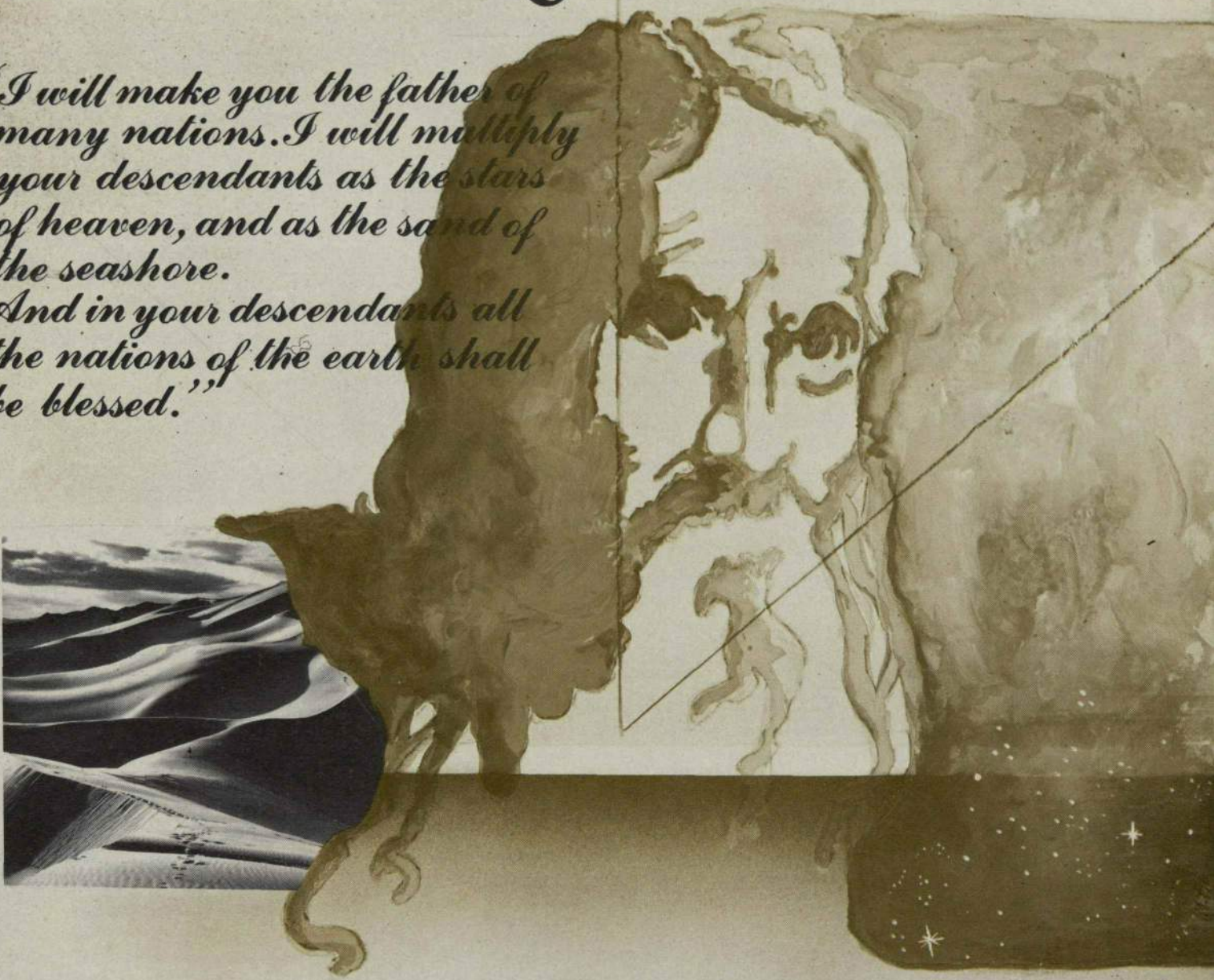


new wine®

APRIL 1978
THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE
DEDICATED TO CHRISTIAN GROWTH

"I will make you the father of many nations. I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and as the sand of the seashore. And in your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed."



Fatherhood and Identity



editorial

It's not difficult to believe the Bible is inspired. If the men who wrote it had schemed merely to promote a religion better than anyone else's, you can bet they would have been careful to present all the biblical heroes in larger-than-life, superhuman proportions rather than as normal men beset with difficulties and failures.

Actually, the recording of those very difficulties and failures point us to the plans and purposes of God. There is one example of such a failure which sharply reveals the importance of our *Fatherhood* emphasis in this month's issue of *New Wine*. It is taken from the life of the prophet Samuel,

and a few brief verses chronicle the event.

And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground (1 Sam. 3:19).

And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.

And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,

And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

And the Lord said unto Samuel . . . for they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them (1 Sam. 8:1,3,4,5,7).

Samuel had spent a lifetime working diligently to keep Israel in the plan and purpose of God, but he failed. Not as a prophet, but as a *father*! And because of his failure as a father, Israel turned from the purpose of God.

Men need to know that failure as a father will rob every other success of its lustre, and that in the eyes of God, to fail in fatherhood is to fail all down the line.

Don Basham
Editor

I am a commercial artist and I really appreciate the great artwork.

Julie Torgerson
Sioux City, IA

As a person with a commercial art background, I'm happy to tell you the graphics in *New Wine* get better all the time. I really get blessed by the interviews as well. Outstanding job!

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Pitrone
Chardon, OH

The last magazine on suffering and praise was by far one of the best from cover to cover.

Mr. and Mrs. William C. Qualls
Wellsville, KS

Wow! The latest issue of *New Wine* was tremendous. I'm sending mine on to a friend who is going through many trials. I'm sure it will be a help to her. Thank you for the much needed teachings you send out each month. They just seem to get better and better, and I always look forward to receiving my copy.

Miss Carole Hiatt
New Castle, IN

On January 24 my mother-in-law underwent surgery for removal of a brain tumor. The day before surgery we received the February issue of *New Wine*. It confirms so many of the things that have happened recently in our family. In addition it seems to have brought together so many of my random thoughts into a well-formed picture of what our suffering is all about.

Several days after the surgery, my wife and I were waiting outside the intensive care ward of our local hospital. I had brought the *New Wine* with me to read. When we were able to visit my mother-in-law, I completely forgot about the magazine and left it behind.

When I returned to the waiting area a short time later, I found a man totally engrossed in it. I told him I would come back later and pick it up. When I did, I found the subscription envelope missing.

By the way, my mother-in-law is doing fine. The procedure went well and she is none the worse for wear.

Please send me ten copies of the February issue to leave in hospital waiting rooms.

William A. Jenkins
Englewood, OH



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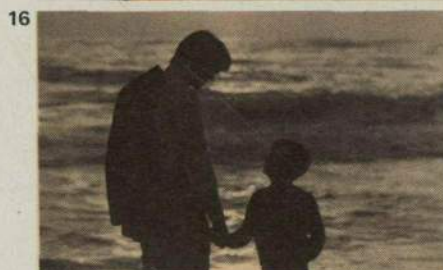
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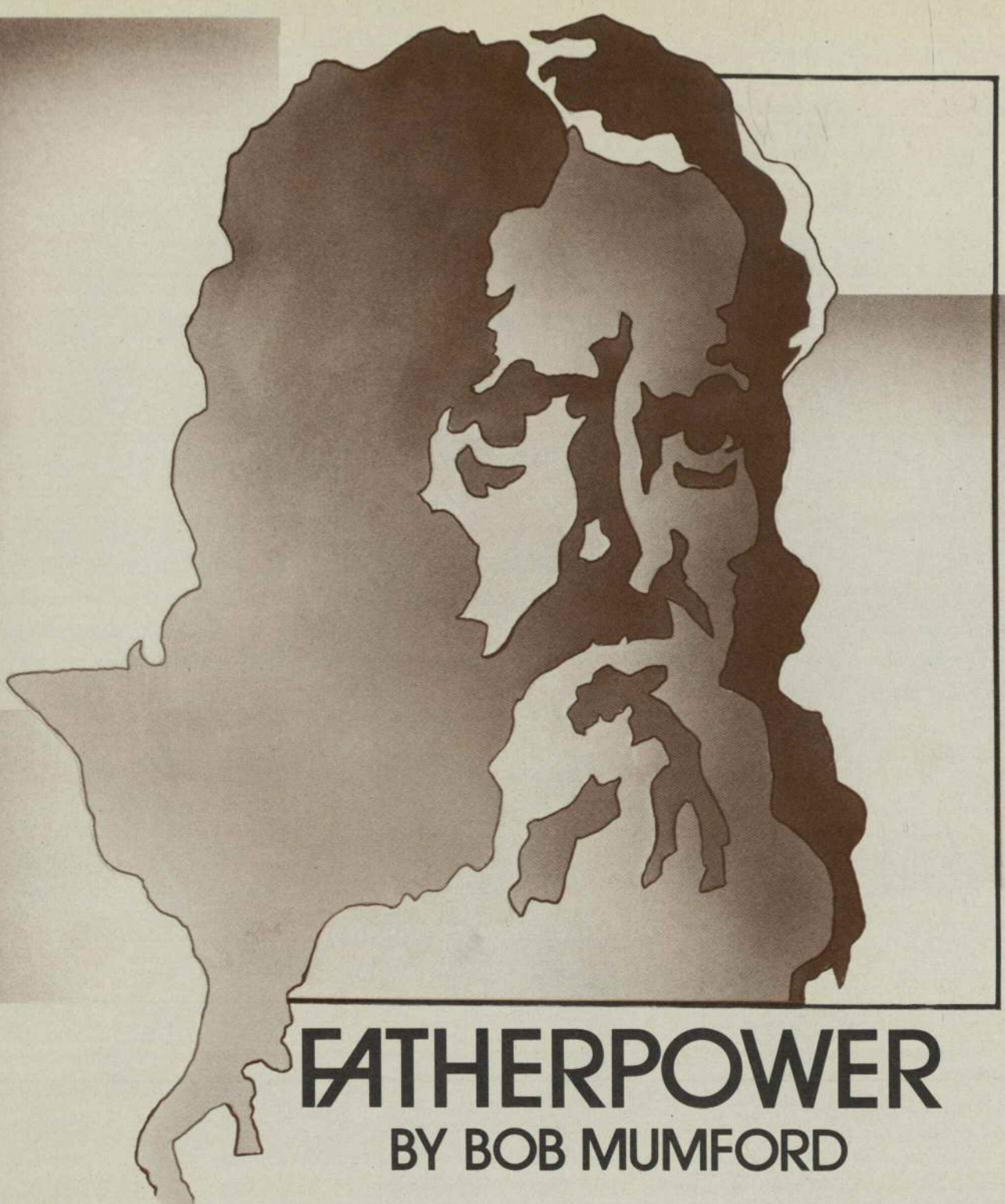


