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EQUIPPING FATHERS OF BEAVER DAM BAPTIST CHURCH  
IN KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, TO SHEPHERD THEIR  
FAMILIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BIBLE

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the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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by  
Scott Drew Hood  
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**APPROVAL SHEET**

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IN KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, TO SHEPHERD THEIR  
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I dedicate this project to my loving and supportive family. The desire to be the husband and dad that God expects has driven me beyond my upbringing and traditions.

Thank you, Stephanie, for loving and supporting me as Christ has commanded wives to support and encourage husbands.

Sullivan and Sutton, I pray this classwork does not rob you of your father but instead gains you the best and most Christ-like version of myself. To God be the Glory!

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## PREFACE

This project is the culmination of a desire to be the best husband and father possible by the grace of God. I am extremely grateful for the environment in which I was raised. Thanks be to God for two loving parents who did the difficult work of raising me in the admonition of the Lord. I also am eternally grateful for men and women who took the time to invest in me over the years via my local church. I would not be the man I am today without much sacrifice and the intentional investment of so many people through the years. A special thanks to Luckey Steele and Bert Solomon who pushed me to attend seminary and dig into God's Word and do the hard work of learning.

I am thankful to Beaver Dam Baptist Church for allowing me to attend and also for helping to pay for my theological training. Their patience with me as a minister of the gospel is wonderful. As I endeavor to be the husband and father Scripture expects, I pray I am able to help the church equip families to excel at disciple-making.

A special thanks to Alice Hood Laws and Beaver Dam Baptist Church who made it financially possible for me to further my education and my walk with the Lord. Debbie Hayes has been a Godsend to help proof and catch my many grammatical shortcomings. Editor Betsy Fredrick has been a tremendous help and blessing. I thank God for my faculty supervisor, Dr. Donald S. Whitney, and the other faculty members at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary who invested in me and this project.

My hope and prayer are that this project will serve to equip families at Beaver Dam to be disciple-making factories both now and for generations to come.

Scott Hood

Knoxville, Tennessee

December 2020

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

When I became a father, I began to question the seeming status-quo of the parenting I had observed within Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) churches. This type of parenting often views the sum of biblical fatherhood as merely bringing the family to church on Sunday. I was saddened that no programs or intentionality were given to faithful Christians within the body of Beaver Dam Baptist Church (BDBC) to equip and educate families and specifically to fathers in passing along their faith to their children. As I had no tangible examples or fellow ministers from which to glean, I turned to higher education and the pursuit of a biblical methodology to help my family and other families within the context of BDBC. My prayer is that this project will develop me and the fathers of BDBC into more biblically-faithful fathers who are formed by the Word of God.

#### **Context**

Beaver Dam Baptist Church is older than the state in which it is located. In 2017, we celebrated our 230th year of existence. Our longevity is truly a mark to be praised in this day of many churches closing their doors. I have been employed at BDBC since May of 2000, in a variety of capacities from intern to youth associate, to youth pastor and now family pastor. The position of family pastor is a new pastoral role for our church. The church has had several ministers of education, but never an intentional minister to families; thus, unintentionally abdicating the biblical roles and responsibilities of Christ's church to hold families responsible for the training of their children in the faith. In 2013, on a staff retreat, the ministerial staff adopted a mission statement to which our church still holds today. Our mission at BDBC is to glorify the Lord by "proclaiming

God's Word to make and mature believers." We have a mature pastor who takes seriously the proclamation of God's Word in weekly corporate worship services. We have full-time men serving as ministers in the areas of music, students, and now families. However, we, as a church, have unknowingly lacked intentionality in making and maturing believers in Christ Jesus.

BDBC has emphasized over the years the importance of members attending Sunday morning worship. Sunday worship services are theologically strong. Unfortunately, the church has failed to engage individuals and families through the week with the Word of God. To my knowledge, no one in our church is holding Christian parents who are church members accountable in what and how they teach and train their children within their homes. Our church does have a midweek service to provide spiritual training for those inclined to participate. However, most if not all of our programming with intentional focus is geared toward children and the occasional women's ministry event or Bible study. There is no programming or intentionality to train and equip fathers in the manner in which God's Word describes a Christian father to conduct himself with his children.

The staff has often discussed how biblically illiterate the common church attendee appears to be. BDBC is comprised of mostly white, middle-class Southerners who grew up attending the church and/or living in close proximity to it. To combat the problem of ignorance of the Scriptures, the church began a systematic and daily church-wide plan of reading through the Bible in 2015. However, we have failed to hold church members accountable for walking in the way of the faith through the week in their homes and businesses. The church gives cursory prayers and advice for the week for parents, typically by a sentence in a morning worship prayer or subpoint in the Sunday sermon. While many segmented groups look at and learn a variety of sound biblical material during our weekly programs and meetings, there is no intentional effort to consolidate and leverage those programs and meetings specifically for the spiritual growth of parents.

Coupled with this lack of intentionality from the church is the constant bombardment of the world upon the family—the result is a losing endeavor for those in the pews. Few will argue that American society is becoming less guided by Christian principles. The church leadership should not assume that attending weekly services is sufficient to equip parents for the challenges they face in today’s world. BDBC, as a Bible-believing church, must educate and expect members to grow toward biblical responsibilities. This means starting where God and His Word begin—with men and specifically with fathers (Gen 2:15).<sup>1</sup> Sadly, there is little difference between worldly fathers and church-going fathers in the BDBC context. Children are taught solid biblical truth in Sunday school classes, kids’ worship, and discipleship classes. However, if the dads only bring their families when the weather is not too bad or too good, and nothing else is competing for their time, then that leaves little room to impact children for the sake of Christ.

### **Rationale**

As BDBC celebrated more than two centuries of existence, it caused me to think where this bride will be a decade or century from now. A four-decade youth ministry veteran, Wayne Rice, states, “Parents not only outsource the spiritual training of their kids to the church, but the church outsources it to a professional youth pastor.”<sup>2</sup> This statement immediately and succinctly expressed what had been resonating within me and my personal experiences in student ministry. I had been serving in student ministry for more than a decade full time when the realization that the traditional Southern Baptist local church ministry makeup and philosophy was neither biblically accurate nor effectively serving the church and families. Student ministry was an opportunity for me

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<sup>1</sup> Gen 2:15 records, “The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.” Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Bible.

<sup>2</sup> Wayne Rice, *Reinventing Youth Ministry (Again): From Bells and Whistles to Flesh and Blood* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2010), 148.

to see God work in and through young men and women, but I realized that traditional student ministry is losing eternal ground.

The ground being lost by student ministry led me to evaluate what I personally believed via the Word of God versus what my religious tradition and education taught to be true. Although the Bible makes no mention of a student minister or a family pastor, the church today is trying, as wisely and discerningly as it knows how, to apply the Holy Scriptures in our current context. Student ministry within the local church needs reform to more accurately portray the scriptural expectations for the spiritual development of people.

I am convicted of the need for reform in the area of equipping fathers to understand what the Bible expects of them. BDBC, as a community of imperfect people redeemed by a Holy God, must hold its members to that biblical standard so that families are restored and celebrated, and Christ is magnified in neighborhoods throughout the community. When BDBC begins to disciple fathers in biblical ways, the church will see at least some level of spiritual revival. Families will be restored, thus making the community healthier. As fathers are discipled biblically the gospel will go forth in ballparks and office spaces throughout the city, and prayerfully to the world, as a city on a hill cannot be hidden (Matt 5:14).

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to equip fathers of Beaver Dam Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee, to shepherd their families in accordance with the Bible.

### **Goals**

Four goals were established to help achieve the purpose of this project. The goals are progressive in that they start with discovering where BDBC is as a church and then advancing to lead the church to mold the familial landscape of future generations.

1. The first goal was to assess the current understanding and practices of BDBC fathers with their families outside the walls of the church.

2. The second goal was to develop a six-session curriculum to equip fathers to shepherd their families.
3. The third goal was to equip fathers by teaching this curriculum in a six-session study on how to lead their families spiritually.
4. The fourth goal was to develop a ministry plan to increase family discipleship practices among fathers.

Each of these four goals was accompanied with clearly defined means of measurement as well as distinctly articulated benchmarks of success. The detailed research methodology along with the instruments used in accomplishing the objectives will be laid out in the next section.

### **Research Methodology**

Four goals determined the effectiveness of this project. The first goal was to assess the current practices of BDBC fathers with their families outside the walls of the church. This goal was measured by administering a Shepherding Perceptions and Practices Survey (SPPS) to 15 fathers who are members and have at least one child residing in the home.<sup>3</sup> This assessment gauged each father's initial level of knowledge and participation in the spiritual development of their children. This goal was considered successfully met when 15 fathers completed the SPPS and the inventory had been analyzed yielding a clearer picture of the current perceptions and practices among BDBC families.

The second goal was to develop a six-session curriculum to equip fathers to shepherd their families. The curriculum covered basic family discipleship issues, such as consistently modeling character, leading a family worship experience, creating ministry opportunities for the family, and developing a family plan for spiritual development. This goal was measured by a panel of three local church pastors who utilized a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the

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<sup>3</sup> See appendix 1. All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

curriculum.<sup>4</sup> This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criteria met or exceeded the sufficient level. If the 90 percent benchmark was not initially met, then the material was revised until it met the standard.

The third goal was to equip fathers by teaching this curriculum in a six-session study on how to lead their families spiritually. This goal was measured by administering the SPPS, which measured the father's level of knowledge, confidence, and motivation to lead their family spiritually in their home.<sup>5</sup> This goal was considered successfully met when a t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-survey scores.

The fourth goal was to develop a ministry plan to increase family discipleship practices among fathers. This goal was measured by a panel of three local church pastors who utilized a rubric to evaluate the functionality of the plan, communication processes, training elements, provision of parental resources, and the action steps.<sup>6</sup> This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of all the rubric evaluation indicators met or exceeded the sufficiency level. If the 90 percent benchmark was not initially met, then the material was revised until it met the standard.

### **Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations**

The following definitions of key terms are used in the ministry project:

*Complementarianism.* *Complementarianism* refers to the view that God created men and women equal but different.<sup>7</sup> While men and women are both equal in value, they

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<sup>4</sup> See appendix 2.

<sup>5</sup> See appendix 1.

<sup>6</sup> See appendix 3.

<sup>7</sup>Wayne A. Grudem, "The Key Issues in the Manhood-Womanhood Controversy," in *Building Strong Families*, ed. Dennis Rainey (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002), 29-58.

have different roles within the home and the church. God gives the responsibility of spiritual leadership within the home to men.

*Egalitarianism.* *Egalitarianism* refers to the view that men and women are equal in all aspects, even in regard to roles within the home and the church. Egalitarians believe that “there is no unique leadership role that belongs to the husband in marriage, and that all governing and teaching roles in the church should be open to both men and women alike.”<sup>8</sup>

*Family worship.* For this project, I employ Donald S. Whitney’s description of *family worship*. He says family worship entails three basic components: “read the Bible, pray, and sing.”<sup>9</sup> *Family worship* brings to mind a formal liturgy akin to corporate church gatherings. However, in the home, the simplicity of gathering together as a family around God’s Word, praying together and singing praises to God is the goal. Families need to hear from the Word, which will challenge and encourage the family. *Family worship* should also include prayer that models dependence upon God via open dialogue in normal vernacular. The final element is spending time singing the truths of Scripture. Consistency and brevity should be sought.

*Shepherd.* To *shepherd* a family biblically means that a man rejects passivity, accepts responsibility, leads courageously, and expects the greater reward.<sup>10</sup> Fathers must choose to engage with their spouse, children, and church to provide spiritual and social direction. God has given fathers the responsibility to love their wives, teach their children, and work diligently in all endeavors. Pastor and author Robert Lewis writes, “Men were created to lead. Leadership demands that men have the courage to master their passions

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<sup>8</sup>Wayne A. Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism & Biblical Truth: An Analysis of More than One Hundred Disputed Questions* (2004; repr., Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 17.

<sup>9</sup> Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 44.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Lewis, *Raising a Modern-Day Knight: A Father’s Role in Guiding His Son to Authentic Manhood* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2007), 60-61.



and bridle themselves with the principle of truth. . . .Christ embraced His responsibilities—a will to obey, a work to do, a woman to love—because He anticipated the reward in it all.”<sup>11</sup> Men who follow Christ have likewise been given a task by a Holy God. Men should look to Christ and His complete obedience as they seek to shepherd their families that the Lord has entrusted to them. The words of Hebrews 12:1-2 exhort them to this: “Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Two limitations applied to this project. First, the accuracy of the pre- and post-series surveys were dependent upon the willingness of the respondents to be honest about their knowledge and understanding of family worship characteristics and leadership style. To mitigate this limitation, the surveys were completed anonymously. Second, the effectiveness of the training was limited by the constancy of attendance. If the participants did not attend all the training sessions, then it would be difficult to measure how beneficial the training had been. To mitigate this limitation, each week of the teaching sessions were scheduled around the schedules of the men and recorded for viewing by those who could not be present.

Three delimitations were placed on the project. First, the project addressed spiritual leadership in the home, but not in the church. Spiritual leadership in the home includes leading the family to be active in church, but the training did not address the exercise of spiritual leadership in the life of the church itself. Second, the project was confined to a twenty-week timeframe. This gave adequate time to prepare and teach the six-week training sessions and conduct the post-series survey after sessions were completed. Finally, this project was limited to training fathers and did not provide instruction to wives or children.

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<sup>11</sup> Lewis, *Raising a Modern-Day Knight*, 57-58.

## **Conclusion**

God has provided every believing father with adequate spiritual resources through the Bible, the Spirit, and the church to lead their families. The following chapters show how these resources contribute to the Christian father's confidence and competency to lead his family spiritually. Chapter 2 focuses on the Scripture's expectation for fathers to lead spiritually in the home, and chapter 3 identifies the practical implications for fathers who live accordingly to the biblical standard. Chapter 4 covers the details of the project, and finally, this project is evaluated in chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR SHEPHERDING

Shepherding is a common theme in both the Old and New Testaments. Indeed, as author Jack W. Vancil notes, “Shepherding was one of man’s earliest occupations.”<sup>1</sup> The Bible early and often utilizes the common roles and responsibilities of sheep and shepherds to describe the people of God and their Savior. Many men throughout Scripture are described as having the occupation of being a shepherd. Thus, it is fitting and helpful to apply the biblical terminology of shepherding and sheep to the desires and expectations Christian men are to have to their God, their spouse, their children, and their church.

God exists as a triune God and created humans, male and female, in His image as equals yet with distinct roles. This view is called *complementarianism*. Theologian and author Wayne Grudem defines complementarianism as “the view that men and women are equal in value before God but that some governing and teaching roles in the church are reserved for men.”<sup>2</sup> Complementarianism highlights the equal dignity of both male and female as image bearers of God while distinguishing their complementary roles and responsibilities within the home and church.

There is a growing trend in the church to embrace the antithesis to biblical teaching on the roles and responsibilities of men and women; namely, a theological view known as *egalitarianism*. Grudem defines egalitarianism as “the view that all functions

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<sup>1</sup> Jack W. Vancil, “Sheep, Shepherd,” *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:1187.

<sup>2</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Inter-Varsity, 1994), 1238.

and roles in the church are open to men and women alike.”<sup>3</sup> Egalitarians see complementarianism as chauvinistic, claiming that complementarianism oppresses women and promotes injustice.<sup>4</sup> Yet, complementarianism is simply a reflection of the equal-but-different authority structure within the Godhead.<sup>5</sup> If Christian men are to be faithful in reflecting God’s character, then they must view their wives as equals before God, and yet be the spiritual leaders of their homes.

Reflecting the complementarian view, this chapter establishes that both the Old and New Testaments teach that fathers should be the head of the home, walk in righteousness, love their wives, and teach their children the Word of God. An exposition of four biblical passages supports this thesis. First, Genesis 1-2 shows that men are created by God to be the head of the home. Second, Psalm 112 shows that men should walk righteously before a holy God. Third, Ephesians 5:25-33 teaches that husbands are to love their wives. Fourth and finally, Ephesians 6:1-4 commands fathers to instruct their children in the Lord. These expositions will support the assertion that the Bible requires men to shepherd their families.

### **Genesis 1–2: A Man of God Will Fulfill His Responsibilities as the God-Ordained Head of the Home**

To understand the role and responsibilities of a man, one must begin with where he came from and the purpose of his creation. The position of this project stands on the shoulders of historic, orthodox Christianity, and the understanding that Genesis 1

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<sup>3</sup> Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1240.

<sup>4</sup> Christians for Biblical Equality website declares via its Core Values: “Patriarchy is not a biblical ideal but a result of sin.” “Patriarchy is an abuse of power, taking from females what God has given them: their dignity, and freedom, their leadership, and often their very lives.” CBE International, “Statement of Faith,” accessed October 16, 2019, <http://www.cbeinternational.org/content/cbes-mission>.

<sup>5</sup> Wayne Grudem, “The Key Issues in the Manhood-Womanhood Controversy,” in *Building Strong Families*, ed. Dennis Rainey (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002), 59-62. Grudem states, “Key Issue 3: The Equality and Differences Between Men and Women Reflect the Equality and Differences in the Trinity.” He goes on to say that this issue is the “heart of the controversy.” Grudem, “The Key Issues,” 59.

declares the “origins” of mankind.<sup>6</sup> Genesis 1 clearly communicates that there is a Creator above creation. Furthermore, the clarity of the intention of Genesis 1 is so vibrant that scholarship has sought to focus mostly upon how the message is delivered or from whom it is written.<sup>7</sup>

The Bible opens with an eternal God speaking into existence the world and its initial inhabitants. Genesis 1 gives a 30,000-foot view of the process while Genesis 2 provides a more detailed view, with special emphasis on the crown jewel of God’s creation—mankind. American Assyriologist Ephraim Avigdor Speiser describes it this way, “The account before us (Gen 2) deals with the origins of life on earth, as contrasted with the preceding statement about the origin of the universe as a whole. The contrast is immediately apparent from the respective initial sentences.”<sup>8</sup> And so in the first two chapters of the Bible, God has revealed a general knowledge of the complexities of the universe as well as information about the most intimate human relationship—the union of a man and a woman, as illustrated in the account of Adam and Eve.

The way that Moses composes Genesis makes it clear that male headship began at creation. Male headship predates the fall and the curse of the fall upon humanity. The Bible opens with God creating everything *ex nihilo* (Gen 1:1), and the rest of Genesis 1

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<sup>6</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1 (Dallas: Word, 1987), xxi. The Hebrew title is taken from its opening word בראימה “In the beginning,” whereas the English title “Genesis” is a transliteration, via the Vulgate, of the Greek title.

<sup>7</sup> Scholars have wrestled with this question for centuries. As Old Testament scholar Victor Hamilton pens, “Discussion about Genesis’ composition has run in cycles—in two uneven cycles at least—for the last two millennia.” Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 11. There is not room here to address Literary and Source Criticism. Many well-educated men and women have spent much of their academic careers attempting to disprove the historic teaching of the Christian church regarding the authorship of Moses. It is not within the scope of this project to respond to challenges to the Mosaic authorship of the first book of the Bible. The position of this project is the same as that advocated by professor and commentator Kenneth Mathews: “We are satisfied that Genesis in its present form is a cohesive unit that shows thoughtful order and a self-consistent theology. This, we believe, can be demonstrated. Essentially, there is one mind that has shaped the book, whom we believe to have been Moses.” Kenneth Mathews, *Genesis 1-11*, New American Commentary, vol. 1 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 24.

<sup>8</sup> E. A. Speiser, *Genesis*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 1 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964), 18.

gives an overview of the six days of creation. The Bible describes God creating man and woman on the sixth day of creation. Then, in Genesis 2:7-25, the record focuses on the creation of Adam and Eve since mankind is the pinnacle of God's creation. In this account God establishes Adam's headship by four actions: (1) creating him first; (2) giving him the first command; (3) entrusting him to name the animals and Eve; and (4) declaring that only men were to "leave father and mother."<sup>9</sup>

### **God Establishes Adam's Headship by Creating him First**

Many Bible believing Christians are so familiar with the creation account in Genesis that they often overlook this first and foundational element of the creation narrative: God created Adam before He created Eve. As God creates the animals on day 6, He does so by creating them in pairs, male and female. The logical assumption would expect that humanity would be created in the same manner. However, God does not create man and woman in the same way He has created the animals; rather, He creates them sequentially, not simultaneously. Paul, in the New Testament, points back to this truth for rationale on women not having authority over men in 1 Timothy 2:12-13.

Eve is not created out of the ground like animals, trees, and Adam (Gen 2:7, 9, 19). Eve is given special attention and detail to her origins in Genesis 2:21-23:

So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."

Eve being formed out of man is unique in all of creation in that she is not formed from the dust of the ground. Nevertheless, Genesis 1:27 reports that both male and female are created in the image of God. Though the woman is created from the man, God chooses to bring into existence the population of humanity through women. In Genesis 3:20 God

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<sup>9</sup> Scott LaPierre, "Five Ways God Established Husband's Headship at Creation," May 16, 2017, <https://scottlapierre.org/god-established-husbands-headship/>. This article is helpful and concise.

reveals His plan to populate His world through Eve. Mathews puts it this way: “She is the ‘mother of all living,’ for all human life will have its source in her body.”<sup>10</sup> In the New Testament, Paul connects and explains the complementarian relationship of Adam and Eve under the authority of God. In 1 Corinthians 11:8-9, 11-12 the apostle explains, “For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. . . . Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman.”

Eve is created from Adam’s DNA.<sup>11</sup> Her DNA contained some of Adam’s, but the reverse is not true. Modern science supports what the Bible describes in Genesis. Men’s DNA contains both X and Y chromosomes (XY), while women’s DNA contains only X chromosomes (XX). If Eve had been created first, then men would not have Y chromosomes. The Y chromosome is what distinguishes the male gender. Adam had the genetic material for a woman to be created from his DNA, allowing for the reproduction of men and women. This molecular understanding of humanity brings special attention to Paul’s words in Ephesians 5:28-29: “Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it.” God wants the husband to see his wife as an extension of himself. Thus, a husband should care for his wife as well as he cares for himself. He should love her as he loves himself.

A careful examination of the Hebrew word for rib reveals that God meant more than just rib. Old Testament theologian and scholar Tremper Longman III suggests, “God creates a woman from Adam’s rib. The Hebrew word (tsela) could also be translated

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<sup>10</sup> Mathews, *Genesis 1-11*, 254. Gen 3:20 asserts, “The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.”

<sup>11</sup> LaPierre does an excellent job of explaining the DNA chromosomal support for Adam being created first and then Eve out of Adam’s existing structure. LaPierre, “Five Ways.”

‘side.’”<sup>12</sup> *Tsela* is the Hebrew word often translated “rib.” However, it is used 41 times in the Old Testament, but only in Genesis 2:21-22 is it translated “rib.” Nineteen times *tsela* is translated “side” and 11 times as “chamber” (Exod 25:12, 2 Sam 16:13, and 1 Kgs 6:8). Adam pushes the point in Genesis 2:23 when he describes Eve as “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.” Eve is perfect for Adam because she is literally part of his own body.

Adam’s declaration “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” points forward to the words of Jesus in Mark 10:6-8 describing marriage between a man and a woman as a “one flesh” relationship.<sup>13</sup> Eve was created from Adam so husbands and wives would see themselves as “one flesh” (Gen 2:24). The text goes on to inform the inaugural humans that henceforth in marriage “a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” This is a strange instruction given that Adam and Eve do not have earthly parents. Therefore, this verse is not primarily about them but is instructive for future generations and marriages. God wanted not only Adam and Eve to understand the nature of their union, but He also wanted to teach all their offspring about the marriage relationship. God, being orderly and intentional, specifically created Adam prior to forming Eve from the substance of Adam.

### **God Establishes Adam’s Headship by Giving him the First Command**

God gives only Adam the command of what trees he was and was not allowed to eat from, and the consequence for disobeying. Genesis 2:16-17 reveals, “And the LORD God commanded the man saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” Once Eve was fashioned, it would be Adam’s responsibility to instruct

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<sup>12</sup> Tremper Longman III, *Genesis*, Story of God Bible Commentary: Old Testament, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016), 50.

