your father and mother.” This is the first commandment with a promise: If you honour your father and mother, “things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth.” Do you find it easy to honour your parents?
Why may this be difficult for you
3. Can someone give a 30sec summary of Earnest Shackleton's expedition to be the first person to circumnavigate Antarctica?
4. In what ways did Shackleton fail after his return to the US after his adventure?
5. Many men in our society succeed on the sports field, in the work place, in music or the arts and yet fail in their homes.
Why is this? Discuss
6. People, who have had abusive Fathers, can struggle to see God as a father. In what ways do some fathers (and mothers) unintentionally abuse their children?
7. Ephesians 6:4 *Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.* Many severe emotional problems such as low self-esteem, feelings of failure, depression or frustration can date back to negative childhood experiences of harsh criticism, unfair discipline or embarrassment in front of others. **Any testimonies or examples**
8. Many children complain these days that *"My parents never listen to me"*
Why is this the case?
9. Often the most important lessons are learnt at times we least expect – tidying up the section, cleaning up the garage, fixing the car, a car journey.
Give some examples.

10. A child's mind is like jelly – it gets shaped into the mould that surrounds it. It's important to surround it with the good stuff before it sets. A young open mind is like loading software onto a new computer - eventually the hard drive fills up and it takes longer to accommodate new stuff. **Discuss**
11. Lot chose to go toward Sodom (Gen 18), a place of extreme sinfulness. We must be careful not to lead our children into a place of sin that may ensnare them. **What sort of places may be more harmful than we realise?**
12. Our season of significant input into the lives of our children (and grandchildren) will be over sooner than we realise. List some ways can we **make the most of our opportunities** to serve, love and positively influence our families.

Pray for each other's families