

The Leader's Marriage and Family

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I. God is very interested in the restoration of the home.

- A. God is restoring the church (Jeremiah 30:1-12, 18-20).
- B. At the same time He also wants the message of restoration to touch the individual families of the church (Jeremiah 31:1).

“At the same time,” says the LORD, “I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people.”

II. A leader's home must be a model home.

- A. God rebuked or judged leaders whose ministry did not effectively begin on the home front.
 - 1. Moses was not allowed to lead Israel out of bondage until his own sons were in proper covenant relationship (Exodus 4:24-26).

*And it came to pass on the way, at the encampment, that the LORD met him and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at Moses' feet, and said, “Surely you are a husband of blood to me!” **So He let him go.** Then she said, “You are a husband of blood!”--because of the circumcision.*

- 2. Eli lost his priesthood because he failed as a priest in the home (I Samuel 3:11-13).

Then the LORD said to Samuel: “Behold, I will do something in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.

- B. God chooses leaders on the basis of their faithfulness to their own family.
 - 1. God knew He could entrust Abraham with great covenant promises because He knew he would be faithful at home (Genesis 18:18-19, NLT).

For Abraham will become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him. I have singled him out so that he will direct his sons and their families to keep the way of the LORD and do what is right and just. Then I will do for him all that I have promised.

2. God made faithfulness at home a criterion for New Testament leadership (I Timothy 3:4-5; Titus 1:5-6).

He must handle his own affairs well, attentive to his own children and having their respect. For if someone is unable to handle his own affairs, how can he take care of God's church?
I Timothy 3:4-5, MSG

I left you on the island of Crete so you could complete our work there and appoint elders in each town as I instructed you. An elder must be well thought of for his good life. He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who are not wild or rebellious.
Titus 1:5-6, NLT

- C. The failure of many biblical leaders was due to a failure to impart godly values to their children after them.

1. To a great extent Israel prematurely pressured Samuel for a king because of Samuel's failure to be a prophet at home (I Samuel 8:1-5, NLT).

As Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons to be judges over Israel. Joel and Abijah, his oldest sons, held court in Beersheba. But they were not like their father, for they were greedy for money. They accepted bribes and perverted justice. Finally, the leaders of Israel met at Ramah to discuss the matter with Samuel. "Look," they told him, "you are now old, and your sons are not like you. Give us a king like all the other nations have."

2. While David was a man after God's heart, many of his offspring were not led into that same experience (II Samuel 15; I Kings 1:5-6).

About that time David's son Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, decided to make himself king in place of his aged father. So he provided himself with chariots and horses and recruited fifty men to run in front of him. Now his father, King David, had never disciplined him at any time, even by asking, "What are you doing?" Adonijah was a very handsome man and had been born next after Absalom.
I Kings 1:5-6, NLT

This rebellion of Adonijah eventually led to his death.

III. The leader's home should be a microcosm of the church.

...for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?
I Timothy 3:5

It takes the same kind of grace and skill to lead the church as it does to lead one's family.

- A. The church and the home are similar in structure.

1. Both the home and the church are established on a covenant basis.

2. Both the home and the church have similar members and similar relationships.
 3. Both the home and the church have a defined membership.
 4. Both the home and the church have a plurality of oversight.
 5. Both the home and the church are autonomous social units.
 - a. Self-governing
 - b. Self-supporting
 - c. Self-propagating
- B. The church and the home are similar in function.
1. Both the home and the church provide protection and covering.
 2. Both the home and the church provide a context for discipline.
 3. Both the home and the church provide training and instruction.
 4. Both the home and the church are centers for spiritual life.
 - a. Worship
 - b. Prayer
 - c. The Word
 - d. Fellowship
 5. Both the home and the church are places of commitment.
- C. The church and the home are the instruments of God to fulfill His eternal purpose.

Both the home and the church are places where God sovereignly plants people. He does this for the following reasons.