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MAGAZINE

APRIL 1978

VOL. 10, NO. 4



FATHERPOWER

BY BOB MUMFORD

During the past few years there has been a growing emphasis in teaching on the woman's place in the home, church and society. Christian magazines and books have published testimonies of women learning to submit to their husbands, dealing with rebellion and learning what it means to enter a scriptural place under God's covering.

This strong emphasis on a woman's role has come about, at least partially, I feel, because until recently, the majority of Christians who were concerned with spiritual things have been women. In answer to their cry to understand their place under God, it has been natural for teaching to come in this area. The result has been, however, to make it seem as if all the

problems in the world would be solved if the women would just "submit."

As timely and beneficial as this teaching has been, I am beginning to understand that the problem in the home, the Church, and our society is *not* just rebellious women—it is renegade husbands and fathers. *Most* men are by nature either passive and irresponsible, or domineering and

insensitive in their leadership in their homes. Both extremes result from a basic insecurity in their manhood, or an ignorance of the true nature of their God-given role.

In *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, Rousas J. Rushdoony, whom I consider to be one of the great biblical theologians of our day, says this about the abdication of male leadership in the home:

Today, men, having abdicated extensively their masculinity, are less concerned with order and more with gratification. As a result, women, because their security, and that of their children, is at stake, become involved with the problem of social decay and law and order. . . . Matriarchal power then develops as a substitute for a normal law-order.

The . . . trend towards a matriarchal society is in evidence in Western culture today. It should be stressed that, contrary to popular opinion, a matriarchal society is not a society in which women rule, but, rather a society in which men fail to exercise their dominion, so that women are faced with a double responsibility.¹

To that, all I can add is, "Amen." The greatest single failure of any man is when a woman, at the marriage altar, lays her life down at his feet and he doesn't have enough understanding or spirituality to pick it up! It lies there for some years and finally in frustration, confusion and hurt, she picks up her own life and begins to go her own way. Then he *can't* lead her anymore and in his insensitivity and ignorance he yells, "You are a rebel woman!"

I heard about a man that told his wife she was a rebel and then didn't see her for two weeks. After two weeks he could see her a little out of one eye!

The effects of renegade fathers is evident in our growing generation of young people as well. I was reading a study on seven young women who had attempted suicide. In getting to the root of their problems, the psychologist who was doing the study thought it might be enlightening to find out how each of those seven girls related

to her father. He found that not one of them had any ongoing relationship with her father, and three of them didn't even know their father.

Another psychologist from the New York Medical College said recently, "Never in my years of psychological research have I seen a case of homosexuality in a male with a good, warm father relationship."

Let me place this in a larger context of what I see happening spiritually in our world today. There is spiritual warfare going on today that is a frontal attack against the government and Kingdom of God.

There are four fronts on which this war is raging:

First, the social front. Secular humanism is trying to move us toward an egalitarian society. Men are saying there are no classes, no ranks, no distinctions—not even those which God has made among men. I don't believe in some kind of caste system which breeds discrimination or oppression. I am talking about the kind of "equal rights" that allow a worker to say to his boss, "I feel like drinking coffee rather than working, and if you try to fire me, I'll call the American Civil Liberties Union." It is a *spirit* that destroys respect and responsibility for the sake of "rights."

Second, hostility to all authority. It may be the policeman, the senator, the mayor, or the man of God. There is a general disrespect and "pulling down" of any man who is in authority. Television takes great delight in telling us that authority is something to be disregarded, bypassed, disobeyed, or laughed at.

Third, loss of role models. Have you ever noticed that everyone is *telling* us what to do, but no one is *showing* us how to do it? We have lost our heroes. There is no one for our youth to look up to and say, "I want to be like him." The heroes of today are the dropouts and the crooks who outsmart the police.

Fourth, is what I call the inadequate or absentee father. There is a concentrated, determined attack on maleness, and particularly fatherhood. Have you noticed how many television programs

there are about one-parent families? They are telling us that the traditional family is no longer necessary. If there is a program with a two-parent family, the father is a bumbling idiot who doesn't know how to walk around the coffee table. He can't administrate his home, balance a checkbook, or handle the kids. Commercials, especially, represent the man as an idiotic moron who can't remember to take his vitamins, doesn't know what to wear, doesn't know what to wash his hair with, or what to take for a backache. He needs his wife and children to mother him and take care of him just so he can cope with life. The message is clear: we don't need real fathers anymore!

Most psychologists tell us a child develops his image of God and authority from his or her father. A father gives a child his first impression of God. If the father can be eliminated from a child's life as far as any kind of strong formative force, do you know what that does to the potential of a child's relationship with the Lord? It lays the foundation for a generation of young people who will have no accurate image of God.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

Fatherhood is rooted in the very nature of God. God Himself carries the name "Father." Jesus, in Isaiah is called the "Eternal Father." Fathering is part of God's very nature. We need to understand that when we call God "Father," we are not referring to a gender, but to a role that God fulfills for His people.

I found a bumper sticker recently that says, "Trust in God; she will provide." A recent article in a San Jose paper reported on a group of Christian theologians who had declared the Bible a "sexist book." They suggested the Christians begin to pray, "Our Mother, which art in heaven." Men try to do everything to God except let Him be God of the Scriptures. We have tied fathering with sex and procreation rather than seeing it as the role of leading, teaching, protecting and providing in every area of life.

God, as a Father, has given us a pattern for all leadership, both in the natural and the spiritual. God governs His family as a *father*. He sets the human family on the earth as His governmental seat of authority with the father as its head. He is a Father who rules through fathers. A correct understanding of the marriage relationship does not see the wife as her husband's slave, but it sees the man as a ruler with the woman as his prime minister.² Out of this seat of authority comes leadership in the Church, the community, and the nation. On this point Rushdoony comments,

... *government is particularly the calling of the man as husband and father, and of the family as an institution... essential to the function of the family under God, and to the role of the man as the head of the household, is the call to subdue the earth and exercise dominion over it.*³

If you can destroy the family and especially the father, the base of God's government in the world is undercut.

HEBREW MODEL

To most of us this concept of the family is foreign. Recently, I met a brother who is doing a doctorate at Harvard on "The Kingdom of God." In his study he traced most of our theology back to the German theologians. Because they were basically anti-Semitic in their approach, they rejected the Hebrew model. They left us looking at the New Testament through the eyes of Greek philosophy, rather than in the context of the Hebrews who wrote the New Testament.

The men who wrote the New Testament understood family, patriarchal authority, tribes and clans, and the concept of elders and elder brothers. The Greeks, however, derived their basis of authority from the individual and the *polis*, or, city-state. The line of authority for the Hebrews was rooted in the family, went to the clan, then the tribe and then to the nation. *All* authority came

out of the father. This has enabled the Jewish nation to maintain its identity and strength through two millennia of persecution. It's the "Papa" who has held the families together.

The Middle East in the times of the ancient Old Testament was a degenerate mess. Cults, perversion, female goddesses, child sacrifice and all kinds of abominations ran wild. Do you know what God did to clean it up? He called a father.

