THE DIFFERENCE A DAD CAN MAKE  
EPH 6:4 / 6-16-19 / AM

I. FIRST, BEING A DAD ISN’T A CHOICE.
   A. God expects dads to be involved in raising their kids.
   B. Paul makes this clear in our text—6:4 “Fathers…bring them up”.
      1. This isn’t an option.
      2. The tense of this verb is an “imperative” meaning it’s a command.

II. SECOND, BEING A DAD REQUIRES FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS.
   A. Men are notorious about following instructions.
   B. Paul, however, provides two kinds of instructions for dads to follow.
      1. The first instruction is a negative, something dads shouldn’t do.
         a. Paul says to dads in our text—“Father’s do not exasperate your children…”
         b. Paul isn’t referring to the “garden variety” kind of anger.
         c. Instead, Paul is talking about an anger that can lead children to rebel against parental authority.
         d. This is the meaning of the Greek word Paul uses here. It’s “parorgizete”. It’s a call to avoid unfair or cruel behavior that results in alienation.
         e. Paul has already instructed Christians, certainly including Christian parents about anger—Eph. 4:31-32.
      2. The second instruction by Paul to dads is positive. He lists two positive things dads must do.
         a. One positive action says Paul is---“Fathers….train your children.”
            i. The Greek word used here is “paideia” and means discipline with actions and with words, both words of correction and words of encouragement.
ii. The Bible tells us in several places when and how parents are to discipline their children.

   **Early** “discipline while there is still hope”  
   *(Pvbs. 19:8)*

   **Consistently** “do not hold discipline back”  
   *(Pvbs.23:13)*

   **Painfully** “No discipline seems enjoyable at the time, but painful” *(Heb. 12:11)*

   **Lovingly** “the Lord disciplines those He loves”  
   *(Rev. 3: 19)*

b. A second positive action says Paul is—“**Fathers...bring your children up in the instruction of the Lord.**”

   i. Too many dads are more concerned with their children’s batting average or grade average than they are with their spiritual instruction.

   ii. Paul says don’t sacrifice your child’s spiritual well-being for their physical well-being.

   iii. Unlike sports, spiritual training is more “caught” than “taught”.

   iv. If the things of God aren’t important to you then they won’t be important to your children either.