1. To develop character in each family member.
2. To develop ministry in each family member.
3. To strengthen the entire family.
4. To protect each family member from deception and sin.
5. To fulfill and satisfy each family member.
6. To begin other solid families eventually.

IV. Pastoral ministry begins with pastoring in the home.

- A. This means cultivating and modeling a godly marriage relationship.

A holy relationship is marked by:

1. Regular prayer together
2. Absolute commitment to each other
3. Moral faithfulness
4. Quality communication
5. Edifying speech patterns

B. This means providing an example for the family to follow.

1. The most important thing that parents can give their children is an example to follow.
2. The example of parents will confirm or negate any positive teaching the children receive.
3. The sins or virtues of the parents will be communicated to the children in magnified fashion (Deuteronomy 5:9-10).

For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

4. The example of the parents includes many areas (I Timothy 4:12).

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

- a. In word
- b. In lifestyle
- c. In love
- d. In spirit
- e. In faith
- f. In purity

C. This means providing an atmosphere that is conducive to spiritual growth (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

1. This means paying attention to the things that create or affect an atmosphere.

- a. Music
- b. Pictures and posters
- c. Books and magazines
- e. Television and video entertainment
- f. Hobbies

2. This means asking biblical questions of these things:

- a. Is it of the world (I John 2:15-16)?
- b. Is it to the glory of God (I Corinthians 10:31)?
- c. Has it the appearance of evil (I Thessalonians 5:22)?
- d. Is its atmosphere good (II Corinthians 6:14)?

D. This means providing spiritual leadership in the home.

1. This means following godly principles of child discipline in the home. If we do not follow divine principles, we cannot expect divine results.
2. This means practicing what you preach at church or living as a Christian in the home. Don't tell your children to do something that you do not do yourself. Don't tell them to not do the very things that you do.
3. This means making sure that the atmosphere in the home is conducive to spiritual growth.
4. This means giving priority, pastoral care to your individual family members.
5. This means continually encouraging your children in leadership development. Your goal is that every child will be a confident leader.
6. This means making time for special spiritual activities.
- 10 This means being creative with the methods of teaching in the home. Here are only a few ideas:
 - Conversational prayer
 - Question and answer
 - Memorization
 - Devotional reading
 - Worship times
 - Story-telling
 - Acting out stories
 - Playing instruments
 - Singing
 - Sharing
 - Bible reading (simple translations)
 - Testimonies
 - Praying for the sick
 - Composing songs of praise

11. This means using every opportunity and happening in the home as a learning experience.
 - a. Interpret everything through your relationship to the Lord.
 - b. Give the Lord credit for victories.
12. This means instilling in your children the fear of the Lord and a respect for His Word.
 - a. Don't allow them to mock the things of God.
 - b. Instill in them a respect for His presence.
13. This means being sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of your children.
14. This means being ever prepared to lead your child to the Lord.
15. This means being willing and eager to seek counsel and advice from other parents.
16. This means leading the family in prayer times as the need arises.

V. Things that will help our home life.

- A. Work to keep church business and home life separate.
 1. Do not discuss church problems in front of the children (regardless of their age).
 2. Control phone calls especially during family times.
 3. Educate your people concerning your days off and when to call you.
 4. Learn what an emergency is and what it is not.
- B. Maintain the basics.
 1. Prayer and devotional life
 2. Dating and courtship
 3. Communication
 4. Mutual respect
- C. Get away regularly.
 1. Regular family vacations
 2. Days off
- D. Make being in ministry special and fun.
- E. Help your family to feel a part of the ministry.

1. Have them minister with you.
2. Involve them in the life of the church.

F. Establish your family as a priority in the lives of your children.

1. Make sure your priorities are spouse, parent, pastor.
2. Use your flexible schedule to your advantage.
3. Have a family night that cannot be interrupted.
4. Limit mindless activity (TV), promote interaction, recreational activity.

G. Learn inexpensive ways to have fun.

1. Talk to others.
2. Be creative.