He said, "Abram! (That means "exalted father.") Get out of your father's house into a land that I will show you. I am going to make you a channel of blessing for all the earth. I am going to make you a *father* to many nations" (Gen. 12:1-3 & 17:1-6). Abraham ("Father of a multitude") was a strong leader who knew how to father his family. His children changed the course of history not only in the Middle East, but in the whole world. He fathered Isaac, who fathered Jacob and so on. The line passed on through Jesse to David and on down to our Lord Jesus.

God's answer for the leadership crisis in our world today is the same as it was 3500 years ago—*fathers!* The only way God's love and fatherhood is going to come into this world is through men who know how to rule and father.

THE HOME—A TRAINING GROUND

This is what the New Testament says to men who want to be leaders in the Church: "He must be one who manages his own household well [by that I think it means both the natural and spiritual aspects], keeping his children under control with all dignity. [That means he rules by his word. He doesn't lose his cool, scream, threaten, and beat them into obedience.] But if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?" (1 Tim. 3:4-5, NAS).

I think one of the vital things any man aspiring to leadership needs to hear is that he is *married to his seminary*. These verses teach us that *all* valid ministry proceeds out of a solid,

"If you can destroy the family and especially the father, the base of God's government in the world is undercut."

secure home and from a father who knows how to function in his fatherhood.

Leadership in the Church does not begin with professional ministers. I am sick to death of professionals. Do you know where God trains His leaders? In their homes! My seminary is Judy, Keren, Beth, Bobby and Eric. The king, the queen and four subjects.

The Lord says, "If you want to know whether you've got what it takes to lead any of My people, find out if you can bring peace and order to your own kingdom!" If I can't do it in my own home, I've got no business teaching others how to do it. Almost without exception, every adjustment in my character and life preparing me to lead and be something to God's people came through my learning to be a husband to my wife and a father to my four children. I'm not finished yet, but I'm working on it.

The home is the basic cell of the Church and society. If we get strong fathers in the homes, we will have strong leaders in the Church. The Church needs fathers, too. Paul was a father to Timothy—he raised him in the Lord. Part of the weakness of the Church has been the absence of real fathers who have the authority and courage to really father people.

Lately, the Lord has been emphasizing authority, discipleship and relationship. I believe the Church is being called upon to get some "Father-power." It needs to fill a vacuum in

the lives of many who never really had a father to father them. Many young people today do not know the basic things it takes to cope with life or hold a job. They need fathers to help them, and if their natural father is not there, the Church must be faithful to fill the gap.

FATHERPOWER

Let me give you seven qualities of fathering that have been lost or are underdeveloped in most husbands and fathers. As I understand it, these can be regained or developed if a man will embrace his "seminary" and learn what it means to exercise his "Fatherpower."

1. *Loyalty.* One of the first things a father learns is to be faithful to his covenants and commitments, even when it is difficult. He learns to be loyal to the marriage covenant: to cherish and love his wife, even when she seems impossible to live with. He has a covenant with his children and learns how to be faithful, even when the kids are running off, doing drugs and going crazy.

Do you know what brought the prodigal home? A father who knew how to be faithful to a covenant with his son. When that kid came to the end of the road, he knew there was a place waiting for him in his father's house. He understood the covenant faithfulness of his father.

2. *The necessity of communication, however painful or difficult.* He learns how to share and teach his six-year-old or his twenty-year-old. He learns how to express himself and face issues squarely without glossing them over or putting "Band-Aids" on them.

He also learns to hear and receive what his family has to say. He is not insecure when his wife disagrees; he hears her out. He doesn't blow up when his children want to tell him where he's wrong; he listens and understands. He learns to hear hurt when anger is expressed; he hears the frustration of growing up behind the hysteria of a teenage daughter. He hears the cry for love in his son's indifference and rebellion.

3. *How to recognize and handle rejection and control manipulation.*

His wife says, "You are the dumbest man I've ever known." He doesn't sulk in a corner. He says, "I understand your feelings, honey, and I love you."

The kid says, "I'm running away from home 'cause you won't let me watch TV."

Father says, "You can't threaten me. I'll help you pack!"

His wife coos, "Honey, you're going to buy me that new sweater, aren't you?"

His reply, "No, dear. I said we weren't buying any more clothes this month."

Fathers know about manipulation and rejection and they learn to handle it. How many of you think it would be nice to learn that one *before* you started to pastor a flock?

4. *Plurality, community and Body concepts.* I am convinced that most Christian fathers fail because they are ignorant, not because they don't care or try. Within the plurality of the Body there is the counsel, support and discipline of committed brothers that will see a desperate father through some rough times.

5. *Vertical authority and one will.* Question: Did you ever try to lead a family with five different wills, each wanting to go its own way?

Father says, "Children, this Sunday after church is a family picnic!"

Child One: "I hate picnics!"

Child Two: "I've got a date for the afternoon."

Child Three: "I need to do a book report for school."

Child Four: "I get sick on picnics!"

A father who understands his vertical authority will say, "I repeat, Sunday afternoon is a family picnic. Child One, you're going anyway; Child Two, call your date and change it to the evening; Child Three, do your book report on Saturday night; Child Four, you get healed."

A father can rule his home by his word. He doesn't need to threaten, yell, coerce or manipulate his family. I was visiting Pat and Shirley Boone in their home some time ago. Their daughter Sherry (who was about

nineteen or twenty, I would guess) was out on a date that evening. We were sitting and sharing and just before 11:00 Pat said, "Sherry will be home any minute."

The door opened at 11:00 on the dot and Sherry popped in, "Hi, Mom. Hi, Dad." Twenty years old? That's a father!

6. *A father learns the critical nature of keeping priorities in biblical balance.*

There is nothing like a growing, active family to teach you the pain and pressure of priorities. At 4:00 PM on Superbowl Sunday, your wife just had a squabble with a lady at church and she needs to talk about it. Priorities!

Your son says, "But, Dad, you've got to be there Friday night. I'm a shepherd in the school play." He has two lines and you would have to cancel the entire board meeting to go. Those two lines are a biblical priority as far as it is within your power to meet it.

"Priorities" means my family comes ahead of sports, hobbies, friends, work, ministry, counseling and the house. Learning to hold these in proper balance will stretch any man.

7. *Maturity in the realm of crisis management.* How many of you know there are some situations you don't have time to fast and pray about? It usually happens something like this:

"Dad, the toilet is running over."

"Honey, the stove is on fire."

"Dad, the dog is running away."

This is a job for Superdad! Do you ever feel like even Superman couldn't handle *your* home? That's where a man learns how to be a shepherd! These situations may seem comical, but they are a real part of God's training of a man in leadership. You will meet the same types of crisis situations when you start leading God's people.

EFFECTS OF FATHERPOWER

I see at least seven effects which fatherpower will bring into the home and the Church.

1. *Internal and external blessing.* In

doing some study on Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, I've come to see that the patriarchal blessing was not laying empty hands on empty heads. When the Hebrew father laid his hands on his son and blessed him, he imparted something eternal, divine and supernatural. It was not a game.

My relationship with my own father was very complicated and difficult—it took me nine years to finally get myself clear of all the hurt and rejection I felt. About five years ago he contracted a terminal illness. Over a period of three months the Lord arranged it so I could spend time with him every weekend, nursing him and loving him until the time he died.

During that time, a cry arose in my heart, "Lord, there's one thing I would ask of You before my dad goes on to be with You. I would ask You to have him give me his parental blessing."

My Dad had only one prayer. He prayed it every time I heard him pray all the years I knew him. He didn't know how to pray for anyone, let alone bless them.

One day as Judy and I were leaving his room, I took his bony old hand in mine and as we stood beside his bed I said, "Dad, please pray for me."

He closed his eyes and began to pray. It was the same prayer he had prayed for years. My heart sank a little as he started. Then, he shifted gears. His voice changed and it became authoritative and strong, "Father, I pray that this, my son, shall know Your blessing. Thou shalt take this ministry to the ends of the earth. And I pray God, Your blessing and provision, and that Thou shalt protect him in every place that his feet shall go as he serves You to the ends of the earth!" I was half in a fog when he began, but by the time he was finished, the Spirit of the Lord had gone through me, Judy and back into him. It was like holding an electrical wire. When he finished, he slipped off into a coma, but I knew he had imparted God's blessing to me.

The blessing is external as well. Scripture testifies continually that when a man stood under the blessing of God, financial and physical pros-

perity followed him. We are discovering that as men are rising in their homes, God is beginning to bless them and their families with health, prosperity and peace.

2. Fatherpower roots us in reality and permits us to mature in safety.

How many of you know children need to grow up inside fences? Our society has produced a whole generation of immature, frustrated, irresponsible, messed-up young people because some idiot said, "Don't inhibit them. Take down the fences! Let little Johnny follow his instincts." Little Johnny tore up the school, drove his parents crazy, took drugs and ended up dead from an overdose or in jail—and we wondered why. Children need to make mistakes and experiment with life, but they need fences to keep them from killing themselves and destroying their lives. That's a father's job.