<sup>13</sup> Mark 10:6-8 says, “But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh.”



Eve as to what the Lord had commanded. The written revelation of how the Lord intentionally created Adam prior to Eve and the manner in which He instructs Adam alone would put Eve in the position of needing to trust in her husband's leading and teaching. As the creation narrative in Genesis reveals, God did not have to do it this way, but He chose to in His perfect sovereign wisdom and goodness. God could have waited until Eve was formed and given them both the command, but in doing it this way He established Adam's headship in the relationship (Gen 3:9 and Rom 5).

### **God Establishes Adam's Headship by Having him Name the Animals and Eve**

God establishes the authority of mankind over all of creation in Genesis 1:26 when He stated, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." But before God created Eve, He brought the animals to Adam and gave him the responsibility to name them (Gen 2:19-20). Thus, bestowing on Adam headship over the animals. Matthew 1:21 shows the importance of a name as well as who decides that name.<sup>14</sup>

God does through Adam alone what could have been done in unison with Eve. When Adam finishes naming the animals, God creates the woman and Adam names her "Eve" (Gen 2:23). Again, only Adam is tasked with naming. British Old Testament scholar Gordan Wenham observes, "Though they are equal in nature, that man names woman indicates that she is expected to be subordinate to him, an important presupposition of the ensuing narrative."<sup>15</sup> Adam is mirroring his Creator in speaking and showing his God-

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<sup>14</sup> Matt 1:21 asserts, "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people, from their sins."

<sup>15</sup> Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 70.

given intelligence by naming animals and Eve. This episode is heightened when it is Adam that God calls for in Genesis 3:9. Also, Adam is the last one given consequences for his disobedience. God begins with the least accountable, the serpent, and ends with the federal head, Adam (1 Cor 15:22), in assigning blame. Moses makes clear in Genesis 2–3 that Adam bears the burden of responsibility. Gospel expectation is portrayed in Adam naming Eve the mother of all life, leading to the incarnation of the second Adam, Christ. Thankfully, believers today have been adopted and redeemed by the second and greater Adam, Christ (Rom 5:19).

### **God Establishes Adam’s Headship by Specifying Only a Man “Leave Father and Mother”**

Yet again the reader sees in Genesis 2:24 that God singled out man when He said that “a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” The implication is that the woman must leave her parents as well in order to cleave to her husband, but the directive is given specifically to Adam. Longman explains, “This leaving is of a more fundamental sort that can be described as forming a new primary loyalty.”<sup>16</sup> The man is clearly to move out from his parents’ authority and establish his own authority and home. With this directive, man is no longer under his parents’ authority and father’s headship, but instead moves into a position of headship over his own new family. The woman moves from being under the headship of her father to being under the headship of her husband. The roles and responsibilities are different. These differing roles and responsibilities are likewise seen in the New Testament when Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:3 does not describe the head of every man and woman as Christ but instead states, “The head of every man is Christ, the head of the wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.” This is symbolized in a modern marriage

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<sup>16</sup> Longman, *Genesis*, 54.

ceremony when a father walks his daughter down the aisle at a wedding and gives her hand to the groom. The image is of a transfer of headship from father to husband.

In these ways, Genesis 1-2 lays the groundwork for the headship of men within the home. “Biblical headship for the husband,” writes author and pastor John Piper, “is the divine calling to take primary responsibility for Christlike, servant-leadership, protection and provision in the home.”<sup>17</sup> Man is given headship in the home from God and he must live up to the expectation of his creator. Those expectations include, but are not limited to, being a leader, articulating plans, and caring well for all that the Lord has created and given unto man.

### **Psalm 112: A Man of God Will Display Righteousness in All His Responsibilities**

In the book of Psalms one finds much wisdom and transparency.<sup>18</sup> It is a collection of prayers, poems, laments, and hymns that focus the worshiper’s thoughts on God in praise, confession, complaint, thanksgiving, and adoration. Although King David is cited far more often than any other, several men contributed to the psalter. Nineteenth-century American Presbyterian clergyman William S. Plumer comments on the unique place of the Psalms in Scripture, “The Book of Psalms is very peculiar. It differs from all other parts of God’s word. It contains one hundred and fifty distinct compositions.”<sup>19</sup> Many of these “distinct compositions” could be included in this chapter on the importance of biblical manhood, but I have chosen Psalm 112 because it extols the man who fears God.

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<sup>17</sup> John Piper, “A Vision of Biblical Complementarity: Manhood and Womanhood Defined According to the Bible,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 52-53.

<sup>18</sup> Ps 112 has been a helpful text to me as a father. I first discovered it in my personal daily reading and praying through Scripture in 2017. Ps 112 gives practical and succinct instructions to men on how to live obediently to the commands of Scripture.

<sup>19</sup> William S. Plumer, *Psalms*, Geneva Series of Commentaries (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2016), 10.

In his multi-volume *Treasury of David*, C. H. Spurgeon expresses his view that Psalm 112 is “evidently a companion to the hundred and eleventh.”<sup>20</sup> Psalm 111 declares the glory of God while Psalm 112 “speaks of the reflection of the divine brightness in men born from above.”<sup>21</sup> Further, says Plumer, “The scope of this Psalm is to commend true piety, and to show that God is not unmindful of the services and sufferings of his saints.”<sup>22</sup> The piety commended in Psalm 112 is described primarily in terms of a godly man’s character and his relationship with others, including the way he demonstrates righteous living in his own home.

This wisdom psalm instructs devotion to God through praise, obedience, diligence, and resolve. These four qualities are paramount for a man seeking to shepherd his family. Psalm 112 also reveals some of the benefits that accrue to the man who fears God and delights in His commandments. This psalm has been selected because of the succinct exhortation of righteous living in response to a righteous God. Headship must be guided by piety, which comes only from the Word of God. Pastor and professor David Prince says it well in his sermon concerning a call to biblical manhood from Psalm 112 when he describes the psalm being the English equivalent of A to Z of praise for Godliness—what it means to lead a God-centered life.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, this section will take this psalm about godly manhood and apply its teaching specifically to the task of being a godly father.

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<sup>20</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*, vol. 3, *Psalms 111-150* (London: Marshall, Morgan, & Scott, 1963), 15.

<sup>21</sup> Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*, 14.

<sup>22</sup> Plumer, *Psalms*, 983.

<sup>23</sup> David Prince, “Be Afraid of Not Fearing: A Call to Biblical Manhood Psalm 112” (sermon delivered at Ashland Avenue Baptist Church, Lexington, Kentucky, May 18, 2014).

## **A Father's Foundation**

Psalm 112 begins with the same wording as Psalm 111: “Praise the LORD!” The psalmist’s resolution is to praise God. The great Reformer John Calvin states, “The best and most efficient method to stimulate others to any duty is to be exemplary; and, accordingly, we find that the prophet, in the present instance, sets himself for an example, to lead others to engage in the celebration of God’s praises.”<sup>24</sup> A man of God must be an example for watching eyes to those eyes within his home and community. Proper admiration of the Lord is crucial to setting the direction of a man’s life and his activities.

## **Proper Praise**

The Psalmist delivers a rationale for why proper praise is expressed in the second half of verse 1. Psalm 112:1b-3 says, “Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments! His offspring will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever.” Fear and delight are the driving twin engines of a righteous man. Martin Luther describes the “fear of God is nothing else than the worship of God.”<sup>25</sup> Fear of God is a common expression throughout the psalter. Moreover, the metanarrative of Scripture is bent toward creatures fearing the Creator. Proverbs 1:7 declares, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.” In addition, Joseph describes himself as a God-fearing man in Genesis 42:18: “For I fear God.” Luke presented the church as “walking in the fear of the Lord” in Acts 9:31. Jesus makes clear in Matthew 10:28, “Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” When people fear God, they are acknowledging His authority over them. German theologian Hans-Joachim Kraus suggests,

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<sup>24</sup> Herman J. Selderhuis, ed., *Psalms 73-150*, Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Old Testament, vol. 8 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2018), 215.

<sup>25</sup> Selderhuis, *Psalms 73-150*, 220.

“What we do not fear above all things we do not properly fear at all.”<sup>26</sup> The lack of fear is an indicator of failing to correctly understand and submit to the Lord’s authority. Proper praise begins by understanding who God is, and that will always lead to a proper fear of Him because of the chasm between the finite creation and infinite creator.

“The man that feareth the Lord,” writes Plumer, “has true godly reverence; and as a proper fruit of such piety greatly delights in the commandments of God.”<sup>27</sup> A righteous man does not just fear the Lord, but he delights in the commandments of the Lord. The book of Psalms begins by proclaiming that the righteous will delight in the law of the Lord (1:2).<sup>28</sup> The Bible depicts people of all ages, ethnicities, and economic standings delighting in the statutes of the Lord. When finite man understands that the omnipotent God of the universe has revealed Himself through His Word, it is right to delight in it. Abraham modeled this delight when he obeyed God’s command to uproot his family and move faraway to an unknown land (Gen 12:4).<sup>29</sup> Abraham did this because he sought the reward found in the eternal God and obedience to His Word. By faith “he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God” (Heb 11:10).

It is an important distinction to notice that those who seek to receive the rewards and blessings of the Lord must first learn to fear Him and delight in His Word. The Lord promises to reward those who properly do so. Hebrew scholar, Nancy L. DeClaissé-Walford, explains, “Verses 2-3a outline the rewards for the one who reveres the LORD and delights in the commandments. That person will have mighty, upright, and blessed

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<sup>26</sup> Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60-150, A Continental Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 363.

<sup>27</sup> Plumer, *Psalms*, 983.

<sup>28</sup> Ps 1:1-2: “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.”

<sup>29</sup> Gen 12:4: “So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.”

descendants and a house in which are riches and wealth.”<sup>30</sup> The psalmist lays out inspired promises for the obedient. However, these promises must be interpreted via the entirety of Scripture. Therefore, people today must not isolate this passage from this Psalter to try and bend it to humanity’s sinful desires which seek the promises of God outside the proper and faithful interpretation of the text. The Lord does promise to meet the needs of His people, but that promise is based upon His character. Although this promise must be understood in the context of the rest of Scripture, the promise given here is that those who fear Him and delight in Him will have mighty, blessed, and upright children. As Plumer summarizes, “True piety has God’s blessing in all things.”<sup>31</sup>

### **Days of the Devoted**

Psalm 112:4 reads, “Light dawns in the darkness for the upright; he is gracious, merciful, and righteous.” The subject of the “light” and “he” of verse 4 is not clearly specified. In the insightful commentary *The Book of Psalms*, scholars DeClaissé-Walford, Jacobson, and Tanner assert, “It is not clear to what the light refers, nor does v. 4b—showing favor and merciful and righteous—have a clear subject, the reader may be permitted to equate the light with the Lord, who is described in 111:4b with the same words that describe the light in 112:4b—showing favor and merciful.”<sup>32</sup> The reader sees the psalmist giving confidence to the righteous in the midst of times that are seemingly troublesome. Just a few psalms later he discovers in Psalm 119:105, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and light to my path.” The use of light to reference the Lord and His ways contrasted with the evil and depravity of the darkness is a common theme throughout Scripture. This is epitomized in Jesus who said of Himself, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows

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<sup>30</sup> Nancy L. DeClaissé-Walford, Rolf A. Jacobson, and Beth LaNeel Tanner, *The Book of Psalms*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 844.

<sup>31</sup> Plumer, *Psalms*, 983.

<sup>32</sup> DeClaissé-Walford, Jacobson, and Tanner, *The Book of Psalms*, 845.

me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). The apostle Peter utilizes the same darkness/light contrast when he writes of God’s people in 1 Peter 2:9: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” It is not a difficult leap to see the imperative to men to live as light in a dark world for their family to see, which leads to dads who are, in the words of Psalm 112:4, “gracious, merciful, and righteous.” A godly father exhibits these characteristics because he has seen them in his heavenly Father.

### **Deeds of the Righteous**

The reader notices the deeds of the righteous in the last half of Psalm 112.

It is well with the man who deals generously and lends; who conducts his affairs with justice. For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever. He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord. His heart is steady; he will not be afraid, until he looks in triumph on his adversaries. He has distributed freely; he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever; his horn is exalted in honor (vv. 5-9).

A man seeking to live according to the entire counsel of God’s Word will follow the example of the righteous man in these five verses. A righteous man will exhibit four deeds of righteousness. First, a righteous man is one who lends generously. Author and professor Daniel J. Estes clarifies, “As he has freely received God’s grace, so he freely gives to others (Ps 37:26; Prov 19:17).”<sup>33</sup> A man who shepherds his family will understand the basic biblical principle that life is not all about himself, his satisfaction, and comfort. Instead he will seek to be charitable to others.

Second, the righteous man handles his affairs justly. As DeClaissé-Walford observes, “In v. 5b, we read that the ‘content’ person holds words in judgement, being slow to speak words of either praise or condemnation.”<sup>34</sup> The demeanor of a righteous

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<sup>33</sup> Daniel J. Estes, *Psalms 73-150*, New American Commentary, vol. 13 (Nashville: B & H, 2019), 355-56.

<sup>34</sup> DeClaissé-Walford, Jacobson, and Tanner, *The Book of Psalms*, 845.



man will thus emulate the righteous One. The justice of the Lord Himself is emphasized in verse 7 of the previous psalm: “The works of his hands are faithful and just.” A man who shepherds his family well seeks to live in accordance with the justice of God and will conduct his affairs accordingly. Following God’s directives means that men pursue biblical justice, which utilizes Scripture as the standard and Christ as the example.

Third, the man of God is steady and steadfast. Estes asserts, “One who is righteous in ordering his life according to the Lord’s character and values will be stable in the present and remembered in the future.”<sup>35</sup> A shepherd is not easily shaken by circumstances or words of troubles because his foundation is upon the unchanging and unmovable foundation of the Lord. Fear is cast out by dependence upon the almighty God who carries the man of trust daily through the swells of life circumstances. He believes there will be blessing in adversity. Plumer affirms, “The scripture does not deny that God’s people have many and sore trials. It warns them that in this life they are to expect tribulation. But then their supports are many and mighty, v.4.”<sup>36</sup> A man who is grounded in the Scripture will understand that life is hard, and even when walking with the Lord, circumstances will not always go the way he plans or desires. Nevertheless, he is confident that God holds the world in His hands, believing as the apostle Paul that this life is not all that Christians have hope in (1 Cor 15:19).<sup>37</sup>

Lastly, in verse 9 the righteous are described as giving to the poor. A righteous man not only loves his own children, but also cares for the poor and hungry around him. The poet ends this section on deeds of the righteous where he begins, that is, on the outward focus and giving to those in need. As Kraus points out, “verse 9 corresponds to

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<sup>35</sup> Estes, *Psalms 73-150*, 356.

<sup>36</sup> Plumer, *Psalms*, 986.

<sup>37</sup> First Cor 15:19 reveals, “If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.”

the statement in v. 5a.”<sup>38</sup> A righteous man, reflecting God’s character, will not be stingy, nor will he be insensitive to those in need. Selfish men, by contrast, and those unconcerned for the poor, stand in stark contrast to the righteous man of Psalm 112.

### **The Way of the Wicked**

Psalm 112 begins by describing the proper position before a holy God and ends with the punishment of the ungodly. The psalmist juxtaposes the righteous and the wicked in the opening and closing of the one hundred and twelfth psalm. In the concluding verse (10), the psalmist makes clear the punishment of the ungodly: “The wicked man sees it and is angry; he gnashes his teeth and melts away; the desire of the wicked will perish!” DeClaissé-Walford explains, “Verse 10, in true ‘wisdom’ fashion, contrasts the fate of the wicked one (*rasa*) with the fate of the righteous one (*saddiq* v. 6b). While the light will shine forth in darkness for the upright ones (v. 4b), the desire of the wicked ones will perish (v. 10c).”<sup>39</sup> Instead of imitating the superior example of the righteous, the wicked becomes angry and gnashes his teeth.

The man who lives according to Psalm 112 seeks to express righteousness in all his responsibilities. He is concerned not just about the impact of his life on himself and others now, but also about the influence it will have on the future—especially for his children. From a New Testament perspective, the man who pursues the righteousness expressed in Psalm 112 lives for the far greater reward promised to those who know God through Jesus Christ. The life of the righteous man in Psalm 112 illustrates what it means to live according to the command of Deuteronomy 6:5: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” This is the supreme calling on God’s people, the highest pursuit of one’s being.

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<sup>38</sup> Kraus, *Psalms 60-150*, 365. When the apostle Paul wants to encourage the church at Corinth to contribute financially to the impoverished church in Jerusalem, he quotes Ps 112:9 as an example of a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:9).

<sup>39</sup> DeClaissé-Walford, Jacobson, and Tanner, *The Book of Psalms*, 846.

## **Ephesians 5:25-33: A Man of God Will Love His Wife as Christ Loved the Church**

This chapter has thus far sought to prove from two different Old Testament passages the biblical warrant and expectation for the headship and righteousness of males who seek to shepherd their families in a God-honoring way. The research now turns to the New Testament to discover the ongoing revelation and expectation that God gives men regarding their families. The focus in the remainder of this chapter is on Ephesians 5:25-33 and the inspired instructions of the apostle Paul on how husbands are to treat their brides, followed by the apostle's directives for fathers in Ephesians 6:1-4.

Ephesians is a pivotal book in the New Testament. Late American biblical scholar and professor of New Testament Harold W. Hoehner has suggested, "The letter to Ephesians is one of the most influential documents in the Christian church."<sup>40</sup> The apostle Paul is the author of Ephesians and he writes to instruct the followers of Christ and His church. A significant part of this important epistle is directed to life in the home, with special emphasis on the role of husbands and fathers.

Throughout Ephesians Paul is encouraging believers to walk in a worthy manner. Paul makes his desire for Christian obedience clear in Ephesians 5:1-2: "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering of sacrifice to God." Here through verse 21 is essentially an explanation of how to "walk in love, as Christ loved us." From 5:22-6:4 Paul narrows the focus to how to "walk in love" in the home. Within that section, the most extensive exhortation (5:25-32) is for husbands.

The centerpiece of Paul's address to husbands is his teaching that they are to love their wives "as Christ loved the church" (v. 25). Paul utilizes the word *love* several times in this section of Scripture, six times in just verses 25-33. The word for love is not that of a romantic fairytale or Disney storyline but instead a biblical, humble, sacrificial

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<sup>40</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 1.

commitment of love. Hoehner unpacks the definition of this kind of love: “It refers to love irrespective of merit, even to the undeserving. The present imperative reinforces the idea that a husband’s love for his wife is to be an ongoing process. Thus, in this context husbands are to love their wives even when they may seem undeserving and unloving, in other words, unconditionally.”<sup>41</sup> Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President Danny Akin has suggested five ways in which a man will love his wife according to Ephesians 5:25-33: his love will be sacrificial (v. 25); his love will be sanctifying (vv. 26-27); his love will be sensitive (v. 28); his love will be satisfying (vv. 29-30); his love will be specific (vv. 31-33).<sup>42</sup>

### **His Love Will Be Sacrificial**

Ephesians 5:25 says, “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” This means a husband will love his wife sacrificially. Moreover, the inspired command is in the present tense, meaning a man is to love his wife habitually. Love is not left to the occasional expression of affection or sexual experience, but is instead the consistent mark of his relationship with his bride.

Akin asserts, “Paul establishes the theology of marriage in the atonement of Christ.”<sup>43</sup> Men seeking to gain insight into how they are to love their spouse find the example in Christ laying down His life for the redeemed. New Testament commentator Frank Thielman writes, “Paul’s comparison between the husband’s love for his wife and Christ’s love for the church implies that the husband’s love for his wife should be so broad and long and high and deep (3:18-19) that it includes the sacrifice of his own social

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<sup>41</sup> Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 747.

<sup>42</sup> Daniel L. Akin, “When a Man Loves a Woman: How to Be the Husband God Meant You to Be” (class notes—Marriage Retreat Session at Black Fox Lodge, Sevierville, TN, January 31-February 2, 2020). The headings for this section are from my notes on Akin’s presentation. Material attributed to Akin elsewhere in this section is also excerpted from my notes and may not represent exact quotations.

<sup>43</sup> Akin, “When a Man Loves a Woman.”

prestige and well-being, indeed his life, for the sake of his wife (Phil 2:5-8).”<sup>44</sup>

Contemporary love is not typically associated with sacrifice but instead with feelings of romance. Biblical love, like that of Christ for the church, is characterized more by sacrifice, and of the kind driven not merely by feelings of affection.

This sort of love requires initiative by the husband. Jesus took the initiative to come to Earth and to live and die for His bride, not because she was deserving, but because of His great love for her. In the same manner, men do not wait upon their wives to be lovely before acting and behaving in love. A husband who loves his wife will act in love toward her both when she is lovable and when she is unlovely and undeserving. Reformer Martin Bucer rightly details, “Christ is put forward as the example of how we should love, and that is the most effective argument. Christ voluntarily gave himself up to death because of his great love for us—the greatest love anyone could have. The apostle asks us to imitate him.”<sup>45</sup> Even when a bride is not exquisite, her husband should love her.

### **His Love Will Be Sanctifying**

Akin,<sup>46</sup> along with several renowned pastors and scholars, have advocated for Ephesians 5:26-27 as a guide on how a husband demonstrates biblical love to his wife.<sup>47</sup> Ephesians 5:26-27 reads, “That he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without

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<sup>44</sup> Frank Thielman, *Ephesians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 382.

<sup>45</sup> Gerald L. Bray, ed., *Galatians, Ephesians*, Reformation Commentary on Scripture: New Testament, vol. 10 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2011), xli. 385.

<sup>46</sup> Akin uses the terminology “His Love Will Be Sanctifying” (see n41) and thus I have retained his wording, but I seek to explain in this section that only Christ can sanctify.

<sup>47</sup> See R. C. Sproul *The Intimate Marriage: A Practical Guide to Building a Great Marriage* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2004), 58; R. Kent Hughes *Disciplines of a Godly Man*, rev. ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001), 37; and John MacArthur *Ephesians*, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1986), 300, to name a few.

blemish.” As professor of New Testament David Croteau notes, “The one command in Eph 5:25-27 given to husbands is that they are to love their wives.”<sup>48</sup> Croteau then posits a convincing argument based upon the structure of Paul’s sentence that there is only one command for the husband in Ephesians 5:25-27, namely the command to “love your wife.” Croteau also makes clear how a husband should love his wife, which is set forth in verses 26-27 in the example of how Christ sanctifies His bride, the church, by means of His Word.

Many helpful scholars and pastors have used Ephesians 5:26-27 as support for a man’s responsibility for his wife’s sanctification. Well-known church leader and Bible commentator John MacArthur teaches, “When a husband’s love for his wife is like Christ’s love for His church, he will continually seek to help purify her from any sort of defilement. He will seek to protect her from the world’s contamination and protect her holiness, virtue, and purity in every way.”<sup>49</sup> Although these are worthy aspirations for a godly husband, the work of sanctification described in verses 26-27 is ultimately the work of Christ by His Spirit. Croteau explains, “All of vss. 26 and 27 are directly about Christ’s love for the church.”<sup>50</sup> Therefore, it appears that New Testament scholar Clinton E. Arnold is correct in explaining this text: “This, of course, far transcends what any other husband is able to accomplish for his bride and further confirms that this portion of the passage is solely a lesson on Christology.”<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> David Croteau, “‘To Make Her Holy’ (Ephesians 5:26): Are Husbands Responsible for the Spiritual Maturation of Their Wives?” *The Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 21, no. 1 (Spring 2016), <https://cbmw.org/2016/05/16/jbmw-21-1-to-make-her-holy-ephesians-526-are-husbands-responsible-for-the-spiritual-maturation-of-their-wives/>.

<sup>49</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *Ephesians, MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1986), 300.

<sup>50</sup> Croteau, “‘To Make Her Holy.’”

<sup>51</sup> Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary Series*, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 390.

