

God's Fatherhood Released in the Church and the Home

I. THE FATHER-HEART OF GOD: A 3-FOLD APPLICATION

- A. ***Premise:*** The truths of God's heart as a father have application to every believer. We apply these truths or principles in three ways. First, ***personally***, as God's children we apply them in receiving from our heavenly Father. Second, ***in the home***, as parents we apply them to our children knowing that many of the principles related to God's fatherhood are the same for fathers and mothers. Third, ***in the Church***, we express them as we make disciples of younger believers.
- B. Jesus was never a physical father, but is called the everlasting father because He expresses the heart of the Father. He possessed a father's heart as a young, single man (Isa. 9:6; Mk. 10:13-16).
⁶His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father... (Isa. 9:6)
- C. I encourage young people to set their heart to be a spiritual father to younger believers (instead of seeking to find a spiritual father). In the early 1970's, the leaders of my youth group immersed us in this by calling all of us to find a few younger believers to start a small discipleship group with. We called it making disciples, but in reality we became spiritual fathers of younger ones.
- D. The Great Commission is a command to disciple people. Discipleship or spiritual fathering is to help people to grow up in Christ so that they can feed themselves in the Word, hear from God for their own life, to make godly choices, minister to others, and to disciple younger believers.

II. SPIRIT OF ELIJAH: TURNING THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS TO THE CHILDREN

- A. In the end times, the Spirit will restore the heart of the father in the Church. There is a crisis of fatherhood in the home, society, and in the Church. This is the first generation in which children are influenced more outside their home than inside it. The solution starts with understanding and receiving the father-heart of God for our personal lives and then expressing it to others.
⁵Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. ⁶And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children..." (Mal. 4:5-6)
- B. ***Prophetic spirit:*** God is a creative thinker who "thinks outside the box." Prophetic dreams allow us to receive a part of His creative plan for this generation. He put you on earth to be part of the miracle of His end-time Church that will touch the nations. Each person's gifting represents part of God's plan for them. Ask the Lord for a dream or vision related to your assignment in God to bring change in the lives of others and society. God is raising up a generation who will receive His creative wisdom for their life and ministry. He is raising up spiritual fathers who will create a context for others to function in ministry, even outside the church organizational structures.
- C. God has a plan for each individual, city, and nation. He gives us new ideas for our schools, the marketplace, media, etc. The devil gives creative ideas to do evil. About 98% are followers of the culture not shapers of it. They are culture zombies, taking their cues from the media. Most of the media is a dream killer. In it, we are merely participating in someone's dream.

- D. Determine that you will seek the revelation of the Father and will express it to others. Many are willing to walk in this truth, but sincerely do not know how to relate to God as a Father nor to relate to others as a father. Thus, we must learn this subject and teach it to believers of all ages.
- E. There are various expressions of spiritual fatherhood that are each valid. Some are far more involved than others. For example, a parent will invest more in the children in their home than in leading a small discipleship group. Do not approach it an “all-or-none” fashion, but invest in others to the measure that you have grace and time without despising the smaller expressions.

III. TWELVE PRINCIPLES: APPLY IN RELATIONSHIP TO GOD, FAMILY, AND OTHERS

- A. There are many principles in godly fatherhood. They include: relationship building, affirming, calling forth, coaching, encouraging, serving, correcting, enduring, celebrating, providing, taking initiative in reconciliation, and standing in difficulty in the battles, pressures and setbacks.
- B. Principle #1 ***Relationship building***: Friendship based training is not the same as being peers or pals relating around entertainment. We invest in others according to their heart cry and passions.
- C. Principle #2 ***Affirming***: Our greatest emotional need is for the assurance of being enjoyed. There is power in speaking blessing to others. God delighting in mercy gives us confidence (Mic. 7:18).
- D. Principle #3 ***Calling forth***: envisioning and inspiring them to take action.
- E. Principle #4 ***Coaching***: training in how to do it, giving them responsibility, then overseeing it
- F. Principle #5 ***Encouraging***: speaking words of life and reminding of God's perspective
- G. Principle #6 ***Serving***: Seeking the greatness of the children with a servant spirit. Our goal is to their greatness in God's will instead of seeing them only as a resource to help our vision.
- H. Principle #7 ***Correcting***: pointing out blind spots without provoking them to anger (Eph. 6:4)
- I. Principle #8 ***Enduring***: being patient and gentle with their failures without giving up on them
- J. Principle #9 ***Celebrating***: supporting them emotionally and enjoying God's blessing on them
- K. Principle #10 ***Providing***: investing our resources (time and money) in them in practical ways
- L. Principle #11 ***Taking initiative in reconciliation***: takes the lead humbling ourselves in conflicts
- M. Principle #12 ***Standing in difficulty***: supporting them in the battles, difficulties, and setbacks.