We need fences as we rise in God, too. Do you know that when you start having your ministry blessed, seeing the sick healed, begin prophesying, and people start following you that it is very easy to hear little voices that say, "Thou art Elijah." A wife, children, and loving brothers will keep our heads in reality and deal with that "revelation" in a hurry!

It is a joy for me to watch young men rising in God, with strong valid ministries starting to flow. They are entering into their place in the Body without all the hurts, hang-ups, breakings and hassles that many of my brothers and I have had to go through. They have someone to tell them when they are getting off track and how to keep their homes straight, to help keep their feet on the ground and encourage them when they want to quit—most of us never had this. There is a new generation of leaders coming into the Body, men who have been fathered spiritually and brought forth in God, who will be able to father others.

A child needs both a mother and father to grow up. They each have an important role, but there is a difference between fathering and mothering. A mother turns a child inward and makes him sensitive, whereas a father

turns a child outward and makes him strong. Example: We are walking down the street with our three-year-old son. He falls down. Mother says, "Ah, sweetie, you got a booboo!" He needs that.

On the other hand, Dad says, "Come on, son. Stop crying; you'll live." To develop normally he needs both of those. He needs someone who can give him TLC and develop the sensitivity of his internal nature (by the way, a father can do some of that, too). And a child (particularly sons) also needs a father for a role model who picks him up and directs his attention to outward things—to conquer and venture out into life.

3. Fatherpower brings belonging, identity, security and authority. There is something very important that needs to be said here.

Our family was driving across the country some months ago, and we stopped to visit a brother whom I had known and loved for some years. He had a ministry in a very difficult city, and when we got there he was really hurting. The pressure on him from his ministry was severe, and his marriage and family were being deeply affected by it.

After a couple of days of being together, he asked if we could talk for a while. We went into his study and as we sat down I said, "You're really hurting, aren't you?"

"Yes," he said. "I really am."

He began to pour it out to me. While he was talking, the Lord was prompting me to ask him something. When he was finished, I said, "Son, has there ever been anybody that you loved that said to you, 'You're doing a good job?'"

The tears literally squirted out of his eyes as he confessed, "Bob, I've been in ministry nine years, and I don't think I have ever heard the words, 'Well done.' I was taught it was wrong to seek approval—you just please God and hang on."

When Jesus came to a critical place in His ministry, the Father wanted to say something to His Son that was vital and meaningful. Each time when the Father spoke to His Son for all to

hear it, He spoke by way of approbation—approval. “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mt. 3:17). Do you think Jesus needed to know He was pleasing to His Father?

For years we have been robbed of something in God that is vital and real because we were afraid of “human exaltation.” If someone ever says to us, “Man, that was a great job,” we get all flustered and embarrassed because we are afraid we won’t be humble enough if we receive it.

I am seeing that we all need someone who really counts to us—a father, whom we love and admire—to give us sincere, scriptural approbation when we need it. I don’t mean flattery, manipulation, or “how to win

who met me after a meeting where I was teaching on fatherpower. With tears streaming down his face he said, “Sir, tonight when you were teaching, for the first time, I *found* myself. Because of my background, I’ve never known who I was. Now I understand what you mean when you talk about the family of God. God has given me a shepherd and I know where I belong.”

4. *Fatherpower permits authority to be visible, workable and practical.* Our youth today are rebellious and disrespectful because they never met real authority at home, where they were supposed to. Parents let their kids run wild and then are surprised when they go to school and punch their teachers.

Part of the attack against our families is to feminize men. Let me quote Rushdoony again:

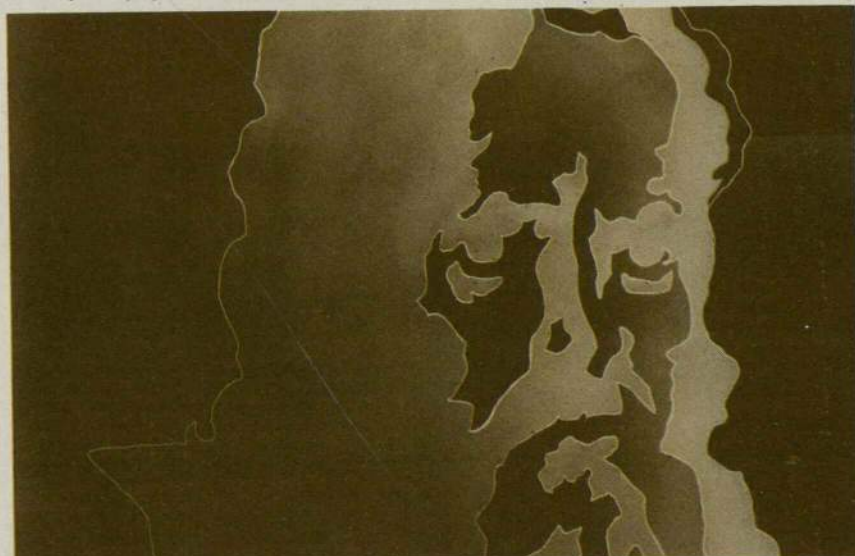
The abandonment of a family-oriented education leads to the destruction of masculinity, and it renders women either fluffy luxuries for men or aggressive competitors to men. [It] basically trains women to be men; it is not surprising that so many are unhappy at being women. Nor are men any the happier, in that dominion in modern education is transferred from man to the state, and man is progressively emasculated. The major casualty of modern education is the male student.⁴

We are finding something very interesting in working with marriages in our communities. In many marriages where there seems to be no real resolution of problems, we are discovering that the husbands are feminine in their leadership in the home. Now I do not mean they are gay, or homosexual. I mean their emotions, reactions and perspective is that of a woman. Effectively, then, there are two women trying to live together, and it doesn’t work. The wives become frustrated, hurt and emotionally unfulfilled. But when these men have become “male,” the picture starts to change. Real manliness is when a man has mastered his emotions and his approach to life so that he does not act or react like a woman in a crunch.

Emotionally, men who are feminized always want to be approved by those they are leading. A real man wants to be respected, but he doesn’t care whether people like him or not. A man makes people glad or sad when he leads, but he doesn’t play the middle or tiptoe through the tulips to get approval. He *leads*, no matter what people think about him. So keep in mind that there is a difference between a healthy desire for approbation and man-pleasing.

Men need to respond like men when they are corrected. I say to a brother, “You did it wrong. Don’t ever do it that way again.”

He starts to blubber, “I couldn’t



friends.” I mean an honest fatherly approbation.

There is a man in one of our fellowships who is almost thirty years old. He is talented, brilliant, handsome, and has everything going for him a man could want. He went through one of the best colleges in the country with a 3.8 average, has a masters degree in radiation physics and now has an excellent job. But do you know that his feelings of self-worth are so low and his inferiority so great that he has a hard time carrying on any type of meaningful relationship. For the first twenty-eight years of his life, he never once heard the words from his father, “Son, I’m proud of you.” God is healing that, but it is difficult.

There was a young mulatto man

There is a principle in Scripture that says, “I can’t love God if I don’t love my brother.” I believe it holds true for authority. God administrates His government through His Body. We learn to obey Him by obeying our brothers. I had to learn to obey my brothers, and when I learned, my wife and children began to learn.

People are scared of authority. Do you know why? Because it gets used by people that aren’t fathers and don’t have a father’s heart. That’s why. God is a Father: He rules through fathers and won’t let anyone lead His people until they have proven that they are fathers! Authority in the hand of a man who is a good father is not dangerous.

5. *Fatherpower creates manliness.*

help it. Boo hoo . . . it was my grand-father that made me like this. If only someone cared about me . . . boo hoo."

I want to say, "For Jesus' sake man, take the responsibility yourself and shape up!" There is nothing wrong with breaking and crying, but be a man and face yourself and your mistakes. Don't pass them off on everyone else!

A man initiates. A father leads; he doesn't just deal with problems after they happen. He has a vision for what God is doing, and he takes charge and says, "This is the way. Follow me." If you don't know where you are going, don't expect anyone to follow you.

Let's not mistake masculinity for "macho." The John Wayne, James Bond ideal of a man is as weak as the limp-wristed gay. Jesus is the ideal of a man. A man who throws himself around and shoots off his mouth is as weak and insecure as any man can be. Let's not be sold Hollywood's ideal of manhood.

6. *Fatherpower develops character where it matters most.*

Endurance is a sign of authenticity. Failure to accept responsibility and to follow through on what we start is the curse of our society.

The ability to confront and be confronted. Most men are nervous or deceptive when it comes to a head-on confrontation. If we can't handle confrontation with our families or each other, how will we stand against the world?

Internal strength. I say, "internal" because I don't mean muscles. I recently read something written by a young widow, 46 years old. She wrote, "My husband was a man. Two years after we were married, he had an industrial accident and broke his spine just below the neck. He was in bed twenty-three years. He was incapable of sex and was totally helpless. I made the living those twenty-three years. But my husband was such a man that when I would come home from work, I could hardly wait to sit down by his bed while he imparted to me his strength."