Although this passage does not teach that a husband is the sanctifier of his spouse, there is helpful guidance when rightfully understood in light of Scripture's teaching. A husband should desire for his wife to grow in godliness and progressive sanctification. Perhaps influential British pastor D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones connects the command to love in Ephesians 5:25 with its proper interpretive outcome in Ephesians 5:28-29. He proposes, "In verses 25, 26, and 27 he tells us what Christ has done for the church, and why He has done it. Then in verses 28 and 29 he gives us a preliminary deduction from that as to the duty of a husband towards his wife, especially in terms of the union that subsists between Christ and the church, and the husband and the wife."<sup>52</sup>

One way a man can encourage his wife toward progress in godliness is by discipling her in the Word of God. The wife should be the first disciple that a married man seeks to develop in Christlikeness. Some of the last words Jesus speaks before His ascension are found in Matthew 28:18-20, which is often referred to as the Great Commission, and the emphasis of Christ is for His followers to make disciples.<sup>53</sup> Godly men should thus seek to make disciples in their home more than anywhere else. A righteous man understands his first priority is to disciple his wife even above discipling his children. As with all other disciple-making relationships, this one takes time, intentionality, and effort. Men will not haphazardly default to discipling their spouse, and he will understand that only through Christ will either of them become more like Christ.

### **His Love Will Be Sensitive**

Ephesians 5:28 says, "In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself." From this verse, one understands

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<sup>52</sup> D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Life in the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973), 130.

<sup>53</sup> Matthew 28:18-20 reads, "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"

that a man of God will love his wife as Christ loved the church by loving her in a sensitive way, as thoughtfully as he loves his own body. Paul has Genesis 2:21-24 in mind since he quotes it in verse 31—where the concept of two people becoming “one flesh” is first taught.<sup>54</sup> Nineteenth century theologian Charles Hodge agrees with this interpretation: “This is the language of God, originally recorded in Genesis 2:24 and repeated by our Lord (Matthew 19:4-6), who, after citing the passage in Genesis, adds, ‘So they are no longer two, but one.’ Neither God by the mouth of Moses, nor our Lord says simply that husbands and wife ought to be but that they are one.”<sup>55</sup>

A husband will have to become a student of his wife if he is to love her as he loves himself. Men should become experts on their wives—their spiritual gifts, likes and dislikes, favorite activities, etc.—and make the pursuit of this expertise a lifelong endeavor. He will often do this by listening more than speaking. A husband would be wise to learn to ask insightful questions that reveal the heart of his wife and remember the answers given. He should pay attention to the idiosyncrasies of his wife and what she is passionate about. As he is equipped with this information about his bride, he should look for opportunities to serve alongside his wife in the local church, plan activities or dates around her interests and desires, and pick movies he thinks she would enjoy watching. A sensitive husband will be aware of his need to learn his wife and will seek to gain greater insights and knowledge of the one he claims to love and adore.

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<sup>54</sup> Gen 2:21-24 says,

So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

<sup>55</sup> Charles Hodge, *Ephesians*, The Crossway Classic Commentaries (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1994), 196.



## His Love Will Be Satisfying

Ephesians 5:29-30 reads, “For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.” In the words of Akin, one way of expressing the meaning of this text is to say that it is an exhortation for a husband to love his wife in a satisfying way. The apostle utilizes two present tense verbs in “nourishes” and “cherishes” in verse 29. Paul thus instructs husbands to an ongoing, lifelong process of love that nourishes both her soul and body, and treats her with honor. Such love would be a satisfying love. Thielman adds, “Paul wants the husbands among his readers to understand that loving their wives means taking care of them both physically and emotionally.”<sup>56</sup> Husbands are to model Christ’s care for His church physically and emotionally by providing for them and protecting them from adversaries both verbally and physically. The husband will protect her from her enemies as Christ protects His church (1:20-23).<sup>57</sup> He will also give his wife that which is necessary for her flourishing, as Paul cites Christ doing for the church in Ephesians 4:15-16: “Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”

The late Anglican pastor and theologian John Stott is exactly correct when he explains, “This exhortation to a husband to ‘nourish and cherish’ his wife as he does his own body is more than a useful guide to daily behaviour, however. It also contains an

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<sup>56</sup> Thielman, *Ephesians*, 388.

<sup>57</sup> Eph 1:20-23 states, “That he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.”

inner appropriateness, since he and his wife have in fact become ‘one flesh.’”<sup>58</sup> A man should see his wife as an extension of his own flesh and seek to deliver both physical and emotional support for her, such as by providing a home that is physically, emotionally, and spiritually safe. He should treat her as his equal in conversation and make it clear that he values her input. Promoting her spiritual wellbeing and acknowledging her importance in his own spiritual growth are also important aspects to nourishing and cherishing his wife with a satisfying love.

### **His Love Will Be Specific**

Ephesians 5:31-33 says, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.” Just as Christ has a love for a specific people—His bride the church—so a man who follows Christ will love a specific woman, namely his wife. A husband should “hold fast to his wife,” for they are “one flesh.” There is no greater human bond than the relationship between husband and wife. Because of this, a man should love his wife in such a way that she knows that her husband loves only Christ more than her.

In these concluding instructions to husbands about the covenant relationship each shares with his wife, Paul goes back to Genesis 2 to emphasize the importance of God’s creation and the boundaries for the marital union. Each man is free to select the bride of his choosing, but upon entering the covenant of marriage, it is his responsibility to love that woman above all others. Men are to be monogamous, regardless of the temptations to do otherwise. Hoehner explains the Greek: “The reflexive pronoun *εαυτων* functions as a possessive pronoun, indicating that husbands are to love their own wives

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<sup>58</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 1979), 230.

and no other women, thus reinforcing monogamy.”<sup>59</sup> Although this passage calls for a man to love his wife in ways far beyond merely preserving sexual faithfulness to her, it is certainly nothing less than that.

God warns through examples in Scripture of how even deeply devoted men can fall prey to adulterous temptations. King David of the Old Testament is described as a man after God’s own heart (1 Sam 13:14; Acts 13:22), indicating his righteousness in the midst of pagan kings and societies. Yet, even the great and noble King David sinned sexually with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11). Love and devotion to Jesus does not nullify the potential for sin. Women are not the enemy and it is not a woman’s fault if a man surrenders to sinful desires. David eventually acknowledges that it was he who sinned and that his sin was primarily against his God (Ps 51:4). If it can happen to David, then it surely can happen to any man today who professes Christ as Lord. All men need to hear the call of the Lord to love their wives and to be faithful, careful, and cautious as long as the Lord graciously gives them breath because marriage is intended by God to proclaim the gospel to the world.

### **Ephesians 6:1-4: A Man of God Will Discipline and Develop His Children in the Discipline and Instruction of the Lord**

Paul continues his discourse on the family into chapter 6 and further develops the theme of mutual submission that he began in the section on familial relationships in 5:21. Hoehner explains, “Paul’s injunction to be filled by the Spirit extends beyond merely a church service or a casual gathering to the believer’s life at home and at work where he or she will be observed twenty-four hours a day.”<sup>60</sup> Paul begins this section by addressing children and concludes with a brief but impactful declaration to parents, specifically addressing fathers. New Testament scholar and professor Frank Thielman

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<sup>59</sup> Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 747-48.

<sup>60</sup> Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 720.

breaks down Paul’s instructions to children: “He instructs children to obey their parents for three reasons: (1) it is required by their relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ; (2) it is universally recognized as the right thing to do; and (3) God has commanded it and has emphasized its importance, promising that, as a general rule, children who obey their parents will prosper.”<sup>61</sup>

The focus of this project is on fathers, but to ignore the biblical expectations for children would leave this section of Scripture void of the message the apostle Paul desires to give to both children and parents. As in each of the sections dealing with familial relationships, Paul begins with the subordinate in the relationship and works upward. In Ephesians 5:17-6:9, “Paul discusses three sets of relationship,” says Hoehner, “wife/husband, children/parents, and slaves/masters. In each instance the one who is to submit is discussed first, namely, the wife, the children, and the slaves. Paul then discusses the responsibility of those in the position of authority, namely, the husband, the parents, and the masters.”<sup>62</sup> Children are expected to “obey” because it is the “right” behavior and normal activity of the subordinate. This has been the default expectation of children throughout history. Only recently have the “rights” of children been elevated in the minds of some to a place of equality with adults. American historian Steven Mintz reports, “During the 1960s widely held presuppositions about authority, family life, gender, race relations, sexuality, and proper behavior were contested.”<sup>63</sup> As a result, in today’s society it is often asserted that children may choose whether they will obey, and an increasing number of cultural authorities want to ascribe to children the same authority as the parents who bring them into the world. This ideology runs contradictory to the teaching of Paul and the Bible. Furthermore, Paul instructs children to honor their parents

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<sup>61</sup> Thielman, *Ephesians*, 403.

<sup>62</sup> Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 720.

<sup>63</sup> Steven Mintz, *Huck’s Raft: A History of American Childhood* (New York: Belknap, 2006), 312.

based on the Torah, specifically quoting Moses in Exodus 20:12 and the Ten Commandments. Charles Hodge adds, “To honor is to reverence; and therefore the command refers to the inner feeling as well as to the outer behavior.”<sup>64</sup> Finally, again quoting Moses, Paul tells the reader that a general promise of blessings and long life is attached to obeying one’s parents.

Paul then shifts his focus from children to fathers as he concludes his teachings on household conduct by urging fathers to develop and discipline their children in the Lord. Paul gives fathers two responsibilities in verse 4, with one being negative (“do not provoke your children to anger”) and one being positive (“but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord”). The former addresses the restraint the man of God must show in interacting with his children. Inciting children toward fury is contrary to the biblical method of instructing children, even though, according to Thielman, fathers in Paul’s day had “far-reaching authority over [their] children.”<sup>65</sup> Instead, Thielman explains that Paul “wants Christian fathers to be gentle, patient educators of their children, whose chief ‘weapon’ is Christian instruction focused on loyalty to Christ as Lord.”<sup>66</sup> Paul, therefore, lays the primary responsibility in the home for teaching children upon the father, giving general guidelines about how and what to teach them.

Paul is aware that parents—and particularly fathers—often become frustrated because of their failures in both communication and consistency regarding expectations and consequences. But having a clear, biblical vision for fatherhood such as the Bible sets forth here and elsewhere will help to eliminate six potential difficulties in these areas. This vision implies: (1) becoming more disciplined in their approach to parenting to avoid frustration; (2) seeking God’s forgiveness for their past failures and move forward with a

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<sup>64</sup> Hodge, *Ephesians*, 202.

<sup>65</sup> Thielman, *Ephesians*, 401.

<sup>66</sup> Thielman, *Ephesians*, 401.

fresh commitment to improve; (3) seeking counsel on how to improve their ability to communicate with their children; (4) learning how to live out their faith in the home; (5) setting realistic expectations for themselves and their children; and (6) realizing that it will take time to work through the consequences of past failures. These and other biblical guidelines can help any father who will seek to develop his role as a father on the solid foundation of Scripture.

Since God's Word is timeless and authoritative in all cultures and settings, the implications today are for fathers to lovingly and compassionately lead their children. Fathers in Paul's day had full control and could be prone to abusing that power.<sup>67</sup> Today, churches still have fathers who abuse their children both physically and emotionally, as well as fathers who, though present in the home, emotionally abandon their children and abdicate their responsibilities as fathers. Paul desired that fathers treat their children as people made in God's image and consider their emotional wellbeing. Here is how Hoehner understands Paul's intent: "In giving the instructions, Paul brings to fathers a new perspective on the treatment of their children. He mentions nothing of their right to absolute power over them as in Roman law but, rather, prefaces a positive exhortation with a negative one, that is, to refrain from provoking their children."<sup>68</sup>

### **Discipline Children in the Lord**

The positive responsibilities Paul gives to fathers are expressed via two nouns. The first noun having to do with discipline (*παιδεία*) and the second having to do with development (*νουθεσία*). Both nouns are modified by the last noun in the sentence *κυρίου*. The reference is to the Lord of the Bible, which means Christian fathers should see the Fatherhood of God as their standard. Hoehner rightly argues, "In other words, the father's

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<sup>67</sup> Hoehner writes, "Israel followed the patriarchal structure with the father having absolute control over his children... He was able to sell his daughter into slavery (Exod 21:7), and he and his wife could have their persistently rebellious son stoned (Deut 21:18-21)." Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 794-95.

<sup>68</sup> Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 796.

training and admonition is not to be anthropocentric as it was in Hellenism nor centered around the law as in the rabbinics but, rather, Christocentric.”<sup>69</sup> Thus a father should make the Christlikeness of his children as the ultimate end of his parenting.

The first of these twin duties is for fathers to discipline their children. However, this discipline should never be executed in anger or any other sinful expression. Paul teaches similarly in Colossians 3:21: “Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.” Commenting on Ephesians Stott is correct when he explains,

There is a place for discipline, as Paul goes on to say, but it must never be arbitrary (for children have a built-in sense of justice) or unkind. Otherwise, they will “become discouraged.” Conversely, almost nothing causes a child’s personality to blossom and gifts to develop like the positive encouragement of loving, understanding parents.<sup>70</sup>

Therefore, discipline must never come without loving instruction. Martin Luther said, “Spare the rod and spoil the child—that is true. But beside the rod keep an apple to give him when has done well.”<sup>71</sup> A father’s job is to administer not only corrective discipline, but also that which is affirmative. Fathers should learn this from the example of how their Heavenly Father relates to them and follow this example in how they relate to their children. Fathers should discipline their children in such a way that they should be able to say to them what Paul said to the Corinthians: “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1).

Children need oversight and direction. Hodge clarifies the intentionality of fathers’ discipline: “Children are not to be allowed to grow up without care or control. They are to be instructed, disciplined, and admonished, so that they are brought to

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<sup>69</sup> Hoehner, *Ephesians* 798.

<sup>70</sup> Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 246.

<sup>71</sup> William Barclay, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrews Press, 1954), 211-12.

knowledge, self-control, and obedience.”<sup>72</sup> This leads to the development of children in the Lord and the second emphasis of Paul’s directives to fathers in Ephesians 6:4.

### **Develop Children in the Lord**

Children must be educated and trained how to speak and act. All this is implied in the command to “bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” The process begins at birth and continues as long as the children are living in the father’s home. As Bruce observes, “The ‘training and instruction of the Lord’ would involve following Christ’s example, with due regard to his ‘meekness and gentleness’ (2 Cor 10:1), as well as putting into practice his precepts. And the children will the more readily learn these lessons if the parents themselves show the way—by following Christ’s example and practicing his precepts.”<sup>73</sup> The “instruction” Paul enjoins does not reflect concern merely for the outward behavior and conformity to culturally accepted norms, but also for the impartation of a knowledge of God and His Word with an emphasis on the heart. A Christian father does not leave the responsibilities of teaching the Word of God to a mother, church, small group leader, or anyone else. Although all these should have an important place in supporting the father’s teaching ministry to his own children, it is the father whom God holds primarily responsible for the instruction of the child.

This fatherly instruction (νουθεσία) might be said to summarize the diligent teaching of children that Moses famously commanded in Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Hoehner concludes, “In the Ephesian context it denotes the word of admonition that is designed to correct while not provoking or embittering.”<sup>74</sup> The word Paul utilizes here can be translated as instruction, admonition, or warning. I have chosen to describe the action Paul seeks by

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<sup>72</sup> Hodge, *Ephesians*, 203-4.

<sup>73</sup> F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1984), 398-99.

<sup>74</sup> Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 797.



the word *develop* children. The term *develop* is an overarching term that contains the meaning of the usual translations of the word. Paul is exhorting fathers in Ephesians 6:4 to develop their children so that they will come to know Christ and become more like Him.

Considering the training in the Torah that the apostle Paul received as a Pharisee at the feet of Gamaliel, he certainly must have written Ephesians 6:1-4 with not only the Fourth Commandment in mind, but also the best-known passage in the Pentateuch on parental instruction, namely that found in Deuteronomy 6:4-5: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” The foundation of a father’s instruction of his children is instruction about God Himself; namely, that “The Lord is our God,” and that “the Lord is one”—one God in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He should teach them what God has revealed about Himself through His written revelation to mankind, and that God can be known, and served, and most of all, loved. Indeed, He should teach them that the greatest of all commandments is, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (v. 5). Moreover, the father should seek to teach these things at every possible opportunity, looking for teachable moments from the time the children wake up in the morning until they go to sleep at night. Moses makes this plain by the methodology he lays out in verses 6-9:

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Fathers who seek to shepherd their children according to the standard God has revealed in His Word will not merely drop off their kids at church and hope they are taught the truths of the faith. Instead, biblically faithful fathers will engage children where they are, intentionally seeking to reveal the mystery of the faith (Eph 3:4-9). Paul gives Christian men a concise expectation for shepherding their families within Ephesians 5:25–6:4. Godly men, since Paul, have been striving to meet those biblical expectations

he set forth in hopes of awakening families and, thus, the world, to the splendor and majesty of the God of the Bible. From the Church Fathers, to the Reformers, to the Puritans and beyond, the torch of the teaching of the importance of the family has been passed. Men today must anchor their aspirations and desires for their lives and their families' lives within the Word of God. The faithful man of God will shepherd his family well by developing and disciplining his children in the Lord.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter sought to establish an exegetical basis for men shepherding their families, showing that the Bible teaches that a godly man is responsible for being the God-ordained head of his home, walking righteously in all his duties, loving his wife as Christ loved the church, and disciplining and developing his children in the Lord. Through an exposition of four biblical passages it has been shown that a Christian man should be a sanctifying means for his wife and children through his sacrificial love and shepherding.

CHAPTER 3  
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES  
RELATED TO SHEPHERDING

**Introduction**

The last chapter demonstrated that God has established for men specific roles and responsibilities throughout the entirety of Scripture. Passages were considered that set forth the importance of husbands being the head of the home, walking in righteousness, loving their spouse like Christ loved the church, and teaching their children the Word of God. This chapter presents some of the theoretical and practical issues related to male spiritual leadership in the home. Good intentions need a good direction. Having a biblical foundation is essential, but men also need to know how to apply God's truth against the schemes of their spiritual enemy.

Since the Garden of Eden the devil has waged war on the family, and based upon the teachings of Scripture, he will not relent until Jesus completely and ultimately destroys him. Pastor and author Voddie Baucham asserts, "A family without a commitment to the God of the Bible has no hope of stemming the tide of cultural onslaught,"<sup>1</sup> an onslaught engineered by none other than the devil himself. This chapter seeks to show men how to get into the fight and engage with the "cultural onslaught." To shepherd their families in accordance with the Bible men must understand the battle, learn from history, love their wife, and teach their children.

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<sup>1</sup> Voddie Baucham, Jr., *Family Driven Faith: Doing What It Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk with God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 33.

## **Biblical Shepherding by a Father: Theological and Spiritual Considerations**

Understanding the battle begins with men appreciating the cosmic battle that rages around them: a cosmic battle often described as spiritual warfare. The apostle Paul instructs the church in Rome to wage war against the sin in themselves (Rom 6) and also to combat the schemes of the devil (Eph 6:10-18). New Testament scholar and Dean of the Talbot School of Theology, Clinton E. Arnold declares, “While demonic influence indeed does tempt us, we are more often enticed by our own flesh as well as the worldly pleasures that surround us and compete for our attention (Eph 2:1-3).”<sup>2</sup> Christian men are prone to overemphasize or underemphasize when it comes to spiritual warfare. Pastor Lance T. Beauchamp is correct when he states two essential facts: “1) Satan and his demons are real. They hate everything about you and want to destroy you. 2) We serve a sovereign and victorious God who has equipped you with everything you need to have victory over evil.”<sup>3</sup> Ephesians 6:10 makes clear that one can stand strong only in the Lord’s power.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, as men seeking to overcome the battles of marriage and parenting, fathers must center their focus upon Christ and root their foundation in the Word with absolute dependence upon the Holy Spirit. International Mission Board President Emeritus Jerry Rankin and pastor and professor Ed Stetzer observe, “Satan’s strategy is to erode our confidence in God’s Word or, at least, cause us to neglect it in the battle.”<sup>5</sup>

What is the center of your universe? Honestly answering this question can help a man evaluate his priorities. If the center of his universe is anything besides Christ then

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<sup>2</sup> Clinton E. Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 32.

<sup>3</sup> Lance T. Beauchamp, “Spiritual Warfare: A Strategic Guide,” *Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry* 15, no. 1 (2018): 88-89.

<sup>4</sup> Eph 6:10 encourages, “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.”

<sup>5</sup> Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer, *Spiritual Warfare and Missions: The Battle for God’s Glory Among the Nations* (Nashville: B & H, 2010), 181.

the man is out of focus, and he must realign and restructure his life. Many Christ followers today are guilty of making their families an idol in the name of being biblically faithful. The family that is driven by the wants and needs of the child will often look family-friendly when in reality the parents are abdicating their roles and responsibilities.

Instead, they should recalibrate their thinking in accordance with the way that Baucham succinctly describes the God of the Bible: “The Lord is jealous about His name and His glory.”<sup>6</sup> Exodus 20:3 is equally straightforward as Moses declares, “You shall have no other Gods before me.” Therefore, anything that is worshiped in addition to or other than the triune God of Scripture is idolatry. Pastor and author Timothy Keller is helpful in his definition of idolatry as “anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and your imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give.”<sup>7</sup> “The whole system of idolatry—guaranteed, selfish, easy, convenient, normal, logical, pleasing, indulgent, and erotic—when you look at it that way, the allure of idolatry does not seem far removed from us,” confesses pastor Kevin DeYoung. “It is easy to see how we can make idols out of everything.”<sup>8</sup> Understanding the multitude of areas in which an individual can be lured into idolatry brings the weight of the temptation to the home and the leader of the home.

Thus, idolatry is not just an Old Testament issue; idolatry is prevalent in the modern age. Idolatry exists among reprobates and the church, though those outside the church are often quickly labeled and accused of idolatry. Jana Magruder and Lifeway completed an intensive research study with parents in 2016, and published their findings in *Nothing Less: Engaging Kids in a Lifetime of Faith*. In the book Magruder observes,

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<sup>6</sup> Baucham, *Family Driven Faith*, 33.

<sup>7</sup> Timothy Keller, *Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope that Matters* (New York: Dutton, 2009), xvii.

<sup>8</sup> Kevin DeYoung, “The Attraction of Idolatry,” *The Gospel Coalition*, September 23, 2016, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/the-attraction-of-idolatry/>.

“Most parents—churchgoers included—judge their success as parents in terms of their children’s values, happiness, success, goodness, education, and self-sustaining maturity.”<sup>9</sup> When this is the case in the homes of Christian parents, there is little difference between parents inside and outside the church. The church is often quick to attack sports when families spend countless hours and financial resources on games, travel, practices, and personal instructors—and this is good. However, as historian and editor Mark Granquist exposes, “The trouble is not only that American youth are training and competing more intensely and at earlier ages, but that these activities seemingly take more of their time and commitment, drawing in the focus and energies of their entire families.”<sup>10</sup> There are also fine arts opportunities readily abused by families. The result is, as professor, podcaster, and dad, Ted Kluck emphasizes, “Many of us worship at the altar of The Perfect Family.”<sup>11</sup> These activities and opportunities in and of themselves are not necessarily sinful, but the excess to which many parents take them makes them opportunities for idolatry.

The church is not immune to having wrong priorities. Many well-meaning and biblically-sound church-going people have inadvertently made their families an idol. Their desire to raise godly children has caused them to position the discipling of these creatures they are to steward ahead of their creator. President of the Ethics and Religious Liberties Commission, Russell Moore, points out in his book on *The Storm-Tossed Family*: “Following Jesus requires us to reorder our priorities.”<sup>12</sup> Every sin-infected

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<sup>9</sup> Jana Magruder, *Nothing Less: Engaging Kids in a Lifetime of Faith* (Nashville: LifeWay, 2017), 28.

<sup>10</sup> Mark Granquist, “Christian Youth Ministries and Youth Sports: A View from the Trenches,” *World & World* 35, no. 4 (2015): 341.

