

F A T H E R S

Stewardship over sacred ordinances of the priesthood.

The proclamation states, "Fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families." They teach their families the gospel and lead in kindness (see D&C 121:34–36).

Fathers perform priesthood ordinances and give priesthood blessings, including father's blessings to their children. They pray for and with family members, collectively and individually. They set an example of respect and love for their eternal companion and mother of their children. In all things they follow the example of the Savior and strive to be worthy of His name and His blessing. Fathers should seek constantly for guidance from the Holy Ghost so they will know what to do, what to say, and also know what not to do and what not to say. They serve the family and the Church in the spirit of love and enthusiasm, by example preparing family members to serve—especially preparing sons to serve as worthy missionaries.

Fathers are expected by God and His prophets not only to provide for their families but also to protect them. Dangers of all sorts abound in the world in which we live. Physical protection against natural or man-made hazards is important. Moral dangers are also all around us, confronting our children from their early years. Fathers play a vital role in protecting children against such snares.

On a day-to-day basis, fathers can and should help with the essential nurturing and bonding associated with feeding, playing, storytelling, loving, and all the rest of the activities that make up family life.

M O T H E R S

Stewardship over bestowing and nurturing mortal life, providing physical bodies for God's spirit children and guiding children toward a knowledge of gospel truths.

The proclamation teaches that "mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children."

Nurturing refers to parenting behaviors such as warmth, support, bonding, attachment, recognizing each child's unique abilities, and attending to children's needs. Nurturing in and of itself is more important in the development of a child than is any particular method or technique of child rearing. It hardly needs saying that nurturing is best carried out in a stable, safe, family context.

A mother's nurturing love arouses in children, from their earliest days on earth, an awakening of the memories of love and goodness they experienced in their premortal existence. Because our mothers love us, we learn, or more accurately remember, that God also loves us.

Today there is significant pressure in our materialistic world to have and spend more money. Unfortunately, this draws married mothers to work outside the home in order to provide a second income. As husbands, wives, and children recognize the difference between basic necessities and material wants, they lessen family financial burdens and contribute to helping mothers be at home. Decisions about working outside the home are difficult ones and need to be made prayerfully, keeping ever in mind the counsel of the living prophets on this complex issue.

President Gordon B. Hinckley, "The greatest job that any mother will ever do will be in nurturing, teaching, lifting, encouraging, and rearing her children in righteousness and truth. None other can adequately take her place."