When I read that, I wondered if I

would *ever* be a man! I wonder whether I wouldn't give way to pity, resentment, bitterness and apathy. What a man! And what a woman!

7. *Now, let me tell you what fatherpower eliminates.*

A wrong emphasis on grace. A feminized Christianity overemphasizes grace and disregards the Father's desire for maturity. Jesus gave grace. He said to the woman taken in adultery, "I don't condemn you." Then He added, "Don't ever do it again." I am a preacher of grace; I am a product of God's grace. But I am also a product of God's hickory stick! I love that stick as much as I do the grace. They are one and the same. Read Hebrews 12 and you will see what I mean.

Wrong motives for ministry. If a man has motives for ministry other than pleasing the Lord, a close relationship with a spiritual father will weed it out for his protection and for the Body's.

Ecclesiasticism. By that I mean authority and leadership vested in a structure rather than in fathering relationships. A real father has to get past the professional religious facade and be a real person that people can love and touch and feel.

Authoritarianism. A real man never has to threaten or pull rank. He leads by his word. If you see a man riding herd like a little dictator, using fear and Bible verses, he's not a father.

Role confusion. Role confusion is when the preacher gets done with the wedding ceremony and says, "Will one of you please kiss the bride!" It's called unisex. Men need to cut their hair and dress like men. Women need to wear their hair and dress like women. That's not Mumford—that's Bible. Men should be masculine and women feminine. Fathers that act like men give children something to pattern themselves after.

Parentalism. In the home, parentalism is the doting father, the doting mother that slobber all over the kids. They protect them and never give them a chance to make mistakes and grow up like normal kids.

Dad says, "I'm going to give my son a knife for his birthday."

"But he's only nine. He'll cut himself!"

"That's all right. It will heal and he'll learn about knives."

One of the things that causes teenagers to go over the brink faster than anything else is parents that treat them like they were still four years old. "Do this! Do that! Don't say anything, just shut up and do as I say!" You do that and you are asking for problems.

In the Church, parentalism is the pastor that won't let his people move without checking everything out with him first. When people are just starting out in God, sometimes they need to be treated like that, but they can't stay there—they need to grow and mature and learn how to be properly independent in God.

The cry of my heart is, "God give us men!" Men who will go home and be fathers with a capital *F*. Men who won't *point*, but who will *lead* the way. Men who will learn their lessons well and walk out changed—ready to do the will of God. ☞

1. Rousas John Rushdoony, *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (The Craig Press, 1973) p. 203.

2. *Ibid*, p. 164.

3. *Ibid*, p. 163.

4. *Ibid*, p. 184.

Just Around the Corner

Next month *New Wine* will carry its second issue on the subject of Fatherhood and Identity. It will feature the first half of an exclusive interview with Graham Kerr, formerly television's Galloping Gourmet. In addition there will be related articles by Derek Prince, Jim Hamann, and others.

Abba, Father

by George Martin

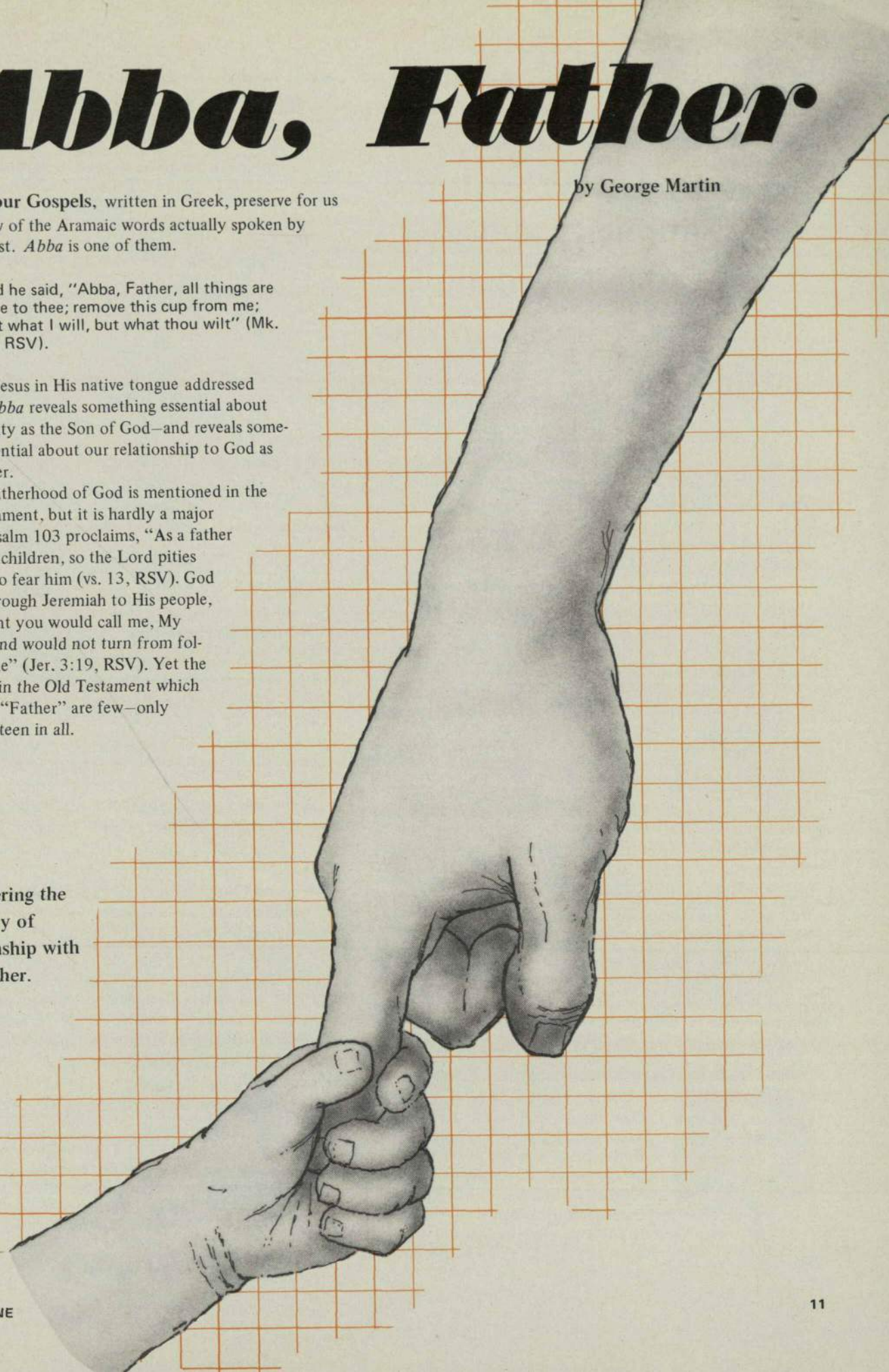
The four Gospels, written in Greek, preserve for us only a few of the Aramaic words actually spoken by Jesus Christ. *Abba* is one of them.

And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mk. 14:36, RSV).

That Jesus in His native tongue addressed God as *Abba* reveals something essential about His identity as the Son of God—and reveals something essential about our relationship to God as our Father.

The fatherhood of God is mentioned in the Old Testament, but it is hardly a major theme. Psalm 103 proclaims, "As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him (vs. 13, RSV). God spoke through Jeremiah to His people, "I thought you would call me, My Father, and would not turn from following me" (Jer. 3:19, RSV). Yet the passages in the Old Testament which call God "Father" are few—only about fifteen in all.

Discovering the intimacy of relationship with the Father.



“Jesus spoke to His heavenly Father with the same simplicity and intimacy that a small child uses to speak to his earthly father.”

Jesus, however, constantly addressed God as “Father” and spoke about Him as being a Father. The Gospels contain over 150 occurrences of Jesus talking about God as His Father, or addressing Him in prayer as Father. Except for praying Psalm 22 from the cross (Mk. 15:34), every prayer of Jesus recorded in the Gospels is explicitly addressed to God as His Father. Thus, when Jesus prayed before raising Lazarus from the dead, He prayed

“Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, I knew that thou hearest me always, but I have said this on account of the people standing by, that they may believe that thou didst send me” (Jn. 11:41–42, RSV).

To us today, there is nothing very startling about Jesus addressing God as His Father. To the first century contemporaries of Jesus, however, such a form of address must have seemed shocking. The scattered references to the fatherhood of God in the Old Testament could hardly have prepared them for the boldness with which Jesus addressed God as Father. And not only did Jesus address God as Father, but He addressed Him as “My Father.” The Old Testament references to the fatherhood of God generally referred to God as being the Father of the whole chosen people; Jesus, in contrast, addressed God as being His own particular Father. Such an address certainly went beyond what Jewish piety



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would allow; if the very name of Yahweh was so awesome that it could scarcely be uttered, to call upon God as one's Father must have indeed seemed presumptuous:

In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babies; yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will.

All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” (Lk. 10:21–22, RSV).