<sup>11</sup> Ted Kluck and Kristin Kluck, *Household Gods: Freed from the Worship of Family to Delight in the Glory of God* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2014), 3. Ted Kluck lays out an excellent exercise to counter the impulse toward idolatry where he instructs to insert whatever word or phrase sums up the operative idol within one’s heart into Paul’s admonishment in Gal 5:1-6. Kluck and Kluck, *Household Gods*, 87.

<sup>12</sup> Russell Moore, *The Storm-Tossed Family: How the Cross Reshapes the Home* (Nashville: B & H, 2018), 57.

individual must examine his own life to see if Jesus is truly the aim and focus of his life, because many good things sadly become the ultimate thing. Sincere Christians are equally susceptible to wrong priorities. How many children in church would identify their parents more as advocates for these misplaced priorities than as teachers of God's Word? Timothy Paul Jones, professor of apologetics at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, reports, "Only one-third of church parents read or discussed Scripture with their children at least once a week."<sup>13</sup> Currently in many evangelical churches parents who simply get their families to church are seen by congregants and staff as sufficiently meeting biblical parental standards.

Further compounding the potential for idolatry can come when the church pushes the congregation toward idolatrous relationships within the family. Churches that most likely began with and desired Christ-exalting ends have developed some human-exalting means. One example of this is attempting to draw larger audiences the focus shifts to appealing to the congregant instead of pleasing the Lord. The audience, instead of the Lord, are the focus. Often these churches are not even aware of the culture and subculture that they have created or promoted. When this happens, the church is being infiltrated by secularism. Professor of Theology Joshua Hollmann describes the development of secularism "not by subtraction or taking away God and classic formularies of spirituality, but more by sublimation, where past religious experiences become presently and persistently nebulous."<sup>14</sup> This shift in focus is often slow and subtle and thus unnoticed.

Pastor and author David Platt elaborates, "While the goal of the American dream is to make much of us, the goal of the gospel is to make much of God."<sup>15</sup> Therefore,

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<sup>13</sup> Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide: How Your Church Can Equip Parents to Make Disciples* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan, 2011), 154.

<sup>14</sup> Joshua Hollmann, "Christian Witness in the Present Charles Taylor, Secularism, and The Benedict Option," *Concordia Journal* 46, no. 1 (2020): 57.

<sup>15</sup> David Platt, *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream* (New York: Multnomah, 2010), 46-47.

as men, the battle is truly all around. It comes from those with evil intentions and those with Christ-exalting intentions. The man of God must be resolved to focus on his God and see to it that nothing diverts his attention. Furthermore, he must establish boundaries that keep him focused on the main thing—obedience to the Lord. “We live in a Genesis 3 world with a Genesis 1 blueprint on the trajectory to a Revelation 21 future,” writes professor of ethics and apologetics Andrew Walker.<sup>16</sup> Walker’s astute insight succinctly describes the battle that faces all of humanity and what men must remember in their desire to shepherd their families according to God’s written revelation.

### **Biblical Shepherding by a Father: Historical Considerations**

The local church along with biblically obedient men have always been called to be at odds with society. The epistles of the New Testament make it clear that those Jews and Gentiles who had turned their lives over to Christ and His desires had struggles navigating the daily decisions before them in the first century. As Christ followers encountered scrutiny from family, friends, and culture, teachers were needed in order to express the truth of God with clarity and precision. Therefore, the Lord has blessed His church with teachers who have rightly elevated the gospel call, from the apostle Paul through modern-day, family-model-movement leaders.

Christian tradition has helped guard the church and individuals from folding under the pressures of society. Tradition alone is not sufficient, but it can be a helpful tool in navigating the ever-eroding landscape of fatherhood. Christian apologist and theologian Alister McGrath writes, “Tradition is like a filter, which allows us to identify suspect teachings immediately.”<sup>17</sup> Professor of patristics and historical theology D. H.

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<sup>16</sup> Andrew Walker, *God and the Transgender Debate: What Does the Bible Actually Say about Gender Identity* (Epsom, England: Good Book, 2018), 88.

<sup>17</sup> Alister E. McGrath, “Importance of Tradition for Modern Evangelicalism,” in *Doing Theology for the People of God*, ed. Donald Lewis and Alister E. McGrath (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 167.



Williams makes a keen observation of the detrimental consequences if this filter is abandoned. He points out that evangelical churches will eventually exude “spiritual subjectivism” and dismiss “the uniqueness of the Christian identity” in the name of pragmatism.<sup>18</sup> Most certainly there will be some in churches who have the greatest of resolve who will fumble the responsibility of their children’s spiritual nourishment. However, it will be helpful to study church history to see how the church has stood against the bombardment of culture. Church history testifies to the home being a place of worship and instruction in the things of the Lord. This section will give a brief overview of how the church conceived of the role of families in the early church, Middle Ages, Reformation, and Puritans, along with the modern period.

From the close of the canon of Scripture, Christian parents, and specifically fathers, have been instructed and understood to be the fountainhead of biblical teaching in the home. Jones points out, “A sermon from the late first century A.D. admonishes parents to make certain their children ‘receive the instruction that is in Christ.’”<sup>19</sup> He goes on to highlight, “A letter written to the church in the ancient city of Philadelphia specifically calls fathers to teach their children ‘the Holy Scriptures as well as trades.’”<sup>20</sup> Faith and life were woven together. They were intertwined so much so that many followers of Christ were killed for their allegiance to the God of the Bible. A martyr in the second-century is recorded as saying, “I received from my parents this good confession.”<sup>21</sup> Pastor C. Michael Wren, Jr. notes that preeminent theologian Augustine in the fourth and fifth centuries would often teach on marriage and would “frequently emphasize the important

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<sup>18</sup> D. H. Williams, *Retrieving the Tradition and Renewing Evangelicalism: A Primer for Suspicious Protestants* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 14.

<sup>19</sup> Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 154.

<sup>20</sup> Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 154.

<sup>21</sup> *Martyrdom of Justin*, in *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*, vol. 2, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (London: Hamilton & Co., 1868), 369.

role that a parent plays in the discipleship of children.”<sup>22</sup> Wren then adds, “Evangelicals can still glean wisdom from Augustine: At a time when many Christians elevated asceticism above material relations, Augustine saw value in this relationship precisely because marriage provided an opportunity for parents to educate children in the Christian faith.”<sup>23</sup> The church must teach men without neglecting the insights of those who have gone before them.

The church of the Lord Jesus Christ underwent many changes after Augustine in the fifth century up through the Middle Ages, but many of them were not beneficial. The responsibility for most of these changes can be placed at the feet of the clergy in those centuries. Minimal expectations were placed upon clergy, such as “knowing the Apostles’ Creed and the Lord’s Prayer, conducting a proper baptism and mass, and singing certain psalms,” notes Wren.<sup>24</sup> Inept clergy, coupled with the limited access that families had to the Scriptures in their native tongues further restricted individuals and families from realizing godly expectations. Illiteracy was a huge obstacle as well. Little was produced to help stem the tide of parents abdicating their responsibilities in the middle ages. “No major medieval theologians,” writes Wren, “seem to have produced any works exclusively devoted to the subject of spiritual training in the context of a family.”<sup>25</sup> Although an abundance of these resources can be found today, the church can always have confidence that God will preserve some measure of faithful Christian family

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<sup>22</sup> C. Michael Wren, Jr., “Among Your Company at Home: Family Discipleship in Late Ancient and Medieval Households,” in *Trained in the Fear of God*, ed. Randy Stinson and Timothy Paul Jones (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 103.

<sup>23</sup> Wren, “Among Your Company at Home,” 104.

<sup>24</sup> Wren, “Among Your Company at Home,” 108.

<sup>25</sup> Wren, “Among Your Company at Home,” 105.

life in the church because Romans 11:5 reveals there will always be a remnant based upon God's grace despite humanity's weaknesses.<sup>26</sup>

In the sixteenth century, and with the Protestant Reformation, came an awakening to both the church and families. Theologian J. I. Packer and professor Gary Parrett make plain, "The Reformers, led by heavyweights Luther and Calvin, sought with great resolve to reverse matters."<sup>27</sup> The Reformers sought to tear down the divisive wall between sacred and secular, laity and clergy. Professor Gerald Sittser explains, "They believed that the Word of God is addressed to all of us, not simply to a chosen few."<sup>28</sup> The teaching of the Reformation embraced salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, as revealed in Scripture alone, to the glory of God alone. These doctrines had practical implications and applications for families. The return to the teachings of the Text caused parents to know, obey, and teach the Scriptures. Submission to Scripture caused Martin Luther to challenge the Catholic Church's teaching on celibacy. Luther not only rejected the teachings on celibacy with his pen but also with his life. Union School of Theology president and professor of theology Michael Reeves expounds, "Luther felt it his duty to find them all [ex-nuns] husbands."<sup>29</sup> He then married Katharina von Bora in 1525. John Calvin believed in the importance of the home so much that he pleaded for the church to be prudent "that this [instruction] might be done more conveniently . . . and individuals enjoined properly to teach their families."<sup>30</sup> With the Reformation and its

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<sup>26</sup> Rom 11:5 states, "So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace."

<sup>27</sup> J. I. Packer and Gary A. Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 23.

<sup>28</sup> Gerald Sittser, *Water from a Deep Well: Christian Spirituality from Early Martyrs to Modern Missionaries* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007), 212.

<sup>29</sup> Michael Reeves, *The Unquenchable Flame: Discovering the Heart of the Reformation* (Nashville: B & H, 2009), 58.

<sup>30</sup> John Calvin, *Tracts and Letters*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), 2:33.

proponents' motivation to reclaim the Scriptures' authority in the life of the church and the individual, came a recovery of Christian family life and for that the church and families today should be thankful.

The Puritans expanded on what the Reformers rediscovered in the importance of the home. Reeves describes the Puritans as “wanting to purify what in the church and in themselves had not yet been purified.”<sup>31</sup> The Puritan era was a period of enthusiastic quest for godliness in the home, church, and world. Packer notes, “The Puritan ethic of nurture was to train up children in the way they should go, to care for their bodies and souls together, and to educate them for sober, godly, socially useful adult living.”<sup>32</sup> The Puritans described the home and the family with different emphases than was common among previous generations of Christians. Professor of church history C. Jeffrey Robinson portrays the Puritans as “seeing every house [as a] household of faith . . . [and] every father [as] a priest in his own family.”<sup>33</sup> The Puritans significantly exalted the role and responsibility of the man in the home. Puritan John Bunyan described the role of fathers in 1674 with the following words: “[The father] ought to be very diligent and cautious, doing his utmost both to increase faith where it is begun, and to begin it where it is not. Therefore, he must diligently and frequently bring before his family the things of God, from His holy Word, in accordance with what is suitable for each person.”<sup>34</sup> Fathers today would do well to heed these instructions.

During the Puritan era of church history, the role and importance of fathers in the home was prominently displayed to all within the church. The practices of family

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<sup>31</sup> Reeves, *The Unquenchable Flame*, 151.

<sup>32</sup> J. I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1990), 25.

<sup>33</sup> C. Jeffrey Robinson, Sr., “The Home Is an Earthly Kingdom: Family Discipleship among the Reformers and Puritans,” in Stinson and Jones, *Trained in the Fear of God*, 119-20.

<sup>34</sup> John Bunyan, *Christian Behavior*, 1674, updated by Tony Capoccia 1986, accessed April 16, 2020, <https://www.biblebb.com/files/bunyan/christianbehavior.htm>.

worship and the catechizing of children were firmly established as norms for Christian family life. These practices, unsurprisingly, were sustained or declined in conjunction with the periods of revival and decline that characterized the church in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. According to historian Frank Otis Erb, “In the American colonies, there was a steady decline of both morals and religion after the first generation.”<sup>35</sup>

With the development of the Industrial Revolution, new pressures were exerted on family life in general, pressures which also affected the spiritual life of the family. As families began migrating to cities and increasing numbers of fathers left the home for their daily work, it became less common for families to spend the entire day together in and around the home. Parents had less time with their children and fathers were often exhausted when home with their children. This, along with child labor and compulsory school attendance, made the job of Christian parents instilling biblical truth much more difficult. As a result, the role and importance of the family in providing spiritual guidance for children continued to dissipate with the arrival of the twentieth century, and declined even further with the influences of two world wars and women entering the workforce in growing numbers.

By the end of World War II, churches began to initiate programs and opportunities for religious education in more age and gender-specific ways. Founder of Daddy Discipleship W. Ryan Steenburg and professor Timothy Paul Jones point out, “By the mid-twentieth century, local churches were imitating parachurch ministries such as Young Life and Youth for Christ by hiring professional ministers whose primary purpose was to engage adolescents.”<sup>36</sup> Churches believed they were faithfully equipping the saints by requiring families to separate into different programs within the church. Steenburg and

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<sup>35</sup> Frank Otis Erb, *The Development of the Young People's Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1917), 3.

<sup>36</sup> W. Ryan Steenburg and Timothy Paul Jones, “Growing Gaps from Generation to Generation,” in Stinson and Jones, *Trained in the Fear of God*, 156-57.

Jones describe the division: “Adolescents receive their training in youth group, children go to children’s church, and adults have Bible studies and worship celebrations tailored to their particular preferences.”<sup>37</sup> The continuation of this approach has sometimes resulted in children growing up in the church with little to no parental involvement in their spiritual development. Professor Mark H. Senter levels a harsh claim against the modern church: “Doctrinally thin, ethically tolerant, and consumer oriented, many churches have lost their passion for the hard sayings of the Christian gospel.”<sup>38</sup> Whether Senter is totally correct or not, the church has wittingly become its own enemy.

Nevertheless, there is hope for a brighter future for families and the local church. Within the past couple of decades church leaders and seminaries have sought to emphasize the family and help churches return to biblically faithful models. Jones points out three different family ministry models—family-based, family-equipping, and family-integrated—in his seminal book from 2011, *Family Ministry Field Guide*.<sup>39</sup> Each of the three models seeks to emphasize the role of parents by intentionally partnering with them and equipping them with the biblical task of equipping their children (Eph 6:4). Thankfully, many evangelical ministers are rediscovering the biblical and historical importance of fathers training their children in the faith.

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<sup>37</sup> Steenburg and Jones, “Growing Gaps,” 158.

<sup>38</sup> Mark H. Senter III, *When God Shows Up: A History of Protestant Youth Ministry in America* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 309.

<sup>39</sup> Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 133. Jones delineates the three modern family ministry models. He explains that Family-Based Ministry Model is defined as “Programmatic structures remain unchanged, but each separate ministry plans and programs activities that intentionally draw generations together and invite parents to take part in the discipleship of their children and youth.” Jones goes on to define the Family-Equipping Ministry Model: “Although age-organized programs and events still exist, the ministry is completely restructured to draw generations together, equipping parents, championing their role as primary disciple-makers, and holding them accountable to fulfill this role.” Finally, Jones demarcates Family-Integrated Ministry Model: “The church eliminates age-segregated programs and events. All or nearly all programs and events are multi-generational, with a strong focus on parents’ responsibility to use their household as a context for evangelizing and discipling not only their own families but also others, inside and outside the faith community.” Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide*, 133.

## **Biblical Shepherding by a Father: Practical Considerations**

### **A Father's Love for His Wife**

Marriage is not for everyone. Another healthy development within the church is an increasing awareness of a biblical understanding of singleness. However, the vast majority of people seek to be married. According to Statista, in 2018 there were around 2.13 million marriages in the United States.<sup>40</sup> With millions of people uniting annually in the bonds of marriage, the question is raised as to who or what defines marriage. The secular definition of marriage is and will always be a moving target, whereas the Christian definition and understanding goes beyond the magistrate to the Messiah. Christ is the church's cornerstone for all horizontal relationships. An exhaustive study on the meaning of Christian marriage would involve a plethora of takes and views. Henceforth, the survey in this section will be limited to an orthodox historical Christian view of marriage outlined in chapter 2 based upon God's Word. Andreas Köstenberger, founding director of the Center for Biblical Studies at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary laments, "Because marriage and the family are not merely a human convention or cultural custom but a divine institution, it should be expected that Satan, who seeks to rob God of his glory, would attack marriage."<sup>41</sup> Hence, fathers today need to be educated and equipped in how to love, lead, and live with their bride so that the gospel shines forth from their family and to generations of families to follow. Professor and pastor George W. Knight III instructs, "In defining how men and women are to relate to one another in fulfilling their respective roles, God has called men to exercise a headship that is loving, gentle, and considerate (Eph 5:25-32, 1 Peter 3:7)."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Statista, "Number of Marriages in the United States from 1990 to 2018," accessed July 20, 2020, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/195931/number-of-marriages-in-the-united-states-since-1990/>.

<sup>41</sup> Andreas J. Köstenberger, *God, Marriage, and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 163.

<sup>42</sup> George W. Knight III, "The Family and the Church: How Should Biblical Manhood and Womanhood Work Out in Practice," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to*

## Exercising Loving Headship

Love is a common word but is rarely defined. Professor of Biblical Counseling and author, Stuart Scott, is helpful in defining biblical love by revealing what love is not: “Love is not romantic feelings, physical attraction, sex, needing, benefitting, loving words alone, loving actions alone, or being ‘in love.’”<sup>43</sup> Instead men are instructed to love their wives like “Christ loved the church” (Eph 5:25). The love of Christ is perfect and undeserved, which should be the goal of a man seeking to shepherd according to the Bible. Scott not only tells what love is not, but also gives a helpful definition: “A selfless and enduring commitment of the will to care about and benefit another person by righteous, truthful, and compassionate thoughts, words and actions.”<sup>44</sup>

Selfishness is the more accurate word to describe what often masquerades as love in today’s culture, when in fact selfishness is the antagonist to properly understood biblical love. Commitment is also rarely identified with love because it seems to be at odds with the “butterflies in the stomach” motif—the kind of love commonly celebrated upon the silver screen. Even in evangelical weddings, couple-composed vows often lack fidelity to Scripture, which erodes the commitments being pledged before God and witnesses. Sadly, even “till death do us depart” is missing in many marriage vows.<sup>45</sup> The sentimental and emotional draw of the world impacts even those within the church on how to view and approach marriage. “The man who truly loves God,” says Scott, “will seek to love his wife with the love that God has shown for him.”<sup>46</sup> Paul’s words in

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*Evangelical Feminism*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006), 345.

<sup>43</sup> Stuart Scott, *The Exemplary Husband: A Biblical Perspective* (Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2002), 102-4.

<sup>44</sup> Scott, *The Exemplary Husband*, 106.

<sup>45</sup> The Book of Common Prayer was written in 1559 and shaped most of what has been held within Christian marriage ceremonies for the past 441 years. Unfortunately, the once sacred and intentional wording of marriage ceremonies is dissipating in the sea of secularism.

<sup>46</sup> Scott, *The Exemplary Husband*, 116.



Ephesians 5:1-2 give clear instructions to heed today: “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.” Counselor and Founder of The Institute for Nouthetic Studies Jay E. Adams affirms, “The husband is to initiate love, to maintain love, and to see that love grows in the marriage.”<sup>47</sup>

### **Exercising Gentle Headship**

Paul selects two of the most tender Greek words to depict the husband’s actions toward his wife in Ephesians 5:29. Those two words used by Paul are translated “nourish” and “cherish” and they harmonize perfectly with a gentle headship. As Adams explains,

If Christ’s headship is for the sake of His bride, the church, and a husband’s headship is to reflect that of Christ, then all that a husband does as head should be for the sake of his wife. All decisions are to be made with her best interests and welfare in mind. The headship of a well-informed, obedient Christian husband is something in which his wife should delight.<sup>48</sup>

A husband should exercise his headship in a way whereby his wife receives the benefit and senses that she is both “nourished” and “cherished” by her husband.

Of course, even in a Christian marriage both husband and wife still sin and sin divides. Even the most devoted and committed of couples cannot escape the allure of sin. Sadly, as pastor Richard D. Phillips laments, “Like Adam, men today find it easier to criticize and accuse our wives than to confess our sin.”<sup>49</sup> Sin will not only alienate the redeemed from their Redeemer but will also divide husbands from their brides. Therefore, a husband seeking to be gentle as he leads his spouse will be quick to acknowledge and repent of his sin. The reason for this, as pastor Justin Buzzard makes clear, is because “Jesus doesn’t just rescue us from the penalty of sin, he also rescues us from the power of

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<sup>47</sup> Jay E. Adams, *Solving Marriage Problems: Biblical Solutions for Christian Counselors* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 117.

<sup>48</sup> Adams, *Solving Marriage Problems*, 118-19.

<sup>49</sup> Richard Phillips, *The Masculine Mandate: God’s Calling to Men* (Orlando: Reformation Trust, 2010), 95.

sin.”<sup>50</sup> Understanding the cosmic battle and relational venom that sin can bring must propel men to confront sin in their lives and homes. In fact, confession of sin should be a regular habit of a man seeking to tenderly lead.

Some men may not associate leadership with terms like “nourish” and “cherish,” but this is God’s desire for a husband’s shepherding ministry in his home. Baucham agrees: “Leading a wife is the foundation upon which a man’s shepherding ministry in the home is built.”<sup>51</sup> Once again, all this is impossible for any man apart from the Holy Spirit, the guidance of Scripture, and the example of Christ’s nourishing and cherishing love for His bride, the church. Pastor Eric Mason mentions, “Through Christ the order, roles, and functions of all creation can find their true intent. The restored order (1 Cor 11:2) is God, Jesus, Man, Woman.”<sup>52</sup> Scott adds, “The word shepherd brings our leadership into perspective. We are not kings, high above our wives, but actually lowly under-shepherds, doing the bidding of the Chief Shepherd.”<sup>53</sup> Men must accept their role as humble leaders in the home who labor on behalf of the Father. More specifically, husbands ought to look to Christ as their model and where they fall short of Him, they should confess and repent.

Combatting sin begins intrapersonally but extends to one’s spouse. Confronting sin in anyone else’s life is always a delicate matter, but especially in the lives of whom one is closest. President of Great Commission Collective Dave Harvey remarks, “When someone close to you is running from the truth, love demands that you

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<sup>50</sup> Justin Buzzard, *Date Your Wife* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 85.

<sup>51</sup> Voddie Baucham, Jr., *Family Shepherds: Calling and Equipping Men to Lead Their Homes* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011), 83.

<sup>52</sup> Eric Mason, *Manhood Restored: How the Gospel Makes Men Whole* (Nashville: B & H, 2013), 55.

<sup>53</sup> Scott, *The Exemplary Husband*, 121.

speak. Sometimes love must risk peace for the sake of truth.”<sup>54</sup> For this reason, the mandate for leading in a gentle way does not excuse confrontation, but it does guide how one goes about confronting his spouse. Jesus makes clear in Matthew 7:5 that one must first examine himself so that he can help others.<sup>55</sup> A man should seek to gently lead his spouse to confession before the triune God. He must have a vision for spiritual reconciliation and seek to clearly communicate that idea so that his mate sees the path and understands it thoroughly.

Finally, a man who is gentle with his bride will be selfless in his leadership. For many men, pride is a debilitating sin, and it often takes years of devotion and intentional work to chip away at the monster of pride residing within them. A consistent, sincere devotional life, coupled with accountable relationships with other men who have a similar desire to see human pride eradicated are helpful steps toward biblical humility. Immediately after giving instructions to wives and husbands, Peter gives a clear command in 1 Peter 3:8: “Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.”

The compassionate way a man is to lead his wife is best demonstrated by Christ’s example. Jesus condescended from heaven to pursue and redeem His bride. Although Jesus is the Son of God, He exhibited servant leadership. Christ was resolved to the mission of the cross before Him. He laid down His life for His bride and thus emptied Himself for the glory set before Him. How might the Lord revolutionize connubial relationships and the covenant of marriage today if men were to have such high standards?

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<sup>54</sup> Dave Harvey, *When Sinners Say “I Do”*: *Discovering the Power of the Gospel for Marriage* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2007), 116.

<sup>55</sup> Matt 7:5: “You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.”

## Exercising Considerate Headship

A man devoted to his bride will be considerate of her, which often means saying no to other things to prioritize the most important things. Pastor Richard Phillips reasons, “God has given the primary calling of emotional and spiritual nurture to men, and many of us fail to do it well.”<sup>56</sup> Peter points out that a husband will take the time to learn his wife by exerting time and energy to “understand” her.<sup>57</sup> Understanding takes a special aspect of devotion to one’s wife, a kind of devotion that is more than just remaining sexually monogamous. Shepherding one’s spouse involves being considerate of her emotional and spiritual well-being.

