

# Can you raise a good son without Dad?

*From Dannah Gresh:*

I want to speak a gentle word to the mothers who are parenting alone. This is hardly ever by choice. No one ever sets out on the journey of life saying, “Gee, I’d like to be a single mom.” But it happens nonetheless. Many moms pick themselves up and succeed in raising great sons. Take, for example, these good men who came out of fatherless homes:

- President George Washington
- John Hancock
- President Thomas Jefferson
- Aristotle
- Nelson Mandela
- Sir Isaac Newton
- Hans Christian Anderson
- Booker T. Washington

The appropriate question isn’t “*Can* you raise a son without a dad?” It’s “*Should* you?”

The answer is no. Not if you can help it, and if there is any possibility that the marriage can be reconciled. Divorce should never be taken lightly. I have never spoken to a divorced mother who recommends it or is happier because of it.

Social science data overwhelmingly declares that boys in father-absent homes are more at risk to be poor, become teen “fathers,” fail in school, use drugs, be involved in criminal activity...and seek authentic male community in unhealthy places such as gangs. This hardly sets a boy on a trajectory to become a “good” man.

In a fatherless generation, where the picture of manhood is distorted and almost nonexistent, we have a generation of young men crying out for one thing — definition. Definition comes from a father and an extended community of men who initiate our sons into manhood through rite-of-passage experiences. In short: Your son is best taught to direct his natural energies of risk-taking and aggressiveness toward a good purpose by having another man show him how to do it.

If you do not have the blessing of a man in your life — either a husband or a cooperative father to your children — you can rest assured that the Lord will be a father to your fatherless children. Stay on your knees and believe that he can straighten any crooked road for your children.

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