Yet Jesus went even further. He used the Aramaic word *abba* in addressing God as His Father. The word *abba* does indeed mean “father,” but it is the form of address a child would use in addressing his earthly father. The origins of the word are clearly in the babbling sounds made by an infant: “dada, mama, papa, abba.” At the time of Jesus, older sons and daughters could refer to their fathers as “Abba,” but the connotations arising from the origins of the word were never lost. If we were to look for an English equivalent for *abba* today, “daddy” or “papa” would be nearer the mark than the more formal term “father.”

Jesus, in His prayers, then, addressed God as “Abba”—almost “Daddy.” While His prayers were deeply respectful and reverential, they addressed God in very familiar terms. Jesus prayed to God not as a distant “Father,” but as a close and loving “Abba.” Jesus spoke to His heavenly Father with the same simplicity and intimacy that a small child uses to speak to his earthly father.

Addressing God as “Abba” would have been unthinkable to devout Jews at the time of Christ. Yet Jesus did this—claiming such a familiar relationship with God that the informal and intimate term “abba” could be used. Jesus claimed that God was His Father, and that the relationship between them was so close and loving that it was indeed proper for Him to call upon God as a child would his father.

This special relationship with God lay at the heart of Jesus' life and mission. The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob was His Father. He was the Son of God. All that He did, all that He taught, all that He accomplished had importance solely because He was the Son of God. His whole mission was to do His Father's bidding; the message He proclaimed was His Father's message (Jn. 8:28–29).

I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one comes to the Father but by me.

If you had known me, you would have known my Father also; henceforth you know him and have seen him.

He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, “Show us the Father”?

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority; but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me (Jn. 14:6-7, 9-11, RSV).

Jesus lived among us as the revelation of the Father. Because He was truly the Son of God, those who saw Jesus saw the Father. Jesus was not merely a messenger of God, as were the Old Testament prophets. Jesus was in such a relationship to the Father that He Himself was the message of God, the Word of God to us. The revelation made in Jesus was not a revelation about God, but a revelation of God Himself.

Were Jesus not the Son of God, His intimacy with the Father would have been blasphemous. No mere man, certainly, could take it upon himself to address God as "Abba"—to approach the creator of the universe with the same familiarity a small child has to its father.

Yet this is precisely what Jesus invites us to do!

He was praying in a certain place, and when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."

And he said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Father, hallowed be thy name . . .'" (Lk. 11:1-2, RSV).

The prayer that we say as the Lord's Prayer, the prayer that Jesus taught the disciples, addresses God as "Father," as "Our Father." We have been authorized to pray as Jesus prayed, to turn to His Father as our Father.

Not only did Jesus teach us to pray to God as our Father, there is also evidence that He taught His followers to use the same intimate address, "Abba," as He did, for there is evidence that this form of addressing God was used in the early Church. When St. Paul, in teaching about the work of the Holy Spirit in us, wished to describe the prayer of Christians, he used the same Aramaic word that Jesus used:

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father!"

it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom. 8:14-16, RSV).

And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying "Abba! Father!" (Gal. 4:6, RSV).

Through the work of Jesus Christ and the presence of the Spirit within us, we are truly adopted as sons and daughters of God. We can therefore address God as "Abba." We can pray as Jesus prayed, for He has enabled us to partake of the relationship with the Father

that He Himself has. "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" (Jn. 20:17, RSV).

Jesus also taught His followers what it meant to have God as our Father. He used the love that human fathers have for their children as an example of the way God loves us—and taught that our heavenly Father's love goes far beyond the love that we have for our children. "If you, then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" (Mt. 7:11, RSV). Jesus taught that our heavenly Father knows our every need (Mt. 6:32) and has prepared an eternal home for us: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Lk. 12:32, RSV).

The parable of the prodigal son (Lk. 15:11-32) is equally the parable of the loving father, searching the horizon for the return of his lost son, forgiving him without quibble or question, welcoming him home again with a celebration. The parable teaches us about the love of God our Father for us: His willingness to forgive, His joy when we repent.

Jesus not only taught about God as our Father; He also taught what it means to be a child of God. The Kingdom of Heaven is promised to those who call upon God as "Abba, Father"—to those who become as little children, entering into an intimate and loving relationship with God. "Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it" (Mk. 10:15, RSV).

Since these words of Jesus indicate a basic requirement for salvation, it is well worth pondering their meaning. What does it mean to receive the Kingdom of God like a child? Most often, we focus on the qualities which we presume characterize children and try to imitate them in our lives. Children are thought to be innocent, without guile, direct in their affections, loving, trusting, spontaneous in their emotions, joyful, carefree. We, in turn, try to make these characteristics part of ourselves, usually without complete success.

Parents know that these traits do characterize children. But parents also know that there is another side to the story. Children can also be self-centered, inconsiderate, prey to petty jealousies, indiscriminate in their affections, and inconsistent in their behavior. Most children are not such models of virtue that we could understand Jesus requiring us to imitate them.

Rather, the essential characteristic of children that Jesus would have us focus on is their status as sons and daughters. Whatever may be the character traits of children, the life of small children is essentially defined in terms of their relationship with their parents. Children may be good children or bad children, but they are still sons and daughters. Nothing changes that basic relationship.

This is clearly seen in the parable of the prodigal son. The prodigal did not act as a good son should have; and

(continued on page 30)

Recommended Reading for Fathers

Fathergram No. 5
P. O. Box 8275
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FATHERGRAM™

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A Service to Fathers™

NEWS: Latest Gallup Poll reveals almost half of all T.V. viewers believe they watch too much T.V. 1½ million viewers are turning off. **Why?** Haynes Johnson of Washington Post, "They have managed to find something **better** to do with their time." More people watch P.T.L. Club than Johnny Carson. Many are turning off ... others are turning on to religious broadcasting.

International Women's Year Conference ("Pro-Women's Lib", "Pro-Lesbian/Gay Rights", "Pro-Abortion") in Houston was federally funded. **Why not national emphasis on the nuclear family?** Almost 15% of all births are illegitimate (even after 300,000 to 400,000 a year are aborted, or murdered, depending on how you look at it). What has ignorance in family life cost America? What will it cost?

FATHER'S RESPONSIBILITY: (Malachi 4:5&6). "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord."

"And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse" (NAS).

Note: The way to prepare for the day of the Lord is to restore father/child relationships. Until children see God in their dads it's unlikely that they will see God. **The result** of unrepaired parental relationships is a **cursed land**. America's problems **cannot** be solved in Washington until they are solved at home.

TO TEACH BIBLE HISTORY:

HISTORY GRAPH

Adam — Noah — Abraham — Moses — Judges — Kings & Prophets — Jesus — Early Church — John's Death
(Dates are Approximate) 2400BC 2000BC 1500BC 1000 BC (Story here) 100AD

FATHERS: This story from Luke 8:41-56 is offered to help you teach your child. Read or tell the story and discuss the questions at the end.

Story

Jairus was a leader among the Jews in Capernaum. (Capernaum is on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee.) He was also the father of a little daughter. Jairus was saddened and troubled by the fact that his precious little daughter was sick and dying. Jairus heard that Jesus, the great miracle worker and teacher, was coming into their little village at that very moment.

"If I can just get to Jesus in time," he thought. As he stepped into the street he could see the noisy, pushing crowd around Jesus. Jairus hurried toward Jesus. Most of the eager group recognized Jairus and moved back so he could speak to Jesus.

Jairus fell at Jesus' feet. "Please come quickly. My daughter is dying." Jesus began to go with Jairus, but the crowds pressed very closely. Many of them were also sick. One woman had been sick 12 years. "If I can just touch the edge of His clothes," she thought, "I can be healed."

"Who touched me?" Jesus asked.

"I did," the woman cautiously admitted.

"Your faith has healed you," He said. And she was ... but Jairus' daughter had died.

"There is no need to go with Jairus now," someone said. But Jesus went anyway. When He arrived, the room was full of people, weeping. Jesus asked them to leave. "She's only asleep," He said. Some of the mourners mocked Jesus and were angry that He asked them to leave.

"Child, arise," Jesus said, as he took her by the hand.

So, she did. "Give her something to eat," He added. As they did, He left quietly while the happy family rejoiced.

Discuss: (1) When do people get the most serious about seeking the Lord? (2) Should we seek the Lord and pray when we need help? (3) Would you say Jairus was a good father? (4) How do you think he felt when Jesus didn't come right away? (5) What does this story say to us about patience in the time of need? (6) Why did Jesus put the mourners out? (7) How can we best show that we care when people need help?

TO TEACH HERITAGE: Recently, Grandma Dix passed away. She was my wife, Carolyn's, 101-year-old grandmother. Just a few days earlier, Carolyn and I, with our children, Steve 15, Charlyn 9 and Jonathan 5, had been to see her. Her mind was so clear and alert. She quoted scriptures and a poem she had recently composed about the Bible character, Dorcas. I envied her mental discipline. Then, only a few days after our visit, she was gone. She was one of those vivacious people who never stopped living until she died. Born in 1876, she had probably witnessed more sociological and technological changes than all generations that had ever lived before put together.