A man thoughtfully leading his wife will defend her against the “darts” of the enemy (Eph 6:16).<sup>58</sup> The assaults of the evil one may come physically, relationally, emotionally, or spiritually. A considerate husband will protect his mate from physical harm. Furthermore, if necessary he will protect her from herself and even from those she surrounds herself with by keeping her from overcommitting herself. A mindful husband will “understand” his wife in such a way that he can encourage or discourage her involvement with others as needed for her emotional health.

A mature husband will further insulate her by leading her to be involved in a Christ-exalting church. A husband will stimulate his partner to love and good works in the body of Christ. He will lead by example in outward affections and empathy for others, which goes hand-in-hand with gathering with like-minded believers. He will model personal holiness and thus fight against the draw of laziness as they together magnify the name of Jesus.

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<sup>56</sup> Phillips, *The Masculine Mandate*, 19.

<sup>57</sup> First Pet 3:7: “Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

<sup>58</sup> Eph 6:16 reveals, “In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one.”

To express this priority another way, family shepherds will be engaged members of a healthy church seeking to live in community as Christ expects. To illustrate the importance of the membership in the local church, Baucham lays out four important reasons to contemplate: “Four of the most important to consider are identification, edification, cooperation, and accountability.”<sup>59</sup> A man’s job as a family shepherd is to ensure his family is identified with Jesus and His people. As a husband and wife identify with the people of Christ they will rejoice, mourn, and work together with them. They will thereby experience the ordinary means of grace that are vital to spiritual development. When couples cooperate with a local body their lives and skills are united to do more together than they ever imagined independently. Ministering together in a local church extends the couple’s influence much further. Moreover, the accountability that the church provides is unmeasurable. Everyone needs accountability, and the wise and discerning husband who pursues the best for his companion will submit himself and his marital union to the accountability of the church.

In light of all these things, men need to evaluate their commitment to their bride. Ted Kluck declares, “Marriage isn’t the be-all and end-all of the Christian existence.”<sup>60</sup> However, the Lord has sovereignly placed husbands within a marital relationship and commissioned men to love, lead, and live biblically with that one whom he freely selected to marry. As husbands evaluate their leadership, they need to take stock of how they spend their time, the pace of their life, the object of their focus, and their attitudes and actions toward the local church. The local church is an essential resource for the marital relationship. Leading their family to engage in a biblical healthy local church will demonstrate their submission before God and their dependence upon God to sustain them through the highs and lows of the Christian journey.

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<sup>59</sup> Baucham, *Family Shepherds*, 148.

<sup>60</sup> Kluck and Kluck, *Household Gods*, 33.

## A Father's Instruction of His Children

English Puritan Richard Baxter saw such a close relationship concerning the home and the church that he penned, “You are not likely to see any general reformation, till you procure family reformation.”<sup>61</sup> Fathers must seize the season of opportunity before them and utilize the rich resources available to them and assume their role as the primary faith-trainers in their children’s lives. Those looking to the Bible to give step-by-step instructions on how to educate their children in the faith will find no such passage. The Bible is sufficient for Christian living, but it is not exhaustive in the details of living as a Christian. Timothy Paul Jones and Michael S. Wilder eliminate the paralyzing fear of missing the mark when they declare, “Despite the fact that growth in faith is praised throughout the New Testament, Scripture provides no explicit step-by-step sequence for this growth.”<sup>62</sup> Information is not transformation. For transformation to take place, fathers must engage in historical practices, such as catechizing and family worship, that are grounded in the Word of God. Three instruments, the Apostles’ Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord’s Prayer, have been influential in guiding catechizing and family worship for centuries. President of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Albert Mohler, advocates, “For long, unbroken centuries it [the Apostles’ Creed] has stood as one of the most crucial teaching instruments of the Christian faith—along with the Ten Commandments and the Lord’s Prayer.”<sup>63</sup> Therefore, fathers today can learn from practices of saints who have gone before them in what exercises they utilized to teach and train their children based upon the Word of God. Two of these historic

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<sup>61</sup> Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1997), 102.

<sup>62</sup> Timothy Paul Jones and Michael S. Wilder, “Faith Development and Christian Formation,” in *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development*, ed. James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim (Nashville: B & H, 2010), 162.

<sup>63</sup> R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *The Apostles Creed: Discovering Authentic Christianity in an Age of Counterfeits* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2019), xvii.

practices—namely catechesis and family worship—will be addressed in the remainder of this chapter.

### **Instruction through Catechesis**

The great American theologian Jonathan Edwards, who lived at the end of the Puritan era, called on fathers to “revive . . . the ancient good practice of catechizing.”<sup>64</sup> This statement by Edwards suggests two realities: catechizing is an ancient practice and catechizing has been (and thus can be) lost. The potential is within each generation to neglect the opportunity before them in catechizing their children. If believers in Edwards’ colonial era could allow the practices of catechizing children to be eroded, then a similar downgrade is certainly possible among evangelicals in America today. If the infrequency with which catechesis is the subject of Christian books and blogs is any indication, then it would not be surprising to learn that there is a widespread lack of awareness by evangelical parents on how to catechize their children. Therefore, the aim of this section is to clearly define what it means to catechize and how a father might go about engaging his family in a historically significant practice of catechizing.

“Historically,” say Packer and Parrett, “the church’s ministry of grounding new believers in the rudiments of Christianity has been known as catechesis.”<sup>65</sup> They are quick to point out that the practice has ebbed and flowed over the centuries. For some, the word *catechesis* today may invoke images of staunch ascetism and ivory tower learning. However, upon further investigation one will discover that catechesis is a simple process whereby there is a teacher and a learner in a basic dialogue of set questions and answers. As part of the preparation for this regular process, the father should create an environment where learning can transpire. Teaching expert Parker Palmer explains, “To teach is to

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<sup>64</sup> Jonathan Edwards, letter to James Robe, May 23, 1749, quoted in Sereno E. Dwight, *Life of President Edwards*, ed. Edward Hickman, in *Works of President Edwards: With a Memoir of His Life in Ten Volumes* (New York: S. Converse, 1829), 1:282.

<sup>65</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel*, 22.

create a space in which obedience to truth is practiced.”<sup>66</sup> Conversation between father and child is a lovely space that happens organically and is incumbent upon the father to leverage for spiritual learning and growth in discipleship. The method of catechizing pushes intentionality to the forefront so that learning might be maximized. For learning to transpire information must be shared and assimilated. However, mere information unloading is not the goal of catechizing. Professors of Educational Ministries Gary A. Parrett and S. Steve Kang opine, “Knowledge is never the goal in and of itself, not even knowledge of the Truth. Obedience to that Truth is required.”<sup>67</sup> The beauty of catechizing children is that it lays a foundation upon which they can construct a theological framework as their brains develop through the years. Children naturally learn from their parents as they observe them navigating in the regular rhythms of life. “Between the ages of three and seven, children intuitively assimilate the visible faith of their parents,” concluded Jones and Wilder.<sup>68</sup> The question is, how are fathers guiding their children in the faith?

Melanie Lacy lays out a simple and straightforward definition of catechism in the beginning of the *New City Catechism*: “A catechism is a collection of biblical doctrines, assembled into a question-and-answer format.”<sup>69</sup> The “format” is up to each family to adapt to the given needs of the family, season, and/or situation of life, meaning one must have a plan. A good, age-appropriate catechism usually takes most of the guesswork out of the process. However, the plan must remain flexible in that there are different seasons within every family. The father should know best the rhythm of his

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<sup>66</sup> Parker Palmer, *To Know as We Are Known* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), 69.

<sup>67</sup> Gary A. Parrett and S. Steve Kang, *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful: A Biblical Vision for Education in the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2009), 270.

<sup>68</sup> Jones and Wilder, “Faith Development and Christian Formation,” 171.

<sup>69</sup> Melanie Lacy, *The New City Catechism*, vol. 1, *Leader’s Guide God, Creation & Fall, Law Questions 1-20* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 5.



particular family. Hence, fathers must chart the course for the family to follow, picking a day and time that works for the family. Routines are helpful for establishing patterns of learning for all ages.

Martin Luther believed that parenting was a holy calling. He therefore composed a catechism to aid parents in the sacred duty of family discipleship. In the preface to the Larger Catechism, he gave the following charge to fathers: “It is the duty of every head of a household at least once a week to examine the children . . . to ascertain what they know or have learned of it, and, if they do not know it, to keep them faithfully at it.”<sup>70</sup> There are scores of available catechisms from the Reformers to present day. There are classic catechisms, like the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) and the Westminster Catechism (1647), and more recent catechisms, like the New City Catechism (2012) and Cornerstones (2018), that can be a blessing to families as they seek to make sense of a complex world by understanding the One who created, redeemed, and sustains those within the world.<sup>71</sup>

Catechizing is challenging, as is all learning. Learning to read, write, do arithmetic, and other normative educational disciplines are difficult and cost time and energy. Why would fathers think that learning about the eternal Godhead would be a simple task? The influential Princeton Seminary professor of theology B. B. Warfield advocates, “No doubt it requires some effort whether to teach or to learn the Shorter Catechism . . . [but it is] worth . . . some tears.”<sup>72</sup> However, fathers are not to strive for

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<sup>70</sup> Martin Luther, *The Large Catechism*, in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, trans. Charles Arand (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2000), 410.

<sup>71</sup> The Heidelberg and Westminster Catechisms have endured the test of time for good reason. However, both the New City Catechism and Cornerstones come with helpful parent/teacher guides that put more information into the hands of fathers who might feel inept at teaching their children information they themselves do not fully comprehend. The beauty of a catechetical system is that one learns as he teaches and thus father and child learn together about their heavenly Father.

<sup>72</sup> Benjamin B. Warfield, “Is the Shorter Catechism Worthwhile?” *The Westminster Presbyterian*, accessed April 21, 2020, <http://www.westminsterconfession.org/confessional-standards/is->

merely the memorization of a document. Editor and pastor Brian Dembowczyk describes the aim as a win: “The win you want to pursue is if they [your children] come to know the God behind the questions.”<sup>73</sup> The goal of catechizing is a relationship with Jesus Christ, not mere knowledge acquisition.

### **Instruction through Family Worship**

Jonathan Edwards not only endorsed catechizing within the family, but he also advocated for family worship. One of Edwards’ most famous quotations is, “Every Christian family ought to be as it were a little church.”<sup>74</sup> As with catechizing, many within evangelical churches lack appreciation and knowledge of what is meant by “family worship.” It is crucial that men be taught about family worship. “It’s impossible to talk about equipping family shepherds,” declares Baucham, “without addressing the issue of family worship.”<sup>75</sup> Because of the lack of insight on this subject, the aim of this section is to clearly define what is meant by “family worship,” and how one might go about engaging his family—especially his children—in the historically significant practice of family worship.

In Joshua’s farewell address to Israel he makes certain to teach the importance of developing the family (Josh 24:14-24). Donald S. Whitney, author of *Family Worship: In the Bible, in History, and in Your Home*, lays out a case for the continual testimony of family worship within the homes of “Christian heroes” from the period of the early church until today as he features such giants in the faith as Tertullian, Chrysostom, Knox,

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[the-shorter-catechism-worthwhile.php](http://the-shorter-catechism-worthwhile.php).

<sup>73</sup> Brian Dembowczyk, *Cornerstones Parent Guide: 200 Questions and Answers to Teach Truth* (Nashville: B & H, 2018), 9.

<sup>74</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *The Complete Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Edward Hickman (London, 1834; repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974), 1:ccvi.

<sup>75</sup> Baucham, *Family Shepherds*, 73.

Spurgeon, Lloyd-Jones, and Piper to name a few.<sup>76</sup> Calvin taught that fathers should give themselves to the duty of family discipleship: “Constant conversation should be held . . . with their children, in order that fathers should diligently attend and apply themselves to the duty of instruction.”<sup>77</sup> So what is and is not meant by “family worship?”

“Family worship,” as explained by Whitney, entails three basic components: “read the Bible, pray, and sing.”<sup>78</sup> It is that simple and straightforward. Striving to be simple and brief should be a priority as fathers seek to shepherd their families through family worship. By the grace of God and through the means of hard work, each man is capable of being a good husband and father who leads his family well in this regard. A man of God who seeks to diminish his regrets at the end of his life will stand on the shoulders of men who have gone before and led their families well. President of the Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary and pastor Joel Beeke implores, “Teach and pray with your family so that when you are on your deathbed, you have a free conscience, knowing you have done your best to raise your children in the fear of the Lord.”<sup>79</sup>

In analyzing the three basic components of family worship that Whitney espouses, fathers must begin with the Word of God. Many fathers feel a keen sense of inadequacy when it comes to their grasp of Scripture, but this neither prevents nor excuses them from at least reading the Bible to their families. Men must always put themselves under the Word of God and demonstrate a reverence and respect for the Word of God in their life as well as in regard to the family as a whole. Therefore, the entire counsel of God’s Word must be utilized, and there is practical wisdom in reading it to the

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<sup>76</sup> Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 28-43.

<sup>77</sup> John Calvin, *Harmony of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Calvin’s Commentaries*, vol. 2, trans. Charles William Bingham (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 367.

<sup>78</sup> Whitney, *Family Worship*, 44.

<sup>79</sup> Joel Beeke, “Leading Family Worship,” *Desiring God*, February 2, 2011, <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/leading-family-worship>.

family in accordance with some sort of simple, systematic plan. Many catechisms or books on family worship will contain a suggested reading plan, although it is easy to adapt for family worship one of the dozens of personal Bible reading plans available on the internet. For fathers who feel inept at teaching, it is helpful to be reminded that God is quite capable via His Word to draw children and spouse into deeper devotion and understanding.<sup>80</sup> Dependency upon the triune God is of utmost importance and also encouraging. On the other extreme is the father who desires to share a lifetime of knowledge in each meeting. Fathers must remind themselves regularly that it is impossible to say everything the Bible has to say in one sitting and be satisfied playing the long game with a vision toward families fearing, delighting, and loving the Lord. Brevity and regularity are essential. Rarely will there be a feeling of supernatural significance in the family worship event. Pastor William Boekestein concedes, “Family worship is like a great friendship. It has its bumps, but it is forged through regular meaningful interaction.”<sup>81</sup> The goal is diligent devotion that leads to eternal delight for father, mother, and child.

The next element in Whitney’s explanation of family worship is prayer. Pastor John Onwuchekwa set forth, “Prayer is like breathing.”<sup>82</sup> Prayer to the Christian—and in the Christian home—should be as regular and automatic as breathing is to sustaining life. The disciples are recorded in the Bible not asking Jesus how to preach or how to do any other ministry skill, but asking Him only to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1).<sup>83</sup> Jesus

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<sup>80</sup> Isa 55:11 declares, “So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

<sup>81</sup> William Boekestein, “Family Worship 101.” *Ligonier Blog*, March 27, 2020, <https://www.ligonier.org/blog/family-worship-101/>.

<sup>82</sup> John Onwuchekwa, *Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 22.

<sup>83</sup> Luke 11:1 reveals, “Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.’”

responds with the Lord's Prayer, and both Matthew (6:9-13) and Luke (11:2-4) record His example.<sup>84</sup> Men would be wise to follow the teachings of our Savior in how to approach the Father in prayer using His method as a template. In family times of worship, the aim of prayer is simplicity without being shallow. One should be direct and model for his children and spouse what prayer is like. Whitney's *Praying the Bible* is a valuable modern tool that many men would find helpful in this practice.<sup>85</sup> Teaching his family how to turn the words of Scripture into prayer would be an ideal skill to model. Incorporating the use of prayer journals and/or journaling Bibles might also be a helpful means to entice and engage children and spouse in the discipline of prayer. No conversant child is too young to pray, and with very young children sometimes it helps for them to repeat the father or mother's biblically faithful prayers.

The last ingredient in Whitney's description of family worship is singing. This element is problematic for many men, especially if they are not adept at singing or playing a musical instrument. However, Scripture affirms that the people of God are a singing people. Colossians 3:16 admonishes, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." The largest book in the Bible (Psalms) has approximately one hundred and fifty references to singing, and this does not include songs of worship found elsewhere in Scripture (such as 2 Sam 6:5, Neh 12:27, Matt 26:30, and Col 3:16) or references to God's people worshipping Him together in song. Men must protect the doctrine of the music sung during family worship. Therefore, one

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<sup>84</sup> Matt 6:9-13 states, "Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Luke 11:2-4 discloses, "And he said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation."

<sup>85</sup> Donald S. Whitney's *Praying the Bible* is an easy read with practical step-by-step instructions on how to increase the doctrine and purity of prayers by utilizing God's inspired Word as a guide.

should not be afraid to seek guidance and help in selecting songs or finding lyrics to songs that are not fully memorized. A man's spouse often will be a tremendous help in fostering growth and assistance in singing unto the Lord as a family. Further, men could purchase hymnals and songbooks to help guide them and their families. Modern technology can also help via music videos that are easily accessible on phones and tablets. Many videos have both lyrics and music which are helpful aids in engaging the entire family. Baucham reminds, "The goal is to help your children learn great truths through music."<sup>86</sup> The singing element in family worship is not a concert or performance, as skill is not essential in a joyful expression to the triune God. Also, with singing, repetition is often helpful, so the same song could be sung all week to help the family learn new music. Fathers must not be afraid to make the singing age-appropriate and fun, when fitting. Music is an excellent way to connect emotions to the truth of the Bible.

"We must strive to have our families be mini-churches," elaborates Beeke, "which function as the backbone of the local church."<sup>87</sup> The idea of the home representing a "mini-church" emphasizes the importance of family worship; however, this may bring added pressure and anxiety to men. Potentially, the idea of family worship strikes fear within the father because he has never been taught or shown how to start and maintain a regular time of worship within his home. Men should not live in fear in this matter, but instead walk in dependence of and obedience to the Lord. Founder of Gospel Family Ministries and pastor Jonathan Williams states, "When worship is overflowing out of our hearts, it becomes a part of our everyday life. Giving the Lord glory becomes the norm."<sup>88</sup> Family worship will never be perfect or ideal within the rhythm of a bustling residence, but it can become a regular blessing. Influential colonial minister, Cotton

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<sup>86</sup> Baucham, *Family Shepherds*, 79.

<sup>87</sup> Beeke, "Leading Family Worship."

<sup>88</sup> Jonathan Williams, *Gospel Family: Cultivating Family Discipleship, Family Worship, and Family Missions* (Houston: Lucid Books, 2015), 150.

Mather argues, “It seems, if every one that is owner of a family, would faithfully command, and manage those that belong unto him, through the blessing of God; they would generally keep His way, and His law.”<sup>89</sup> At the most basic level evangelical men desire for their families to know their maker before they face Him. Why, therefore, would these men not seek to redeem the time the Lord has given by teaching and training their families in the home on a daily basis? Hughes writes, “The realization that we have only a brief time to raise our children should give us huge motivation to make the most of it and should make Scriptural advice about fathering pulse with importance for us.”<sup>90</sup> Men must be aware of how they schedule their days because those days turn into weeks, which become months, resulting in years of potentially wasted time on good things instead of the things God has given fathers to concentrate upon.

### Conclusion

Russell Moore says, “Family is difficult because we live in a fallen world.”<sup>91</sup> Today in the year 2020 it seems odd to hear reports of men being put out of fellowship for failing to engage their family in home devotions. However, in 1647, the churches that embraced the work of the Westminster Assembly were instructed to remove heads of households who persistently refused to take the biblical imperatives about discipling the family seriously.<sup>92</sup> I can simply look to my own local fellowship (BDBC) and our church

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<sup>89</sup> Cotton Mather, *A Family Well-Ordered*, 1699, trans. Patrick Doucette (Lexington, KY: Patrick Doucette, 2019), 7.

<sup>90</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Man* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001), 54.

<sup>91</sup> Moore, *The Storm-Tossed Family*, 30.

<sup>92</sup> The Assembly at Edinburgh on August 24, 1647 was admonished, And, to the end that these directions may not be rendered ineffectual and unprofitable among some, through the usual neglect of the very substance of the duty of Family-worship, the Assembly doth further require and appoint ministers and ruling elders to make diligent search and enquiry, in the congregations committed to their charge respectively, whether there be among them any family or families which use to neglect this necessary duty; and if any such family be found, the head of the family is to be first admonished privately to amend his fault; and, in case of his continuing therein, he is to be gravely and sadly removed by the session; after which reproof, if he be found still to neglect

covenant for a contemporary illustration of failure to hold fathers accountable for family worship. The covenant from at least 1954—and likely further back—up until 2008, included the words “We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children.” When the covenant was updated in 2008, however, those words were removed.<sup>93</sup> Might the Holy Spirit capture hearts and families, leading men to long for local assemblies that hold high the standard of biblical manhood. Moore expresses the longing well:

We long to belong, to have and to hold, not out of some random, evolutionary accident but because God is “the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named” (Eph 3:14-15). Marriage is not just about companionship or procreation but is a mystery, pointing to the one-flesh union of Christ and his church (Eph 5:32). Parenting is not just about human flourishing (although it is that), but a reflection of the Fatherhood of God (Matt 5:7-11; Heb 12:5-11) and the motherhood of the Holy City to which we belong in Christ (Gal 4:26).<sup>94</sup>

Might men hear the call of Scripture and learn from the saints who have gone before on how to faithfully execute the office of husband and father with great zeal.

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Family-worship, let him be, for his obstinacy in such an offence, suspended and debarred from the Lord’s Supper, as being justly esteemed unworthy to communicate therein, till he amend. (*The Westminster Confession: The Confession of Faith, The Larger and Shorter Catechisms, The Directory for the Public Worship of God, with Associated Documents* [East Peoria, IL: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2018], 622)

<sup>93</sup> See appendix 4.

<sup>94</sup> Moore, *The Storm-Tossed Family*, 31.



## CHAPTER 4

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINISTRY PROJECT

#### **Introduction**

Having established the biblical and theological basis for shepherding the family, as well as the theoretical, practical, and historical issues related to men leading their family, this chapter now details the process of equipping the men at Beaver Dam Baptist Church (BDBC) in Knoxville, Tennessee, through the implementation of this ministry project. The concern for this project started many years ago as I slowly began to realize through the process of having children of my own how inadequately our church was equipping fathers to lead their families. The Bible presents many practical verses that give guidance to men, and therefore to churches, in how to shepherd families by the power of the Holy Spirit. The heart of this project was a six-week teaching series designed to train the men of our church in this endeavor. As a result of this project, men at BDBC experienced measurable improvement in both their perceptions and practices in biblical headship within their homes.<sup>1</sup>

#### **History**

The genesis of this project was twofold. First, I selfishly desired a more biblically faithful approach in my own experience of fatherhood than I had been exposed to growing up in conservative SBC churches. I am extremely thankful for the churches I have had the privilege of being a member of since being born again in 1989. However, I do not believe any of those well-meaning churches equipped men adequately regarding biblical fatherhood.

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<sup>1</sup> An analysis of the metrics that demonstrate this improvement is the primary focus of chap. 5.

The second impetus for this project came through a book assigned in my first doctoral seminar: *Reinventing Youth Ministry (Again): From Bells and Whistles to Flesh and Blood* by Wayne Rice. Rice is a pastor and professor who has worked with teenagers and families for over four decades. He made a statement within his book that immediately resonated with me regarding how many churches, including BDBC, address ministry to families and children: “Parents not only outsource the spiritual training of their kids to the church, but the church outsources it to a professional youth pastor.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Lord used both the needs I saw in my own family as well as my doctoral studies at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary to establish the path forward for me and men at BDBC.

### **Project Format**

I considered multiple formats for this project. Ultimately after reading other projects, consulting with fellow classmates and professors, and taking into consideration my church and the men who attend, I decided the best format would be to teach a six-week discipleship class geared toward men who had at least one child living at home. I carefully considered the number of weeks for the discipleship class. I knew from experience that, in my church culture, the greater the number of weeks a discipleship class was held, the fewer the number of people who would attend. Additionally, I had to fit this discipleship class into the calendar of opportunities that BDBC provides. I am not the senior pastor; therefore, I did not have the opportunity to do a sermon series. In the summer of 2019, I led my church to pilot a Summer Nights discipleship series in a university style format to see how attendance would go so that I would have a precedent for implementing my doctoral project the following summer. In 2019, BDBC offered eight-week classes that lasted ninety-minutes. Based upon attendance trends and verbal feedback from participants, I determined that eight weeks in the summer was

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<sup>2</sup> Wayne Rice, *Reinventing Youth Ministry (Again): From Bells and Whistles to Flesh and Blood* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2010), 148.

unsustainable, and the ninety-minute timeframe was too long. Therefore, the church adjusted for the summer of 2020, and I developed my curriculum to harmonize with the desires of the church leadership. Thus, the Summer Nights discipleship series for 2020 was six weeks with each class meeting from 6:30-7:30.

The purpose of this project was to equip fathers of BDBC to shepherd their families in accordance with the Bible. The discipleship of current and prospective members was guided by four goals. The first goal was to assess the current perceptions and practices of BDBC fathers with their families outside the walls of the church. The second goal was to develop a six-session curriculum to equip fathers to shepherd their families. The third goal was to equip fathers by teaching this curriculum in a six-session study on how to lead their families spiritually. The fourth goal was to develop a ministry plan to increase family discipleship practices among fathers. These goals were carried out during the summer of 2020 in the thirteen weeks from May 1 to July 31.

### **Project Promotion**

BDBC began promoting Summer Nights in early May 2020. Summer Nights is BDBC's annual summer "university like" discipleship structure. My class, entitled "How to Shepherd Your Family," was changed for promotional materials to be called "Biblical Manhood" so that it aligned with the other six classes and specifically the class offered to women entitled "Biblical Womanhood." All the normal church promotion channels were utilized. However, the church was in the midst of a global pandemic, which limited group gatherings and advertisements. Nonetheless, classes were promoted via the church website, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Furthermore, I sent individual texts and emails to over thirty men personally inviting them to attend my class and giving specific details. I also had the privilege of preaching the week before classes started and tried to establish the importance of the upcoming classes and specifically my class for men. I explained both how the series related to my doctoral work and how it would address struggles with being a man in today's society. People were encouraged to invite friends and neighbors.

### **Expert Panel**

I carefully selected two local pastors and the current Director of Missions for Knox County (TN) Association of Baptists to serve on my expert panel. This expert panel evaluated the curriculum and future ministry plan. These three men were selected because of their experience in the community and their faithfulness to the Word of God. All three have at least twenty years of experience in pastoral ministry. I originally thought I would send them all six sessions at once to evaluate, but after consulting with peers in my doctoral program I determined it would be more beneficial to send them one lesson per week so as to get more specific feedback and to make the material more accessible to the men who would attend. The panel was given the teaching notes, student notes, and appendix outline, along with a rubric each week on Monday evening prior to the class. I asked them to return their comments and evaluations on the rubric by Thursday. This schedule allowed for changes and corrections to be made prior to teaching on Sunday evenings from 6:30-7:30.

### **Shepherding Perceptions and Practices Survey**

I administered the pre- and post-surveys to assess the usefulness of the project. The instrument assessed current understanding and practices of fathers outside the walls of BDBC. I originally had an instrument that was very thorough and had forty-two questions; however, after I took Danny Bowen's *Applied Empirical Research 80950A* seminar in January of 2020, I discovered that long surveys exhausted the subjects, leading to inaccurate results.<sup>3</sup> Also, there was no need to ask questions that were not germane to the research project. Through sampling several assessments within the scope of that class I was able to refine my instrument to twenty questions. I discovered Timothy Paul Jones' "Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey," which had sixteen questions geared toward evaluating family discipleship. Through the means of Bowen's

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<sup>3</sup> Taking *Applied Empirical Research 80950A* prior to implementing my project was very helpful and timely in my doctoral studies.

class, I was able to adapt Jones' instrument to fit the means of BDBC and my project. After developing my instrument, Shepherding Perceptions and Practices Survey (SPPS), I had the opportunity to edit the language since all students in my doctoral seminar took the survey and offered feedback. I was then given the opportunity to pilot my instrument with a local church to see how accessible it truly was. Hence, in January I piloted my Shepherding Perceptions and Practices Survey (SPPS) at City View Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee and found it to be a reliable tool.

### **Weekly Sessions**

In May of 2020 I began working on the structure and broad outlines for each lesson. The classes began on Sunday night, June 21, and ran for six consecutive weeks. The curriculum was finished and sent to the expert panel to evaluate on the Monday prior to being taught. This allowed time for the panel to evaluate and offer feedback prior to each lesson being taught.

#### **Session 1**

I titled the first session, "A Man Is to Be the Head of Home" based upon Genesis 1–2.<sup>4</sup> The goal of the first session was to look at the roles and responsibilities given to men in the creation narrative. The class began with an overview of the goal of the six-week study. Then time was given to distribute, explain, and allow participants to take the pre-survey.<sup>5</sup> An envelope was circulated to collect the pre-surveys to keep answers anonymous. Following the collection of the pre-surveys, the direction of the class began with a teaching on the biblical doctrine of the Trinity that established relationships and roles. An examination of Genesis 1–2 revealed that God has established male headship

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<sup>4</sup> See appendix 5 for session 1 outline.

<sup>5</sup> See appendix 1.

prior to the fall of man in Genesis 3. Then, the class briefly had a conversation about complementarianism and egalitarianism to establish parameters of modern thought.

Significant time was then given to the creation narrative of Genesis 1–2 to see the importance of both chapters in providing a full picture of the origins of humanity. Specific time was devoted to Genesis 2:7-25 and an explanation of four reasons to affirm male headship. Several questions were interspersed with the teaching to ascertain retention of information given. Finally, the men were challenged to discuss the information in Genesis 1 and 2 with their spouses as a means of applying the truths learned. A handout was provided to help guide the discussion and reinforce the learning objectives. Additional resources were also presented to help spur men to learn more about the truths encountered in the session.

## **Session 2**

The second session was “A Man Is to Be Righteous,” based upon Psalm 112.<sup>6</sup> The goal of session 2 was to ground the aim of a man’s life in holiness, which is taught in both the Old and New Testaments (Lev 11:44; 1 Pet 1:14-19). Psalm 112 was utilized as a practical guide to describe how a man is to respond to his holy Lord. If any new men attended, they were given the opportunity at the beginning of class to fill out the pre-survey. They also were instructed as to where they could find the recording of the first session.

Extensive time was allotted for reading Psalm 112 and unpacking four qualities: praise, obedience, diligence, and resolve. These qualities were then analyzed. Questions were employed to help the men digest and apply the wisdom of the psalm. Given the current condition of the nation, much time was allotted to the subpoint of confidence found in walking in obedience to God. In closing, men were challenged to utilize Psalm 112 to guide their daily times of prayer for the following week. A handout

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<sup>6</sup> See appendix 6 for session 2 outline.

was provided to help guide the discussion and reinforce the learning objectives. Moreover, additional resources were suggested to help the men discover more about what was presented in the session.

### **Session 3**

I labeled the third session “A Man Is to Love His Wife (part 1),” based upon Ephesians 5:25-33.<sup>7</sup> Upon establishing the direction of a man’s life in the Word of God and acknowledging that the Bible gives specific steps in obedience, the direction for the last four weeks was devoted to the two most important relationships in a man’s life: his wife and his children. Two weeks were spent on each subject. Sessions 3 and 4 focused on the marital relationship while sessions 5 and 6 focused on being the father God has called men to be.

The text for both sessions 3 and 4 was Ephesians 5:25-33. A man can exhibit the instructions given from Paul in Ephesians in five ways. The five directives were borrowed from Daniel Akin who led the church’s marriage retreat in January 2020, an event many of the men in the class had attended. Akin’s instructions to men from Ephesians 5:25-33 included: his love will be sacrificial (v. 25); his love will be sanctifying (vv. 26-27); his love will be sensitive (v. 28); his love will be satisfying (vv. 29-30); and his love will be specific (vv. 31-33).<sup>8</sup> Therefore, the goal of this class and the next class was to drive home application of the truth that had now been taught to many of them on two occasions. The first two behaviors, sacrificial and sanctifying, respectively from verses 25-27, were the concentration of this lesson. The main command is given in verse 25 “to love” and the example of Christ’s love for the church is used by Paul; therefore, much attention was given to this verse. Also, significant time was needed for unpacking

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<sup>7</sup> See appendix 7 for session 3 outline.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel L. Akin, “When a Man Loves a Woman: How to Be the Husband God Meant You to Be” (class notes—Marriage Retreat Session at Black Fox Lodge, Sevierville, TN, January 31-February 2, 2020).

the “sanctifying” terminology that Akin used on the retreat. Numerous questions were spread throughout the lesson to ascertain the retention of information being given. Finally, as an encouragement for them not to be lazy in their pursuit of their bride the men were challenged to pursue their wives as though it was their first date. A handout was distributed to help guide the discussion and reinforce the learning objectives. Moreover, additional resources were briefly discussed as means of providing further instruction on the truths taught in that evening’s class.

#### **Session 4**

I branded the fourth session “A Man Is to Love His Wife (part 2),” based upon Ephesians 5:25-33.<sup>9</sup> Session 3 began looking at the five directives given by Paul to men on how they are to love their bride. This lesson picked up where session 3 left off (point 3—his love will be sensitive) and sought to complete the imperatives of how a man can walk in obedience to loving his wife according to the text.

The lesson began with a recap of the week before and then accountability was engaged by asking the men if they had planned and participated in a special date with their bride since last meeting together. The bulk of the lesson focused on the implications of how to specifically love one’s bride in a manner worthy of Ephesians 5:28-33. Throughout the session I paused to ask questions to determine the retention of information. Finally, the men were challenged to ask their bride how she would desire for them to demonstrate their love. Each man was given an outline to guide the discussion at home and reinforce the learning objectives. Furthermore, a website and book were introduced to the men to expand their understanding of marriage.

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<sup>9</sup> See appendix 8 for session 4 outline.



## Session 5

I entitled the fifth session “A Man Is to Teach His Children,” rooted in Ephesians 6:1-4.<sup>10</sup> The lesson began by recapping what was learned in the previous four weeks. Then I sought accountability by asking if they had spoken specifically with their wives in the past week about how they might more specifically love her. Ultimately, the class got to the heart of the matter in Ephesians 6 and Paul’s address to children and parents. This led to quickly addressing Paul’s expectations of children and I sought to utilize many questions early and often in the lesson to not only engage the men in the class but to stress the importance of communication with children. However, the bulk of the time dealt with Ephesians 6:4 and the two responsibilities that Paul gives to fathers. One is presented in the negative, “Do not provoke our children to anger”; the second is in the positive, “But bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

One of the reviews from my panel pointed out the need for specific issues and examples; therefore, I took time to unpack the frustration and often times anger that men unknowingly express toward their children when they fail to obey. The class talked about restraint and responsibility as well as applying a biblical vision forward to eliminate difficulties. The goal of biblical guidelines is for fathers to lead their children lovingly and compassionately to our heavenly Father.

Time was also devoted to briefly explaining Paul’s positive responsibilities expressed via two nouns. The first noun has to do with discipline and the second with development. I tried to communicate that fathers must begin guiding their children when they are young and must continue daily as the battle for the heart is constant. Deuteronomy 6 was briefly referenced and previewed for next week as the base of instruction and Psalm 78 was read for a vision of the future.

Finally, the men were challenged to ask their bride to evaluate how they communicate with their children. Interactive handouts were distributed to reinforce

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<sup>10</sup> See appendix 9 for session 5 outline.

learning objectives and to increase retention of knowledge. Books and other resources were suggested at the end of the meeting for those wanting to explore the content of the session more deeply.

## **Session 6**

The sixth and final session was titled “A Man’s Responsibility,” established in Deuteronomy 6:1-9.<sup>11</sup> The aim of the final session was to expose and educate men to the helpful practices of family worship and catechizing. This lesson began as each of the previous five lessons, with a quick recap and evaluation of the men’s engagement with their homework from the previous week, which was to seek their spouse’s evaluation of their communication practices with their children. Next, we looked collectively at Deuteronomy 6:1-9 and quickly unpacked the practical and straightforward ways in which Moses instructed parents to teach children about the Lord. I posed several discussion questions during the teaching to help men see the regulative and normative nature of exposing children to God. A document was provided to each man to assist learning. Men were also encouraged to engage with a brief article or book to further expand their understanding of family worship.

A discussion of the duties of fathers to teach their children the statutes of the Lord led to consideration of the ancient instructional formulae: the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Apostles’ Creed. Discovering these means—the last being unknown to several men in the class—opened the door to educate them about catechesis and family worship. Both catechesis and family worship needed to be explained and defined. The bulk of the time was given to allowing space and opportunity for the men to more fully ponder these two historically significant Christian practices. Many resources for these practices were available for the men to evaluate as well as for me to reference as I taught. Men were challenged for the first time (to my knowledge) at BDBC to engage in

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<sup>11</sup> See appendix 10 for session 6 outline.

family worship and catechizing in order to strengthen them, their families, the church, and the community. The challenge was given for each man to commit to working with their spouse and family to establish one time in the coming week to engage in family worship. One of the panelists noted that my original plan failed to call the men to respond. This issue was corrected in my teaching outline. The class and study were brought to a climax with a guided time of prayer. The prayer began with repentance in not shepherding our families as the Lord laid out in His infallible Word, which led to a call for the men to respond via prayer to what they had learned over the previous six weeks.

Before dismissing, I allocated the last ten minutes of the class to distribute, explain, and allow participants to take the post-survey.<sup>12</sup> An envelope was circulated to collect the post-surveys and to keep the answers anonymous. Following the collection of the post-surveys, the class was dismissed.

### **Future Ministry Plan**

After completing all six sessions on “How to Shepherd Your Family,” a continued strategy for the future training and accountability for fathers was composed. The same expert panel I consulted to evaluate the teaching curriculum was also asked to evaluate the BDBC ministry plan moving forward.<sup>13</sup> In addition, feedback and discussion during the six-week class from the men were instrumental in the formation of the future ministry plan.

The plan has seven components. First, I intend to continue offering seminars and workshops on the topic of biblical manhood. They will be offered bi-annually and will include learning opportunities for every level of spiritual maturity and faithfulness to shepherding the family according to Scripture. These biannual seminars will include other topics not addressed in this project, such as communication, accountability,

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<sup>12</sup> See appendix 1.

<sup>13</sup> See appendix 3 for the Evaluation of Ministry Application Plan rubric.

humility, and developing rites of passage, to give practical insights to questions raised during the six sessions.

Second, fathers will be encouraged verbally by all pastors and directors to participate more in the present discipleship ministries available for their children at BDBC. This involvement could be as minimal as occasionally joining their children in their classes to observe how to interact well with their children over spiritual matters. It will also involve the church leadership intentionally reaching out to fathers to ask specific questions about their children's spiritual development. This will give accountability and responsibility to the fathers to know more fully the spiritual condition of their children. As fathers experience these various ministry elements, they will grow more comfortable and confident speaking with their children about spiritual issues.

The third part of the plan is the creation of a simple resource center in the church library for families. More specifically, the resource center will help fathers to love, lead, and live with their families. Free resources, such as DVDs, books, catechisms, and Bible studies, may be checked out and utilized. Also, there will be pamphlets with information available to take and review in the comfort of one's home. We will also place links, articles, and resources on a resource tab on the church website.

Fourth, the family ministry team will develop a pamphlet that suggests the option of age-appropriate Bibles for the different developmental stages of one's spiritual journey.<sup>14</sup> This pamphlet will aid families in selecting age-appropriate Bibles so that children can read for themselves the glories of the Lord. This resource will be posted around campus so families can access it as needed. Additionally, it will be placed in the resource center and on the website.

Fifth, the family ministry team will work with the minister of music to develop a Spotify list of songs that will be incorporated in congregational worship each quarter.

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<sup>14</sup> The BDBC Family Ministry Team is comprised of the Children's Director, Student Pastor, Family Pastor, and Family Ministry Assistant.

Upon creating the playlist, the family team will distribute it to families to assist them in family worship during the week. The Spotify list will also provide music to listen to as families travel and help kids who cannot yet read become familiar with and engage in corporate worship via song.

Sixth, the staff as a whole will make efforts to incorporate terms such as *shepherding*, *family worship*, and *catechize* into their regular conversations and teaching to reinforce the importance and normative nature of all three terms. During sermons, the teaching pastor will point out specific issues that would be helpful to discuss in family worship. Testimonies of families utilizing catechisms and family worship will be shared in newsletters, resource center, and sermons as opportunities arise. The goal will be that family worship and catechizing will become normative practices for the families of the church that are being shepherded well by men.

Finally, the family ministry team will seek to plan a bi-annual retreat where the entire family attends and where breakout sessions are geared toward specific needs of all ages of the family. Furthermore, these breakout sessions will be led by both lay and ministerial staff personnel to demonstrate the importance and reality that all members of the church are capable of engaging their family with the Word of God. There will also be family activities and teaching so that both individuals and families are encouraged and trained.

### **Conclusion**

The time and effort invested in this project was a labor of love. The literature reviewed in chapters 2 and 3 of this project were vital in preparing this project. The weekly encouragement from the men attending, as well as the occasional affirmation from the wives of men who were attending, helped spur me along each week. I am optimistic that fruit from this project is already becoming evident in many individuals and families. God willing, the inauguration of this project and future ministry plan will strengthen both individual families and the church as a whole for generations to come.

## CHAPTER 5

### MINISTRY PROJECT EVALUATION

This project was designed to equip men of Beaver Dam Baptist Church of Knoxville, Tennessee to shepherd their families in accordance with the Bible. The desired effect was accomplished through developing and teaching a six-week curriculum. This chapter serves to assess the overall effectiveness of the project through evaluating the purpose and goals. Additionally, the strengths and weaknesses of the project are discussed before investigating what could have been done differently. Finally, the chapter concludes with theological and personal reflections.

#### **Evaluation of the Project Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to equip fathers of Beaver Dam Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee, to shepherd their families in accordance with the Bible. While the church faithfully teaches on the theological and practical components involved in biblical manhood, the teaching and preaching ministry has not included a concise and systematic guide for men specifically regarding their distinct roles in the family. The pre-assessment survey showed that 94 percent considered themselves the spiritual leader of their home and 94 percent believe fathers bear the responsibility to disciple their children.<sup>1</sup> However, only 39 percent had led their family in the past month in a devotional or family worship.<sup>2</sup> From these numbers it is clear that the men knew they were supposed to be the spiritual leaders of their home but were unequipped to actually carry out that task. This project sought to bring together the necessary biblical elements to help men be the

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix 1 for survey and appendix 11 for pre-assessment scores.

<sup>2</sup> See appendix 11.

spiritual leaders in their home and to communicate these elements in an organized and helpful manner that would lead to real change.

This purpose supports both the mandate found in Scripture and the mission of Beaver Dam Baptist Church of Knoxville. In Genesis 1 and 2 the creation narrative establishes spiritual headship with the husband. God then instructs His image bearers to procreate. Deuteronomy 6 gives clear instructions for propagating the understanding, love, and devotion to the triune God. Then Paul further commands men to “love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Eph 5:25), and specifically fathers “bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph 6:4). This purpose agrees with the mission of BDBC, which is “To proclaim God’s Word to make and mature believers. Teaching people to live. Leading people to share. Expecting people to grow.” Men at BDBC need to be discipled. A man who is shepherding according to the Bible will be taught to live, led to share, and expected to grow. Sadly, few men within the church exhibit biblical marks of spiritual maturity within their families. Therefore, this project addressed this urgent need and problem.

### **Evaluation of the Project Goals**

To achieve the stated purpose, the project focused on four goals critical for success.

#### **Goal 1: Assess Knowledge and Practice**

The first goal of this project was to assess the current understanding and practices of BDBC fathers with their families outside the walls of the church. This goal was measured with a pre-assessment survey of the participants’ understanding and practices of shepherding in the home.<sup>3</sup> Each participant identified himself on the survey by using a unique four-digit personal identification number to guarantee anonymity. The

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<sup>3</sup> See appendix 1.

survey consisted of twenty questions and statements that helped reveal the current understanding and practices of BDBC men’s spiritual leadership in the home. The desired target group was married men with at least one child residing in the home. For this goal to be successfully reached, fifteen men who were active members of the desired target group had to complete the survey, and the survey had to reveal the current understanding and practices of male spiritual leadership in the home. Once the pre-assessment surveys were administered and retrieved, and the surveys revealed an overall picture of the current understanding and practices of shepherding in the home among men, the first goal was partially met. Nineteen men completed the pre-assessment survey in week 1, but only eleven of the men were fathers with at least one child living in the home.

Quantitative data analysis was applied to the interpretations of the Shepherding Perceptions and Practices Survey findings to discover the basic level of biblical fatherhood among Christian fathers at BDBC. The data collected from the survey questionnaire allowed me to assess the fathers’ knowledge, attitude, confidence, and willingness as the primary disciple-makers of their children and the correlation between the perceptions and practices regarding fathers’ engagement with their family. Table 1 shows the questionnaire results and table 2 shows the basic relationship of the data.

Table 1. Questionnaire results

Participant	Perceptions Score	Practices Score
1012	50	35
3947	50	32
4793	52	17
3817	48	29
1967	52	33
1983	46	24
0180	55	56
2513	43	31
1963	44	20
1683	57	42
1987	45	23



Table 2. Relationship of data

	Perceptions	Practices
Mean	49.27	31.09
Median	47.5	29
Mode	50 & 52	N/A
High	57	56
Max	60	60
Low	43	17
Range	14	39
SD	3.54	8.49

Regarding fathers' perceptions of biblical fatherhood, the standard deviation is 3.54. The maximum score is 60 but the highest score is 57 and the lowest score is 43 with a possible range of scores 10-60. The actual range is 14 and the mean is 49.27. Regarding the practices of fathers, the standard deviation is 8.49. The maximum score is 60 with 56 being the highest score and the lowest score is 17 with a possible range of scores 10-60. The actual range is 39 and the mean is 31.09. Upon gathering the pre-assessment, I learned that men self-assessed their knowledge at a higher level than their practice. This information was helpful because it informed me that I and the church need to do a better job with application of knowledge. Goal 1 was partially met in that I successfully assessed where the men are in regard to their perceptions and practices. Unfortunately, I was not able to fully achieve the goal of fifteen men surveyed who have at least one child living at home.

### **Goal 2: Develop Curriculum**

The second goal was to develop a six-session curriculum to equip fathers to shepherd their families.<sup>4</sup> This study covered basic biblical manhood perceptions and practices, such as spiritual headship, personal holiness, loving one's wife, and developing children. This goal was measured by an expert panel consisting of three local experienced pastors who used a rubric to evaluate the biblical faithfulness, scope, teaching

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<sup>4</sup> See appendices 5-10 for curriculum notes.

methodology, and practicality of the curriculum.<sup>5</sup> This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criteria met or exceeded the sufficient level.

The panel was presented with all six lessons that made up the study. The men welcomed the ability to critique with honesty. Upon reading the curriculum, they overwhelmingly supported and approved of the study. Every evaluator gave marks exceeding the minimum requirement of 90 percent of sufficient or above. Each week of the course the expert panel offered minor comments and adjustments that added application to the curriculum. Upon receiving the final rubric from the evaluators, the goal of developing a six-week study on equipping men to be spiritual leaders in their homes was considered successfully met.

### **Goal 3: Implement Curriculum**

The third goal was to equip fathers by teaching the six-session curriculum, over six weeks, on how to lead their families spiritually. The material developed in goal 2 was used during the implementation of the third goal. This goal was measured through administering a post-assessment survey to measure the participants' understanding and practices of shepherding in the home.<sup>6</sup>

A *t*-test was used because it displays and evaluates the statistical difference between the pre- and post-assessment surveys. I used a one-tail *t*-test because my working hypothesis was that the training made a difference in participants' knowledge and practice. According to the one-tail paired *t*-test, this goal was met. I used a paired *t*-test because I was able to match the results of each participant's pre- and post-assessments via their four-digit codes. Assuming a level of significance set at .05 there was a statistically significant difference  $t_{(8)}=1.90, p=.0469$  in measuring the participants'

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<sup>5</sup> See appendix 2.