At the mortuary, over and over we heard people say, **"You have a wonderful heritage."** I was so glad our children knew this old saint whose life was so rich in Christ, character and genuine culture.

"Pop" had preceded her in death by a few years and had lived an equally full life. He had served the Mobile Baptist Association as moderator longer than any other person. At the funeral, the pastor told how "Pop" and Grandma had mortgaged their home to meet church debts, and a few other of their numerous acts of love. He told of her music, poetry and painting. The funeral was in every way a celebration of her life by a family of grateful descendants. "Her children rose up and called her blessed."

Hours before she died, she had said, quite rationally, "We are not the only ones here." Then, she described the beautiful person who had come into the room and remained, seen only by her, until together they "went away".

("Heritage is something from the past to help us in the future." Does your child know his heritage?) C.S.

PRACTICAL TIPS: A man who has 3 children — a girl 11, a boy 8 and a boy 5, says "I give the two oldest 5 questions from the Bible story, and let them bring back the answers. They get help from the Bible and other reference sources. I teach them how to find the answers. This helps them learn how to use their Bibles. I give the 5 year old a Bible picture to color. We discuss it together as a family."

FATHERGRAM is a bimonthly newsletter — a service to fathers. We want to stir your sense of responsibility, awaken your own creativity, pass on information and serve any need you wish to share with us, to the limits of our ability. Where the need for godly men is concerned, we've stopped "cursing the darkness," and begun "lighting candles."

How you can serve: 1. Make fathers and **Fathergram** an object of prayer.

2. Share your issue with another father.

3. Send us names of **interested** fathers.

4. Make a tax deductible contribution to:

Fathergram

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5. Send us **tips** and **testimonies** for successful parenthood.

Yours in Christ's service,



Vernon and Charles Simpson

To Receive Fathergram

This copy of *Fathergram* is reproduced here as a service to those of you who are not familiar with the work Charles Simpson and his father, Vernon, are doing to encourage and support effective, successful fatherhood.

If you would like to receive *Fathergram* on a regular basis, just send your request to:

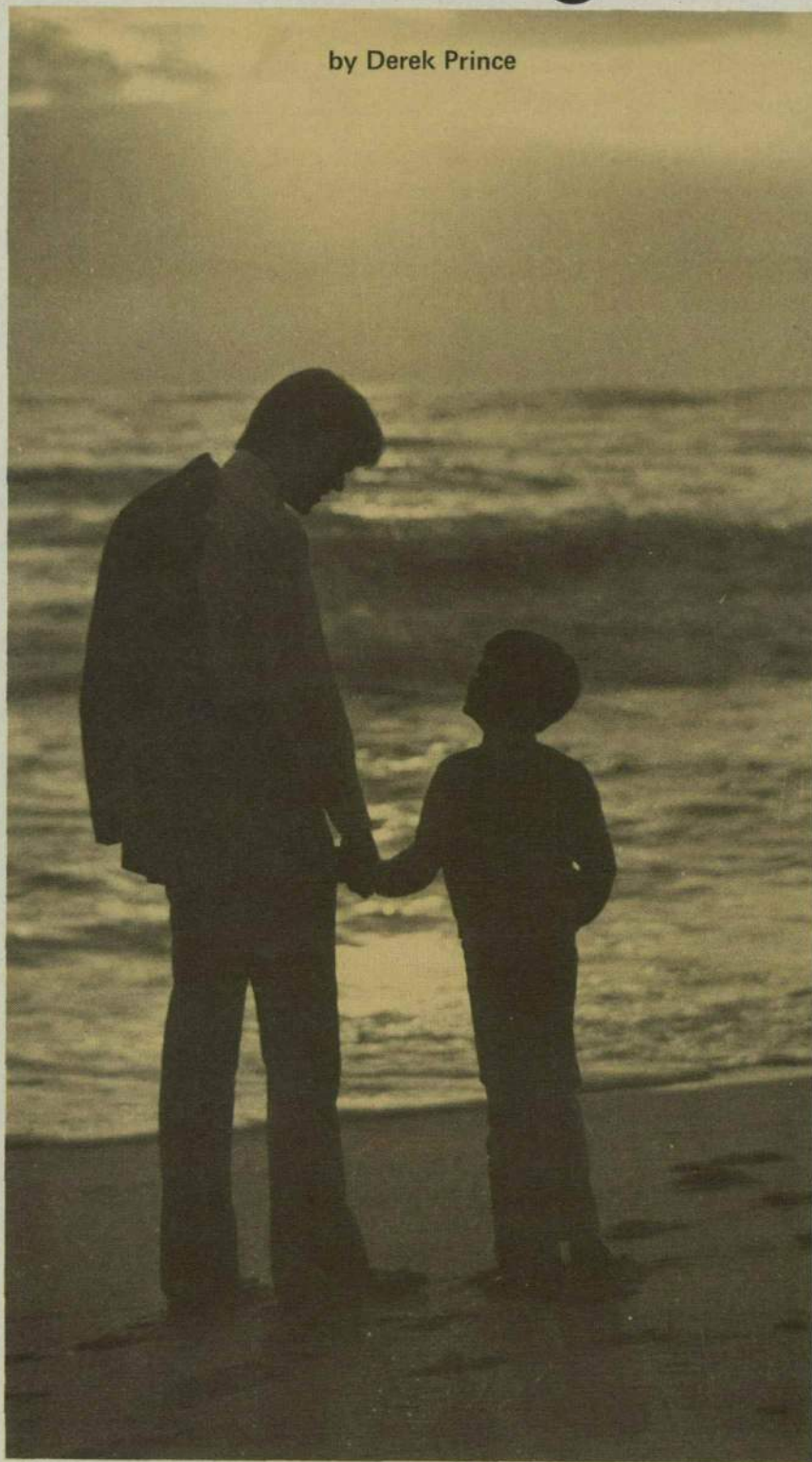
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Succeeding as a Father

by Derek Prince



"You may succeed in every other area of life, but if you fail as a father, then in God's eyes you are a failure at life."

"Success" is a by-word of western civili-

zation. By environment and upbringing we are continually challenged to seek success in all that we do—in our professions, in sports, in politics, in our personal lives. It is an overriding motivation.

Success in God's eyes, however, is often measured by a standard quite different from our own. God brought this home to me in a very personal way. I once heard a fellow minister define an "expert" as "a man away from home with a briefcase." Since I traveled a great deal, and always had my briefcase with me, I was, by that standard, an expert. However, while I was meditating on this one day, the Lord spoke to my spirit, "You may travel all over the world with your briefcase and preach to thousands of people and have them flock to the altars when you finish, but if your home is not in order—in My eyes, *you are a failure.*"

Having a great desire to be a success in God's eyes, I took this to heart. As a result, there opened up to me a new understanding of home life and parental responsibility.

"I WRITE UNTO YOU, FATHERS"

In 1 John 2:13 the apostle says, "I write unto you, fathers . . ." Let me do the same. Let me speak very directly to each one of you who is a father: You may succeed in every other area of life, but if you fail as a father, then in God's eyes you are a *failure at life.*

In Ephesians 6:4 Paul sums up in one verse the primary responsibilities of fathers: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition (or education) of the Lord." In Colossians 3:21 Paul repeats the initial warning, "Fathers, provoke not your children," and adds, "lest they be

discouraged." Mothers, of course, are intimately involved in the care and upbringing of children. Nevertheless, the primary responsibility rests upon the fathers.

A father has two obligations toward his children: first, *communication*; second, *education*. The order is important. If the channels of *communication* between father and children are not kept open, then the father will be frustrated in his task of *education*. It is not enough for the father to *give* instruction. The child must be willing also to *receive* it.

In order to maintain communication, a father must guard against two opposite attitudes in his children: rebellion on the one hand, and discouragement on the other. Therefore he must give time and attention to each child. He must cultivate each child as an individual personality. No two children in a family are the same. Discipline that will benefit one child will crush another. One child will receive correction in a form that will merely provoke rebellion from another. In frequent counseling sessions with adults, I have discovered that many of their problems can be traced back to a situation in which a father—by anger, or unfairness, or indifference—*provoked* his child.

THE HOME IS THE CENTER

It is not merely the New Testament that lays these responsibilities upon fathers. The same principle runs through the whole Bible. In every dispensation alike God has ordained that the spiritual life of His people be centered in their home. Deuteronomy 11:18–21 speaks very directly about this to us as parents:

Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul . . .

And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates;

That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

God places upon us, as fathers, the responsibility to teach His words and His ways to our children at home. This responsibility cannot be relegated to some special religious institution—temple, church or Sunday School. Nor can it be delegated to some special professional class—priests, preachers or Sunday School teachers. As parents, we must instruct our children at home in the words and the ways of God.

This is not a question merely of setting up a "family altar" or holding "family devotions." To be effective, spiritual instruction and discipline must be continuous. God says, "When thou sittest . . . when thou walkest . . . when thou liest . . . when thou risest up . . ." This covers all our waking hours. It is our business to interweave the teaching of God's word with all the daily activities of our home life.