<sup>6</sup> See appendix 1.

understanding and practices of shepherding in the home. In these results,  $t$  is simply the ratio between the mean differences I saw and the mean differences that might be expected from chance alone. The number in parentheses after the  $t$  result (8) is the degrees of freedom. Degrees of freedom determine the shape of the probability curve from which the result is calculated, and  $p$  is the probability that the differences I saw are due to chance rather than to a systematic difference between groups. The results yielding a systematic difference is the result of the teaching performed between measurements of the same group of participants.

Table 3 proves that the mean score increased from pre-test to post-test. The increase in the mean score reveals that each father increased in both knowledge and practice. Table 4 substantiates that the absolute value of the  $t$ -stat (1.90) is larger than the  $t$ -critical one-tail value (1.85). The  $p$  value for the one-tail test is .046. These three results show a significant change, although its effect is very small.

Table 3.  $t$ -test paired two sample for means

	Pre-test Results	Post-test Results
Mean	81.56	90.33
Variance	234.03	391.25
Observations	9.00	9.00

Table 4. Results of  $t$ -test

Pearson Correlation	.72
Hypothesized Mean Difference	.00
df	8.00
t Stat	-1.90
$p(T \leq t)$	.046
$t$ Critical one-tail	1.86
$p(T \leq t)$ two-tail	.09
T Critical two-tail	2.31

Knowledge and practice increased for all but one participant (see table 5 for  $t$ -test scores). Eight of the nine fathers who completed the pre- and post-survey showed an overall increase in knowledge and practice. When looking at tables A1 and A2, the

average response increases in all but three questions.<sup>7</sup> Three encouraging increases are in questions 7, 13, and 14. These questions have to do with the church helping fathers develop a plan, discussing spiritual matters with children, and engaging in family worship respectively.

Table 5. *t*-test scores

Participant	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment
1012	85	89
4793	69	74
3817	77	82
1967	85	96
1983	70	71
0180	111	112
2513	74	118
1963	64	62
1683	99	109

Post-assessment scores indicated that the men’s knowledge is greater than their implementation of knowledge.<sup>8</sup> Only nine of the eleven men attended on the last night to take the post assessment survey. All of the men surveyed agreed that fathers have a responsibility to engage personally in a discipleship process with each of their children. However, the lowest score came from the question which gave men an “out” regarding engaging due to busy schedules. On the practices portion, regular church attendance was the highest scoring question with 89 percent of the men indicating they had been to church seven or more times in the past two months. Whereas witnessing with one’s child was the lowest, with 56 percent indicating that “they had never witnessed or invited someone to church with their children.” It appears the men are active at church but not practicing biblical manhood in this regard outside the walls of the church. Based upon pre-assessment scores, I endeavoured during my teaching to instill practical steps men

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<sup>7</sup> See appendix 11 for table A1 and appendix 12 for table A2.

<sup>8</sup> See appendix 12.

could take toward being more faithfully obedient to Scripture in the everyday rhythms of their life, as Deuteronomy 6 instructs.

#### **Goal 4: Future Ministry Plan**

The fourth goal was to develop a ministry plan to increase family discipleship practices among fathers. This plan sought to give ongoing instruction, accountability, practice, resources, and encouragement.<sup>9</sup> This goal was measured by the same expert panel that evaluated the curriculum to give consistency. The expert panel utilized a rubric to evaluate the functionality of the plan, communication processes, training elements, provision of parental resources, and the action steps of the future ministry plan.<sup>10</sup> The goal was considered successfully met when each evaluator scored the plan with a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion at sufficient or above levels.

The panel was asked to evaluate the future ministry plan. The men welcomed the opportunity to critique with honesty. Upon reading the plan, they overwhelmingly supported and approved the strategy. Every evaluation exceeded the minimum requirement of the 90 percent threshold. Upon receiving the final rubric from the evaluators, the goal of developing a future ministry plan to increase family discipleship practices among fathers was considered successfully met.

#### **Strengths of the Project**

The project proved to have a number of strengths. The first strength was that this project addressed and met a true need in the congregation. As the results of the pre-assessment survey were calculated, it was clear that the men of BDBC understood that the Bible expects them to be the spiritual leaders of the home, but they needed clarity on what that entails. For instance, 94 percent believe they are to be the spiritual leader of the

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<sup>9</sup> To read about the future ministry plan, see chap. 4 and section Future Ministry Plan.

<sup>10</sup> See appendix 3.

home, but at the same time only 46 percent indicated that within the past week they had prayed aloud with their children outside of mealtime.<sup>11</sup> If the church expects men to be the spiritual leaders of their homes but is not equipping them to do so, then the result for men is guilt and shame without any measure of helpfulness. This is compounded by the revelation that only 38 percent indicated that in the past year any church leader had made contact with them to help them love and lead their wives.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, this project proved to be timely and useful for men who needed guidance in terms of biblical manhood.

The second strength was the project's biblical and Christ-exalting focus. Each week the men were led to Scripture to learn and pushed to depend upon the Holy Spirit for the strength and endurance in the difficult tasks they have been given by their heavenly Father. Routinely, the focus was not on checking boxes of legalism but instead seeking greater dependence upon Christ.

The third strength of the project was the experience of community among the men during the six-sessions. The implementation took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and the men were eager for in-person interaction via fellowship, accountability, and encouragement with like-minded God fearers. There was also an unanticipated blessing in the intergenerational age makeup of the group. There were men from 18 years of age up to 68 years of age, which allowed for them to engage with others whom they did not even know prior to the class, and with whom they now spend time together outside the walls of the church.

The fourth strength of the project was that biblical counsel was sufficiently general enough to find application with almost any age man. While it is often helpful to narrow the scope of a series to deal with concrete issues facing a particular stage of manhood, there seemed to be value in understanding the broader biblical approach to

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<sup>11</sup> See appendix 11.

<sup>12</sup> See appendix 11.

learning to shepherd a family from the Word of God. Men from every age group reported different applications that they drew from the sessions. Some of these applications could not have been anticipated.

### **Weaknesses of the Project**

While much of project was successful, significant weaknesses became apparent during implementation. The first weakness was the effect of the global pandemic prior to and throughout the implementation portion of the project. BDBC was on the front end of opening in-person meetings within our area, but we did not begin meeting for small groups of any sort (which included Sunday School) until the first week of this six-week study. We were unable to give out bulletins, which is the main source of information distribution within our church, so promotion of the study was limited, as was expecting people to attend when they did not feel safe gathering with groups of people. This was compounded by the lack of meeting space that allowed for issues like social distancing, which were not even imaginable when I planned this implementation.

A second weakness was the setting and timeframe. The rationale for choosing six weeks was discussed in chapter 4. However, the rationale notwithstanding, the six-week time frame in the middle of the summer was a difficult window to work within. Late June and July are when people take vacations and thus many men missed at least one if not two weeks due to being out of town. Although I recorded the sessions, few men went back and watched if they missed. While much was still gained for those who participated in only two or three classes, the full value of the class was not experienced. Also, we were required to meet in a room that limited interaction and discussion due to Covid-19 meeting requirements. The sixty-minute time slot that the entire church was functioning upon restricted the opportunity for adequately presenting resources provided for discussing and applying at home the material taught in each session. With practices being the glaring deficiency of the men, it would have been helpful to role play and work

on exercises that could be utilized within the home setting. These opportunities would have given men more confidence to engage with their family.

The third weakness was the lack of discussion. Although I attempted to stimulate discussion in every session by means of questions, these failed to stimulate interaction to the degree I had hoped. The lack of response might have been due to the large amount of material concentrated in every lecture or simply poor methodology on my part. I was guilty of trying to get across the plethora of information I gleaned in the previous two years from my doctoral seminars and reading and often lost sight of the goal of helping men where they are, not where I am. Another possibility for the lack of discussion could have been due to the wide range of ages among the participants as well as the mixture of both married and unmarried men. This diversity leads to the fourth weakness.

The fourth weakness also had to do with the composition of the class. I began this project with a target audience in mind, but few from that group participated in the class. The Covid-19 pandemic gave an easy excuse for marginal church members not to participate in a discipleship class in the middle of the summer. I executed every means at my disposal in direct advertisement and invitation. Nevertheless, only a small number of even the most committed men in the church attended. Also, I was not expecting men without children to participate. Obviously, I was not clear in the promotion as to whom the class was intended, but having roughly 43 percent of the class composed of men who were not fathers made discussion of application difficult. Also, the pre- and post-assessment did not account for men without children, so those assessments were discarded due to the fact they were incomplete, which once again lowered the sample size and affected the statistical analysis. However, I was excited to have younger men learn biblical truth prior to establishing poor familial spiritual practices and perhaps later having to confess years of failure with their children. Unfortunately, I feared excluding them in trying to drive home practical application with the men who did in fact have



children. The men without children were encouraged and enlightened, but due to the instrument being geared toward fathers, there was no way to evaluate their participation.

### **What I Would Do Differently**

While I would do much of the same with this project, I would change five things. These changes are connected to the stated weaknesses of the project. The first thing I would do differently is I would not seek to teach this class during a global pandemic. This leads into the second change I would make—to offer the class during a more conducive time for young fathers. Young fathers are the target audience and thus I would seek out several young fathers and discover the most optimum time of year and also time of week to schedule the class. I would also encourage these young fathers to help me promote the class as well as ask them to bring a friend.

The third change would be to lecture less and allow more time for discussion. If the class was comprised largely of fathers of young children, they would find the additional opportunity for discussion more appealing. With a smaller and more homogenous group, discussion could be tailored to specific issues those men are facing at the time, as well as include practical steps to take to overcome current practice missteps. Also, I would focus on elements and principles that needed further explanation in that season of life and not address such a wide range of life stages as I did in the 2020 class. I am convinced that this approach would increase the interest of the participants because the information would be readily useful and applicable.

The fourth thing I would do differently is strive for greater clarity in promotion and recruitment. This change would contribute to the improvements sought in the first three changes mentioned. The entire class hinges upon the composition of those who attend. There are benefits to a multi-age assembly in many kinds of classes, but I learned that for the purposes of this class, more life-stage homogeneity is essential.

The fifth thing I would change would be to utilize a different rubric for the curriculum evaluation. A rubric with less specificity in the questions would have allowed

the expert panel to engage and evaluate the curriculum more quickly and concisely. The rubric I used was not unworkable, but it slowed down the process and required more communication between me and the panel.

### **Theological Reflections**

The aim of this project was to equip men to be gospel-centered leaders in their homes. I knew I wanted to encapsulate the entirety of the counsel of God's Word in chapter 2. However, as I was preparing the actual teaching lessons, I was convicted that I did not devote sufficient time to explaining Genesis 2:18 for the purpose of establishing the truth of male headship in the home.

Also, after reviewing the teaching lessons I was convicted that I did not utilize Deuteronomy 6 in chapter 2 of my project. I was trying to be creative and come from different perspectives, but a treatment on how to lead the family is insufficient without handling the Shema and Deuteronomy 6. Furthermore, engaging with Psalm 78 would have been wise. Even though I did not address these passages in chapter 2, I was able to point the men to these watershed texts in the course of teaching. However, the men did appear to be impacted by the use of Psalm 112. Many of the men were unfamiliar with Psalm 112, and the accessibility and simplicity of it helped to drive home the tangible significance of how a father is to walk in holiness.

### **Personal Reflections**

I am thankful that BDBC is a church that saw the value of me pursuing this degree. I am indebted to the faithful members who prayed for and encouraged me. I never dreamed that one day I would be working on a doctoral project, as I believed that was for researchers in the academy and not for practitioners like myself. However, I have discovered the error of my thinking. This project opened my eyes to see the importance of academic study coupled with implementation within the local church.

I feared that some marginal men within BDBC were not leading their families well. However, through this project I was able to apply academic research even to some of the most faithful and committed members of our church. I also have evidence that while even many committed men in our fellowship may have the knowledge to shepherd their families well, it is not moving into the practice of their respective families. This information is encouraging and discouraging at the same time. I, too, have more knowledge than daily practice; and, therefore, I am resolved to engage better with my community of men and seek to bring about helpful and righteous renewal of practices among fathers in the twenty-first century. This study helped men see the disconnect between their knowledge and their practice. Thus, I look forward to seeing what the Holy Spirit does with the men who did attend, as well as observe the fruit of the class upon their families.

It was exciting to teach the last lesson on family worship and catechizing—two rarely utilized terms in traditional Southern Baptist churches and specifically at BDBC. Through the class, the men present were able to discover these activities and their usefulness throughout church history. Also, I was able to share what my family is doing in this regard and what I have discovered Christians have been doing for centuries. I believe this was inspiring and helpful to young and old fathers alike. I am most optimistic about the men in the class who are yet to be fathers and how their minds and hearts were enlightened and given direction.

I greatly anticipate watching how the Lord uses the fruit of this study within our church as a catalyst to all of our men walking humbly with their families in biblical obedience. There is a deep desire for the things of the Lord among the men of BDBC, but direction was missing. I am hopeful for results from the conversations that began taking place, even as the last class was taught, about what roles and responsibilities men need to engage within and through BDBC. Biblical direction and desire are slowly coming together for the men of BDBC, and I long to see the Lord use families within the BDBC

community of believers to revitalize and strengthen the concept of families for the world to see.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this project was to equip the men of Beaver Dam Baptist Church of Knoxville, Tennessee, to shepherd their families in accordance with the Bible. I believe the purpose of this project was accomplished. Although I did not fully meet all four of the stated goals, men within my local church were encouraged and challenged by the Word and spurred on in their practices within their individual families.

In chapter 1, the project demonstrated the need to equip BDBC men to shepherd their families in accordance with the Bible. Chapter 2 set forth the biblical and theological basis for shepherding one's family. Chapter 3 established the theoretical and practical issues related to male spiritual leadership in the home. Chapter 4 explained the details and descriptions of the project. Chapter 5 was the overall evaluation of the project, including the project's purpose, goals, strengths, weaknesses, necessary modifications, theological reflections, and personal reflections.

By God's grace, this project will continue to impact BDBC in three ways. First, there will be more men confidently making disciples in their homes. Most of the men did not need to be instructed to lead their families spiritually as much as they needed to be shown how to lead their families spiritually. This project began the conversation and engaged fathers of all ages at BDBC. Prayerfully, it also exposed men to some accessible tools to aid and assist the implementation. Second, I am hopeful that there will be more men consistently making disciples in their homes. This research project and six-week class spurred many conversations that have led to questions and answers resulting in fathers trying new activities. These activities are bringing about accountability and information sharing that will strengthen the entire church. Finally, BDBC will be a healthier church. Healthier men will lead to healthier families, resulting in a healthier church. Since the completion of this project, more men are taking up the responsibility

that has been entrusted to them, which means there are more men fit for leadership within the church. By God's grace, subsequent generations will experience and be enriched by the fruit of the faithfulness carried out by the men of Beaver Dam Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tennessee.

APPENDIX 1  
SHEPHERDING PERCEPTIONS AND  
PRACTICES SURVEY

The following instrument is the Shepherding Perceptions and Practices Survey (SPPS). It is a twenty-question survey with a six-point Likert scale. The instrument's purpose is to assess fathers' perceptions versus practices of biblical manhood in the home. Questions 1-7, 11-14, and 16-17 are from Timothy Paul Jones' "The Family Discipleship Perceptions and Practices Survey."<sup>1</sup> Items 2, 3, 4, and 6 are reversed scored.

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Paul Jones, *Family Ministry Field Guide* (Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011), 215-18.

## Shepherding Perceptions and Practices Survey

### Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess your perceptions and practices of family discipleship. This research is being conducted by Scott Hood for the purpose of assessing the value of a doctoral ministry project. In this research, you will answer questions in the way that best corresponds to your perceptions and practices of family discipleship. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported or your name identified with your responses.

*Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

### Directions

This survey is intended for parents with at least one child living at home and currently involved in the life of ministry at Beaver Dam Baptist Church in Knoxville, TN. For purposes of this survey, “church leaders” includes any member of the pastoral staff, deacons, Sunday School teachers, or adult volunteer leaders.

To ensure your privacy, instead of using your name, please use a 4-digit code that is unique to you and that you will be able to easily recall for a future survey. To help avoid duplicate codes, please avoid using repetitive or linear 4-digit codes, such as “0000” or “1234”. The last 4 of your Social Security number might be helpful.

**Your 4-Digit Code**

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<b>Part 1: Father Perceptions</b>						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewh at disagree	Somewh at agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I prioritize consistent family devotional or worship times in my family's schedule.						
2. I would like to do regular family devotions or Bible reading in our home, but my family is just too busy for that right now. It will probably be that way for quite a while.						
3. The church is where children ought to receive most of their Bible teaching.						
4. When my child spontaneously asks a biblical or theological question, I really wish that my child would have asked a minister or other church leader instead of me.						
5. Fathers have a responsibility to engage personally in a discipleship process with each of their children.						
6. Church leaders are the people primarily responsible for discipling my children and teaching them to share the gospel with others.						
7. My church has helped me to develop a clear plan for my shepherding my family.						
8. The father should be the spiritual leader of the home.						
9. I understand what the Bible teaches regarding how to lead my wife spiritually.						
10. I seek to serve in the church with my wife.						



<b>Part 2: Father Practices</b>						
	Never	Once	A couple of times	Three or four times	Five or six times	Seven or more times
11. Other than mealtimes, how many times in the past <i>week</i> have I prayed aloud with any of my children?						
12. How many times in the past <i>month</i> have I read or discussed the Bible with any of my children?						
13. How many times in the past <i>month</i> have I discussed any biblical or spiritual matters with any of my children while engaging in day-to-day activities?						
14. How many times in the past <i>month</i> has my family engaged in any family devotional or worship time in our home?						
15. How many times in the last <i>month</i> have I talked with my spouse about spiritual issues?						
16. How many times in the past <i>year</i> have I intentionally participated with one or more of my children in witnessing to a non-Christian or inviting a non-Christian to church?						
17. How often in the past <i>year</i> has any church leader made any contact with me to help me to engage actively in my child's spiritual development?						
18. How often in the past <i>year</i> has any church leader made any contact with me to help me to love and lead my wife?						
19. How many times in the past <i>week</i> have I read my Bible outside of church?						
20. How many times in the past <i>2 months</i> have I attended church?						

APPENDIX 2  
BIBLICAL FATHERHOOD CURRICULUM  
EVALUATION

The following instrument was sent to three local church pastors. This panel evaluated the course material to ensure it was biblically faithful, sufficiently thorough, and practically applicable.

## CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

Shepherding Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
1=insufficient 2=requires attention 3=sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
<b>Biblical Faithfulness</b>					
The content of the curriculum is hermeneutically sound. All Scripture is properly interpreted, explained, and applied.					
The content of the curriculum is theologically sound.					
<b>Scope</b>					
The content of the curriculum sufficiently covers each issue it is designed to address.					
The curriculum sufficiently covers the basics of biblical fatherhood.					
<b>Methodology</b>					
The curriculum sufficiently addresses fathering methodology.					
The curriculum makes use of various learning approaches such as lecture, discussion, case studies, role play, and homework.					
<b>Practically</b>					
The curriculum includes opportunities to practice counseling applications.					
Overall, the curriculum is clearly presented.					

Please include any additional comments regarding the curriculum below:

### APPENDIX 3

#### EVALUATION OF MINISTRY APPLICATION PLAN

The following evaluation was sent to three local church pastors. This team evaluated the plan for applying biblical fatherhood in each participant's ministry context.

**Name of evaluator:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry Application Plan Evaluation					
1=insufficient 2=requires attention 3=sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
<b>Content</b>					
The plan is easy to understand.					
The plan is simple to implement.					
<b>Scope</b>					
The plan accounts for a wide scope of ministries.					
The plan takes into account each participant's ministry passions and goals.					
<b>Resources</b>					
The plan takes into account the church's resources.					
The plan takes into account the church's limitations.					
<b>Application</b>					
The plan involves the church's leaders in the placement of biblical fathers.					
The plan facilitates each participant's ability to practice biblical fatherhood in a specific ministry context.					

Please include any additional comments regarding the ministry application plan below:

## APPENDIX 4

### BEAVER DAM BAPTIST CHURCH COVENANTS

#### **Church Covenant (1955-2006)**

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of, and use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

#### **Church Covenant (2006-2014)**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this Covenant and the principles of God's Word.

### **Church Covenant (2014-Present)**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations.

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this Covenant and the principles of God's Word.

## APPENDIX 5

### HOW TO SHEPHERD YOUR FAMILY SESSION 1 OUTLINE

#### **Week 1—A Man Is to Be the Head of the Home: Genesis 1-2**

Study Overview:

Week 1 we will look at the biblical mandate for men to be the **head** of the home.

Week 2 we will discover the biblical **expectations** our Creator has for us.

Week 3 we will learn how a man is to **love** his wife.

Week 4 we will discuss the **impact** of sin.

Week 5 we will see the **responsibility** of a father.

Week 6 we will unpack how a father **disciplines** and **develops** his children.

Do you allow God to begin the conversation on manhood or do you bring your own worldview and presuppositions to the conversation?

We worship a **triune** God.

The Bible depicts an eternal triune God: (Gen. 1:26, 3:22; Matt. 3:16-17, 28:19)

- God the **Father**.
- God the **Son**.
- God the **Holy Spirit**.

Complementarianism vs. Egalitarianism

Complementarianism:

- God exists as a triune God and created humans, male and female, in His image as equals yet with **distinct** roles.
- Complementarianism defined: “the view that men and women are equal in **value** before God but that some governing and teaching roles in the church are reserved for men.”<sup>1</sup>

Egalitarianism

- A growing **trend** in the church to embrace the antithesis to biblical teaching on the roles and responsibilities to men and women’s roles and responsibilities, and this is called *egalitarianism*.
- Egalitarianism defined: “the view that all **functions** and **roles** in the church are open to men and women alike.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Inter-Varsity, 1994), 1238.

<sup>2</sup> Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 1240.



## Why Shepherding?

- Shepherding is **biblical** terminology.

## Creation Overview (Genesis 1 & 2)

- Genesis is written by **Moses** to describe and explain creation or the “genesis” of life.
- Genesis **1** is written from 30,000-foot view while Genesis **2** is from a 3-foot view.
- Genesis makes clear male **headship** (Genesis 2:18)

### 4 reasons for male headship displayed in Genesis 2:7-25

1. Adam is Created **First** (Genesis 2:21-23)
  - a. God does not create man and woman in the same way He has created the animals; rather, He creates them **sequentially** not simultaneously.
  - b. Paul, in the New Testament, points back to this **truth** for rationale on woman not having authority over men in 1 Timothy 2:12-13.
  - c. Eve is not created out of the **ground** like animals, trees, and Adam (Gen 2:7, 9, 19). Eve is given special attention and **detail** to her origins in Genesis 2:21-23:
  - d. Eve is created from Adam’s **DNA**.
2. Adam is Given the **first** Command (Genesis 2:16-17)
  - a. God gives only **Adam** the command of what trees he was and was not allowed to eat from, and the consequence for disobeying.
  - b. God could have waited until Eve was formed and given them **both** the command, but in doing it this way He established Adam’s headship in the relationship.
3. Adam names the **animals** and **Eve** (Genesis 2:19-20)
  - a. God bestows on Adam **headship** over the animals.
  - b. God bestows on Adam **headship** over Eve by naming her.
4. Adam is commanded to **leave** Father and Mother (2:24)
  - a. The directive is given specifically to **Adam**.
  - b. Paul references differing **roles** and **responsibilities** (1 Cor. 11:3).

## TAKE HOME:

What do I need to discuss with my wife based upon what I have learned tonight?

Resources for further study:

An Article:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/complementarianism.html>

A Book:

John Piper and Wayne Grudem, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012)

## APPENDIX 6

### HOW TO SHEPHERD YOUR FAMILY SESSION 2 OUTLINE

#### Week 2—A Man Is to Be Righteous: Psalm 112

##### Recap:

Last week we looked to the beginning of God’s Word in Genesis 1-2 and the pre-fall creation and existence of man and woman (Adam & Eve) to see the establishment by God that men are to be the **head** of the home.

##### Male Headship defined:

In the partnership of two spiritually **equal** human beings, man and woman, the man bears the **primary** responsibility to lead the partnership in a God-glorifying direction.<sup>1</sup>

What are the expectations you feel are placed upon you as a man? (Good or bad expectations)

#### Psalm 112: A Man of God Will Display Righteousness in All His Responsibilities

##### Background:

- In the book of Psalms, one finds much **wisdom** and **transparency**.
- Psalm 111 declares the glory of **God** while Psalm 112 gives direction to men seeking to be holy.
- The piety commended in Psalm 112 is described primarily in terms of a godly man’s character and his relationship with others, including the way he **demonstrates** righteous living in his own home.
- Psalm 112 instructs devotion to God through **praise, obedience, diligence, and resolve**.
- Headship must be guided by **piety**, which comes only from the Word of God.

#### 4 Qualities of a man seeking to shepherd his family

1. Praise
  - a. A man’s foundation (Psalm 111 & 112)
    - i. A man of God must be an example for watching eyes; to those eyes within his **home** and **community**.

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr., “Male-Female Equality and Male Headship Genesis 1-3,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 95.

- ii. Proper admiration of the Lord is **crucial** to setting the direction of a man's life and his activities.
  - b. Proper Praise (Psalm 112:1b-3)
    - i. **Fear** and **delight** are the driving twin engines of a righteous man.
    - ii. Those who seek to receive the **rewards** and **blessings** of the Lord must first learn to fear Him and delight in His Word.
- 2. Obedience
  - a. Days of the devoted (Psalm 112:4)
    - i. The Psalmist gives **confidence** to the righteous in the midst of times that are seemingly troublesome.
    - ii. A Godly man will be **gracious**, **merciful**, and **righteous**.
- 3. Diligence
  - a. Deeds of the Righteous (Psalm 112:5-9)
    - i. A man seeking to live according to the **entire** counsel of God's Word will follow the example of the righteous man in these five verses.
    - ii. A righteous man will exhibit four deeds of righteousness.
      - 1. A righteous man is one who **lends** generously.
      - 2. The righteous man handles his affairs **justly**.
      - 3. The man of God is **steady** and **steadfast**.
      - 4. The righteous are described as giving to the **poor**.
- 4. Resolve
  - a. The Way of the wicked (Psalm 112:10)
    - i. The psalmist **juxtaposes** the righteous and the wicked in the opening and closing of the one hundred and twelfth psalm.
    - ii. The man who lives according to Psalm 112 seeks to express righteousness in all his **responsibilities**.

TAKE HOME:

Use Psalm 112 as a guide for prayer this week.

Resources for further study:

A Sermon:

David Prince, "Be Afraid of Not Fearing: A Call to Biblical Manhood Psalm 112" (sermon delivered at Ashland Avenue Baptist Church, Lexington, KY, May 18, 2014)

A Book:

R.C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 1998)

## APPENDIX 7

### HOW TO SHEPHERD YOUR FAMILY SESSION 3 OUTLINE

#### Week 3—A Man Is to Love His Wife (Part 1): Ephesians 5:25-33

##### Recap:

Last week we looked to the psalter to discover how we as men might seek to live up to God's holiness expectation (1 Peter 1:14-19) as men. We looked to Psalm 112 and the reality that a man is to be **righteous**.

This wisdom psalm instructs devotion to God through **praise**, **obedience**, **diligence**, and **resolve**.

##### Accountability Check:

Did any of you utilize Psalm 112 as means of guiding your prayers this past week?

**Ephesians 5:25-33: A Man of God Will Love His Wife as Christ Loved the Church**  
Good intentions need a good **direction**.

- “A family without a commitment to the **God** of the Bible has no hope of stemming the tide of cultural onslaught.”<sup>1</sup>

Men seeking to overcome the battles of **marriage** and **parenting**, fathers must center their focus upon Christ and root their foundation in the Word with absolute dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

##### Facts:

- Marriage is not for **everyone**.
- The vast majority of people seek to be **married**.

### BACKGROUND TO EPHESIANS

5 Ways in which a man will love his wife (Eph 5:25-33)<sup>2</sup>

1. His love will be **sacrificial**. (v. 25)
2. His love will be **sanctifying**. (vv. 26-27)
3. His love will be **sensitive**. (v. 28)

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<sup>1</sup> Voddie Baucham, Jr., *Family Driven Faith: Doing What It Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk with God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 33.

<sup>2</sup> Danny Akin, “When a Man Loves a Woman: How to Be the Husband God Meant You to Be” (class notes—Marriage Retreat Session at Black Fox Lodge, Sevierville, TN, January 31-February 2, 2020). The headings for this section are from my notes on Akin’s presentation.

4. His love will be **satisfying** (vv. 29-30)
  5. His love will be **specific**. (vv. 31-33)
1. His love will be sacrificial (25)
    - a. The inspired **command** is in the present tense, meaning a man is to love his wife habitually.
    - b. Love is not left to the occasional expression of affection or sexual experience but is instead the consistent **mark** of his relationship with his bride.
    - c. Men seeking to gain insight into how they are to love their spouse find the example in **Christ** laying down His life for the redeemed.
    - d. Love = Jesus
    - e. **Selfishness** is the more accurate word to describe what often masquerades as love in today's culture, when in fact selfishness is the antagonist to properly understood biblical love.
    - f. **Commitment** is also rarely identified with love because it seems to be at odds with the "butterflies in the stomach" motif, of which love is celebrated upon the silver screen.
    - g. This sort of love requires **initiative** by the husband.
  2. His love will be sanctifying (26-27)
    - a. Although these are worthy aspirations for a godly husband, the work of sanctification described in verses 26-27 is ultimately the work of **sanctification** by His Spirit.
    - b. A husband should desire for his wife to **grow** in Godliness and progressive sanctification.
    - c. One way a man can be a sanctifying shepherd to his wife is by discipling her in the **Word** of God.
    - d. Godly men should thus seek to make **disciples** in their home more than anywhere else. A righteous man understands his first priority is to disciple his wife even above discipling his children.

TAKE HOME:

Before next week plan a date specifically to woo your wife like it is your first date. If possible, execute the date but if not at least get it on the calendar?

Resources for further study:

An Article:

<https://www.crossway.org/articles/20-ideas-for-dating-your-wife/>.

A Book:

Stuart Scott, *The Exemplary Husband: A Biblical Perspective* (Bemidji, MN: Focus Publishing, 2002)

## APPENDIX 8

### HOW TO SHEPHERD YOUR FAMILY SESSION 4 OUTLINE

#### Week 4—A Man Is to Love His Wife (Part 2): Ephesians 5:25-33

##### Recap:

If you were with us this past January you, like me, heard from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President Danny Akin, and he shared five ways in which a man will love his wife according to Ephesians 5:25-33: his love will be **sacrificial** (v. 25); his love will be **sanctifying** (vv. 26-27); his love will be **sensitive** (v. 28); his love will be **satisfying** (vv. 29-30); his love will be **specific** (vv. 31-33).<sup>1</sup>

##### Accountability Check:

Did you plan a date with your spouse this past week?

#### Ephesians 5:25-33: A Man of God Will Love His Wife as Christ Loved the Church

1. His Love will be sacrificial (v. 25)
2. His love will be sanctifying (vv. 26-27)
3. His love will be **sensitive** (v. 28)
  - a. A man of God will love his wife as Christ loved the church by loving her in a sensitive way, as thoughtfully as he loves his **own** body.
  - b. A husband will have to become a **student** of his wife.
    - i. Men should become **experts** on their wives—their spiritual gifts, likes and dislikes, favorite activities, etc.—and make the pursuit a lifelong endeavor.
      1. He will often do this by **listening** more than speaking.
      2. A husband would be wise to learn to ask insightful questions that reveal the **heart** of his wife and remember the answers given.
  - c. Exercising Considerate Headship
    - i. **Prioritize** your wife
    - ii. **Protect** your wife

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<sup>1</sup> Danny Akin, “When a Man Loves a Woman: How to Be the Husband God Meant You to Be” (class notes—Marriage Retreat Session at Black Fox Lodge, Sevierville, TN, January 31-February 2, 2020). The headings for this section are from my notes on Akin’s presentation. Material attributed to Akin elsewhere in this section is also excerpted from my notes and may not represent exact quotations.

- iii. **Promote** the church
  - iv. Warning:
4. His love will be **satisfying** (vv. 29-30)
- a. Paul thus instructs husbands to an **ongoing, lifelong** process of love that nourishes both her soul and body and treats her with honor.
  - b. Paul utilizes two **present** tense verbs - “nourishes” and “cherishes”.
  - c. Exercising Gentle Headship
    - i. Paul selects two of the most **tender** Greek words to depict the husband’s actions toward his wife and they harmonize perfectly with a loving headship.
    - ii. Some men may not associate **leadership** with terms like “nourish” and “cherish.”
    - iii. A husband should exercise his headship in a way whereby his wife receives the **benefit**.
    - iv. Even the most devoted and committed of couples cannot escape the allure of **sin**.
      - 1. Understanding the cosmic battle must propel men to **lead** in confronting sin in their lives and homes.
      - 2. **Confession** of sin should be the regular habit of a man seeking to tenderly lead.
      - 3. He must have a **vision** for spiritual reconciliation and seek to clearly communicate that idea so that his mate sees the path and understands it thoroughly.
    - v. A man who is **gentle** with his bride will be selfless in his leadership.
5. His love will be **specific** (vv. 31-33)
- a. There is **no** greater human bond than the relationship between husband and wife.
  - b. Each man is **free** to select the bride of his choosing, but upon entering the covenant of marriage, it is his responsibility to love that woman above all others.
  - c. Love and devotion to Jesus does not nullify the potential for **sin**.
    - i. Women are not the enemy and it is not a woman’s fault if a man **surrenders** to sinful desires.
    - ii. If it can happen to David, then it surely can happen to **any** man today who professes Christ as Lord.

**TAKE HOME:**

Ask you wife how you might demonstrate your love in ways that communicate love to her.

Resources for further study:

A Website:

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/topics/marriage/>.

A Book:

Gary Thomas, *Sacred Marriage: What if God Designed Marriage to Make us Holy More than to make us Happy?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015).

## APPENDIX 9

### HOW TO SHEPHERD YOUR FAMILY SESSION 5 OUTLINE

#### Week 5—A Man Is to Teach His Children: Ephesians 6:1-4

Recap:

Men are to shepherd their families **according** to the Word of God.

Week 1 – A man is to be the head of the **home** (Genesis 1 & 2)

Week 2 – A man is to be **righteous** (Psalm 112)

Week 3 & 4 – A man is to **love** his wife (Ephesians 5:25-33)

Accountability Check

Did you speak with your spouse this past week about how you can more specifically love her?

#### **Ephesians 6:1-4: A Man of God Will Discipline and Develop His Children in the Discipline and Instruction of the Lord**

Paul begins this section by addressing children and concludes with a brief but impactful declaration to parents, specifically addressing **fathers**.

Paul gives fathers **two** responsibilities in verse 4, with one being negative (“do not provoke your children to anger”) and one being positive (“but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord”).

- The former addresses the **restraint** the man of God must show in interacting with his children.
- Paul, therefore, lays the primary **responsibility** in the home for teaching children upon the father, giving general guidelines about how and what to teach them.

Paul is aware that parents—and particularly fathers—often become **frustrated** because of their failures in both communication and consistency regarding expectations and consequences.

- Biblical vision for fatherhood such as the Bible sets forth here and elsewhere will help to eliminate six potential difficulties in these areas.
  - o (1) becoming more **disciplined** in their approach to parenting to avoid frustration;
  - o (2) seeking **God’s** forgiveness for their past failures and move forward with a fresh commitment to improve;
  - o (3) seeking counsel on how to improve their ability to **communicate** with their children;
  - o (4) learning how to live out their faith in the **home**.
  - o (5) setting **realistic** expectations for themselves and their children; and



- (6) realizing that it will take **time** to work through the consequences of past failures.

The positive responsibilities Paul gives to fathers are expressed via two nouns – Discipline & Develop.

- A father should make the **Christlikeness** of his children as the ultimate end of his parenting.

1. Discipline children

- a. Discipline should never be executed in **anger** or any other sinful expression.
- b. Discipline must never come without loving **instruction**.
- c. Children **need** oversight and direction.

2. Develop children

- a. Children must be educated and trained how to **speak** and **act**.
- b. The process begins at **birth** and continues as long as the children are living in the father's home.
- c. A Christian father does **not** leave the responsibilities of teaching the Word of God to a mother, church, small group leader, or anyone else.
- d. This fatherly instruction might be said to **summarize** the diligent teaching of children that Moses famously commanded in Deuteronomy 6:4-9.
- e. Considering the training in the Torah that the apostle Paul received as a Pharisee at the feet of Gamaliel, he certainly must have written Ephesians 6:1-4 with not only the Fourth Commandment in mind, but also the best-known passage in the Pentateuch on parental instruction, namely that found in Deuteronomy 6:4-5:
  - i. He should **teach** them what God has revealed about Himself through His written revelation to mankind, and that God can be known, and served, and most of all, loved.
  - ii. Moreover, the father should seek to teach these things at every possible **opportunity**, looking for teachable moments from the time the children wake up in the morning until they go to sleep at night.
  - iii. Moses makes this **plain** by the methodology he lays out in verses 6-9:
- f. Fathers who seek to shepherd their children according to the standard God has revealed in His Word will not merely drop off their kids at church and **hope** they are taught the truths of the faith.

TAKE HOME:

Ask your spouse to evaluate your communication with your children.

Resources for further study:

An Article:

<https://biblical-parenting.org/articles/mission-impossible/>

A Book:

R. Kent Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Man* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001).

## APPENDIX 10

### HOW TO SHEPHERD YOUR FAMILY SESSION 6 OUTLINE

#### Week 6—A Man's Responsibility: Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Recap:

Men are to shepherd their families **according** to the Word of God.

Week 1 – A man is to be the head of the **home** (Genesis 1 & 2)

Week 2 – A man is to be **righteous** (Psalm 112)

Week 3 & 4 – A man is to **love** his wife (Ephesians 5:25-33)

Week 5 – A man is to **teach** his children (Ephesians 6:1-4)

Accountability Check

Did you speak with your spouse this past week to evaluate your communication with your children?

A Man's Responsibility from Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Moses says we are to love the Lord our God with all our **heart**, with all our **soul**, and with all our **might**. (6:5)

The Word of the Lord must be on our **heart**. (6:6)

You must **teach** your children about the Lord (6:7)

1. When we sit in our **house**
2. When you go down the **road**
3. When you go to **bed**
4. When you **wake up**

You should **surround** yourself with the Word of God (6:8-9)

A Man's Method

Three instruments have been influential in guiding catechizing and family worship for centuries.

1. **Ten Commandments** (Exodus 20 & Deuteronomy 5)
2. **Lord's Prayer** (Matthew 6:9-13 & Luke 11:1-4)
3. **The Apostles' Creed**

Catechism is an ancient learning style where a **question** and **answer** format are utilized to learn a particular doctrine.

1. The format will **vary**.
2. A **good**, age-appropriate catechism usually takes most of the guesswork out of the process.
  - a. **Flexibility** with the rhythm of life
  - b. **Routines** help establish patterns of learning for all ages

3. Examples: There are scores of catechisms from the Reformers to present day.
  - a. Classic catechisms—Heidelberg Catechism (1563) & Westminster Catechism (1647)
  - b. Modern catechisms—New City Catechism (2012) & Cornerstones (2018),
4. Challenge
  - a. Catechizing is challenging, as is **all** learning.
5. The Goal
  - a. The goal of catechizing is a **relationship** with Jesus Christ, not mere knowledge acquisition.

Family worship is sitting down as a family and reading the **Bible**, **singing**, and **praying**.

1. Read the Bible
  - a. **Begin** with the Word of God.
  - b. Men must always put themselves **under** the Word of God.
  - c. The entire counsel of God's Word must be **utilized**.
  - d. **Dependency** upon the triune God is of utmost importance and also encouraging.
  - e. **Brevity** and **regularity** are essential.
  - f. The goal is diligent **devotion** that leads to eternal delight for father, mother, and child.
2. Pray
  - a. Prayer to the Christian should be as **regular** and automatic as breathing is to sustaining life.
  - b. Men would be **wise** to follow the teachings of our Savior in how to approach the Father in prayer using His method as a template.
  - c. The aim of prayer is **simplicity** without being shallow.
  - d. No child is too **young** to pray.
3. Sing
  - a. This element is **problematic** for many men, especially if they are not adept at singing or playing a musical instrument.
  - b. Scripture affirms that the people of God are a singing **people**. (Col 3:16, Psalms, 2 Sam 6:5, Neh 12:27, Matt 26:30, Col 3:16)
  - c. Men must **protect** the doctrine of the music sung during family worship.
  - d. A man's spouse often will be a tremendous **help** in fostering growth and assistance in singing unto the Lord as a family.
  - e. The goal is to use music as a **means** of learning Truth.
  - f. Music is an excellent way to **connect** emotions to the truth of the Bible.

**Family Worship** and **Catechizing** will strengthen individuals, families, churches, and communities.

TAKE HOME:

Talk to your spouse about when would be the best time of day and where would be the best place at the house to have family worship this week. Commit to do it one time this next week!

Resources for further study:

An Article:

Joel Beeke, "Leading Family Worship," *Desiring God*, February 2, 2011,  
<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/leading-family-worship>.

A Book:

Donald S. Whitney. *Family Worship*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016.

APPENDIX 11

PRE-ASSESSMENT SCORES

Table A1. Pre-assessment scores

Questions	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	Likert Scale Average	Total Responses
1. I prioritize consistent family devotional or worship times in my family's schedule.	0	1	0	1	7	2	4.82	11
2. I would like to do regular family devotions or Bible reading in our home, but my family is just too busy for that right now. It will probably be that way for quite a while.	0	2	1	5	2	1	3.09	11
3. The church is where children ought to receive most of their Bible teaching.	4	3	3	1	0	0	4.91	11
4. When my child spontaneously asks a biblical or theological question, I really wish that my child would have asked a minister or other church leader instead of me.	4	6	1	0	0	0	5.27	11
5. Fathers have a responsibility to engage personally in a discipleship process with each of their children.	0	0	0	0	4	7	5.64	11
6. Church leaders are the people primarily responsible for discipling my children and teaching them to share the gospel with others.	5	4	2	0	0	0	5.27	11
7. My church has helped me to develop a clear plan for my shepherding my family.	0	1	1	4	5	0	4.18	11
8. The father is the spiritual leader of the home.	0	0	0	0	4	7	5.64	11
9. I understand what the Bible teaches regarding how to lead my wife spiritually.	0	0	0	1	8	2	5.09	11
10. I seek to serve in the church with my wife.	0	0	0	2	3	6	5.36	11
11. Other than mealtimes, how many times in the past <i>week</i> have I prayed aloud with any of my children.	2	3	3	2	1	0	2.73	11
12. How many times in the past <i>month</i> have I read or discussed the Bible with any of my children?	2	1	4	1	1	2	3.36	11
13. How many times in the past <i>month</i> have I discussed any biblical or spiritual matters with any of my children while engaging in day-to-day activities?	3	2	3	2	0	1	2.73	11
14. How many times in the past <i>month</i> has my family engaged in any family devotional or worship time in our home?	5	1	3	0	2	0	2.36	11
15. How many times in the last <i>month</i> have I talked with my spouse about spiritual issues?	2	0	6	0	1	2	3.36	11

Table A1 continued

16. How many times in the past <i>year</i> have I intentionally participated with one or more of my children in witnessing to a non-Christian or inviting a non-Christian to church?	5	3	2	0	0	1	2.09	11
17. How often in the past <i>year</i> has any church leader made any contact with me to help me to engage actively in my child's spiritual development?	6	0	0	1	1	3	3	11
18. How often in the past <i>year</i> has any church leader made any contact with me to help me to love and lead my wife?	6	1	2	0	1	1	2.27	11
19. How many times in the past <i>week</i> have I read my Bible outside of church?	1	0	4	2	2	2	3.91	11
20. How many times in the past <i>2 months</i> have I attended church?	0	0	0	3	2	6	5.27	11

APPENDIX 12

POST-ASSESSMENT SCORES

Table A2. Post-assessment scores

Questions	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	Likert Scale Average	Total Responses
1. I prioritize consistent family devotional or worship times in my family's schedule.	0	0	0	2	3	4	5.22	9
2. I would like to do regular family devotions or Bible reading in our home, but my family is just too busy for that right now. It will probably be that way for quite a while.	2	0	1	4	2	0	3.56	9
3. The church is where children ought to receive most of their Bible teaching.	5	4	0	0	0	0	5.56	9
4. When my child spontaneously asks a biblical or theological question, I really wish that my child would have asked a minister or other church leader instead of me.	4	3	1	1	0	0	5.11	9
5. Fathers, have a responsibility to engage personally in a discipleship process with each of their children.	0	0	0	0	2	7	5.78	9
6. Church leaders are the people primarily responsible for discipling my children and teaching them to share the gospel with others.	5	4	0	0	0	0	5.56	9
7. My church has helped me to develop a clear plan for my shepherding my family.	0	0	0	1	3	5	5.44	9
8. The father is the spiritual leader of the home.	0	0	0	1	2	6	5.56	9
9. I understand what the Bible teaches regarding how to lead my wife spiritually.	0	0	0	1	4	4	5.33	9
10. I seek to serve in the church with my wife.	0	0	0	1	2	6	5.56	9
11. Other than mealtimes, how many times in the past <i>week</i> have I prayed aloud with any of my children.	3	0	1	3	1	1	3.22	9
12. How many times in the past <i>month</i> have I read or discussed the Bible with any of my children?	3	0	1	0	0	5	4	9
13. How many times in the past <i>month</i> have I discussed any biblical or spiritual matters with any of my children while engaging in day-to-day activities?	3	0	2	1	0	3	3.44	9
14. How many times in the past <i>month</i> has my family engaged in any family devotional or worship time in our home?	2	1	3	0	0	3	3.44	9
15. How many times in the last <i>month</i> have I talked with my spouse about spiritual issues?	2	0	1	3	0	3	3.89	9

Table A2 continued

16. How many times in the past <i>year</i> have I intentionally participated with one or more of my children in witnessing to a non-Christian or inviting a non-Christian to church?	5	2	0	1	1	0	2	9
17. How often in the past <i>year</i> has any church leader made any contact with me to help me to engage actively in my child's spiritual development?	3	1	0	1	0	4	3.67	9
18. How often in the past <i>year</i> has any church leader made any contact with me to help me to love and lead my wife?	3	0	1	1	0	4	3.78	9
19. How many times in the past <i>week</i> have I read my Bible outside of church?	0	1	2	2	1	3	4.33	9
20. How many times in the past <i>2 months</i> have I attended church?	0	0	0	0	1	8	5.89	9



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## ABSTRACT

### EQUIPPING FATHERS OF BEAVER DAM BAPTIST CHURCH IN KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE, TO SHEPHERD THEIR FAMILIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BIBLE

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2020  
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This project seeks to equip fathers of Beaver Dam Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee to shepherd their families in accordance with the Bible. Chapter 1 presents the history and ministry of Beaver Dam Baptist Church and the goals of this project. Chapter 2 provides exegesis of four passages of Scripture (Gen 1-2; Ps 112; Eph 5:25-33, and Eph 6:1-4) for the purpose of gleaning their instructions for being a godly father. Chapter 3 presents the practical implications for fathers who live accordingly to the biblical standard. Chapter 4 describes the project itself, recounting the content and teaching methodology of the specific course curriculum. Chapter 5 evaluates the efficiency of the project based on completion of the specified goals. Ultimately, this project seeks to equip Christian fathers with the confidence and competency to minister to their families with the truth of the gospel and the love of Jesus Christ.



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