The late Dr. V. Raymond Edman, one-time president of Wheaton College, wrote in a book: "Looking back on the way I brought up my children, if I had to do it over, I'd spend more time with them in simple, nonreligious activities." He had found that the things the grown children remembered most were the informal times of just being together. Real communication with a child is not achieved in five minutes. Often the most important things are said with a child at the time you would least expect it—in a casual or off-hand way. If the casual contact is not there, these things will never be said.

THE ROLE OF THE FATHER

As I have previously pointed out, the father is the primary "home-maker." Unless the father takes his place, accepts his responsibilities and stands as God intends him to stand as the head of his house, God's program for the home cannot work. If the father will not provide proper head-

ship in the home, the home will fall into disorder.

In His relationship to the Church, Christ holds three great offices which have been delegated to Him by God the Father. In every home the father stands in a parallel relationship to his family. There are three main offices delegated by divine authority to the father, from which he may never abdicate in the sight of God. Every father in every dispensation is called by God to be the priest, the prophet and the king of his home. As a priest, he represents his family to God; as a prophet, he does the opposite: he represents God to his family; and as a king, he governs his family on behalf of God.

As a priest, the father is called upon to intercede for his family, bringing their needs in prayer before God, and claiming God's protection and blessing upon them. This he cannot do without *faith*. Not the least of a father's responsibilities is that of *exercising faith* on behalf of his family.

In the Old Testament this is typified by the ordinance of the Passover. In each family it was the duty of the father to kill the sacrificial lamb and to sprinkle its blood over the door of his home (Ex. 12:3–7). By this act of faith and obedience he obtained the protection of God for his whole family.

In the New Testament the same principle is dramatically illustrated in Mark 9:20–27, where the father of a demon-afflicted son comes to Jesus. Imploring help for the child, he says to Jesus, "If thou canst do anything . . . help us." Jesus immediately returns the responsibility for the child upon the father and says, "If *thou* canst believe, all things are possible . . ." The *child's* deliverance hinged on the *father's* faith. A father has both the right and the responsibility to believe for his children.

People quite frequently bring me little children for deliverance, but I have learned to ask them, "Are you the child's parents?" Sometimes it is merely an aunt or a well-wishing neighbor. All too often the parents—and particularly the father—are nowhere to be found. I find no basis in Scripture

for ministering to a child except on the basis of the faith of one or both parents.

The one person who hardly ever comes to me seeking help for a child is the father. Our whole scheme of operation is out of order, and then we wonder why God is not blessing it. In ministering to a child, no preacher can take the place of a father.

The second office given to every father by God is that of a prophet; he is to represent God to his family. A father does this whether he realizes it or not; be it for good or bad. Most people involved in counseling or working with children will bear witness to the fact that every child forms his basic impression of God from one source—his father. Is it any wonder so many of our youth want little or nothing to do with God?

The third office of the father in his home is that of a king. As a king, the father is required to govern his family on behalf of God. In describing the qualifications of a leader in the Church Paul specifies that he must be "one that ruleth well his own house" (1 Tim. 3:4). The word "rule" indicates the exercise of governmental authority. There is a direct relationship between leadership in the home and leadership in the Church. The home is the proving ground for the life and ministry of every man.

Let us face up to one simple, objective fact. If our religion does not work at home, it does not work—period! In heaven's name, let us not export to the world something that does not work at home! The world already has enough of strife and disharmony. It needs no more!

The tragic disaster of the American home is the renegade male. Some of you men may feel that the word "renegade" is too strong—almost insulting. However, I use it advisedly. A "renegade" is one who "reneges," and the vast majority of American males have reneged from their three primary responsibilities—as husbands, fathers and spiritual leaders. It has left us with a matriarchal society, dominated by women.

Let me ask you this: Who—if any-

body—normally prays with the children at night? Who gets them ready for Sunday School? Who reads the Bible stories? Who prays when the child is sick? In the majority of cases, it is the mother. The mother should indeed share in the spiritual growth of the child, but it is the father who is called upon by God to be the initiator and leader in the spiritual lives of the family.

When little Johnny goes astray, we want to blame the church, the society, the schools—everyone except the person who chiefly deserves the blame—and that is the *father*.

Most boys think that church and the things of God are "sissy" because they see only their mother involved in them. Little Johnny grows up saying to himself, "I want to be like Daddy." In being "like Daddy," he determines to leave the things of God to the "weaker sex."

In due course, when little Johnny fails at life—when he becomes a dropout or a delinquent—it is not really Johnny who has failed, but his father. I have come to see that there are no juvenile delinquents, but only adult delinquents. It is not children who are the real dropouts, but their parents—and primarily their fathers.

My friend, let me ask you: How do you rate as a father? You may achieve success in your business or popularity in the country club—you may become president of a bank, or achieve a golf score that startles your friends—but if you fail as a husband and a father, then in God's eyes you are a failure.

THE OFFICE OF FATHER

In the office of fatherhood God has united the greatest privileges with the greatest responsibilities. This theme runs unbroken through Scripture, from beginning to end.

In the days of fearful evil, immediately before the flood, there was one man who found grace in God's sight—Noah. To Noah God said: "Come thou and *all thy house* into the ark; for *thee* have I seen righteous before me in this generation" (Gen. 7:1). It was the righteousness of Noah that provided a

covering for his whole household. Because Noah took his rightful place before God as head of his house, he had the privilege of bringing his entire family with him into the ark.

Later—after the flood—God began to look for a man who would become the head of a special nation, destined to bring unique blessings to all mankind. Eventually God found the man He was looking for in the person of Abraham. Genesis 18:19 reveals the special element in Abraham's character which caused God to choose him over all the men of his day: "*For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*"

God chose Abraham for one primary reason: He knew that He could count on him to train and discipline his children and his household in the way of the Lord. What tremendous importance God must attach to this aspect of a man's character!

God expected Abraham to "command" his children and his household. The word *command* sounds undemocratic in some western ears. But it is the key word in this passage. There are times when a man has both the right and the duty to command. When he stands as God's representative and governor in his home, he must not be weak and compromising. He must say firmly to his wife and children, "I require you to do so and so."

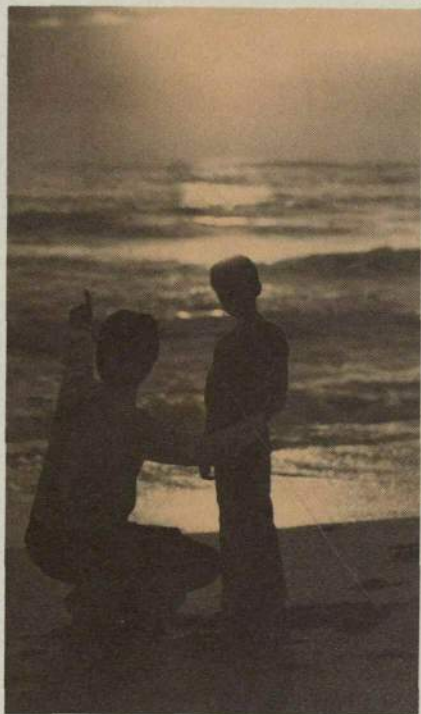
Some of you men may ask, "What will my wife and children say? They aren't used to hearing me speak like that!"

May I suggest how they will react? It may take them several minutes to recover from the shock, but eventually they will say, "At last—we've got a man in the house!" Both the wife and the children know in their hearts who ought to lead, and they will respond to a father who takes his rightful place. Most women have taken the lead in the home by default because the man failed to do it, and they will be happy to give it up if the man will take over.

ABRAHAM OR LOT?

It was the character and conduct of Abraham in his home that commended him to God. However, Abraham's nephew, Lot, stands in sad contrast. Lot had been with Abraham. He had seen God's blessings and had heard God's promises. Nevertheless he made a wicked and foolish decision. He chose to lead his family into the degraded city of Sodom (Gen. 13:10–13).

The lesson of Lot moves me deeply each time I ponder it. He led his family



into Sodom, but he never led them out again! When God's judgment fell upon the city, Lot lost his entire family, save two daughters (Gen. 19:15–26).

Fathers, let me say it to you as plainly as I can: If you know the way of the Lord, do not take the same foolish course as Lot. You may lead your family into Sodom—into the world with its sinful pleasures and enticements. You may make these things the center of life in your home. Then the day may come when you tire of these things and turn back to the way of God. But remember this! Your family may not be willing to follow you any longer. You who led them into Sodom may never be able to lead them out again!

Let us look at another leader of God's people: Joshua. At the end of his life, Joshua, having brought Israel into the promised land, challenges them with a decision: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve"—either the heathen gods of Egypt and Canaan, or the Lord Himself, your Deliverer. Then Joshua adds, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15).

For years I marvelled at these words of Joshua. Obviously he could make his own personal decision to serve the Lord. But how could he be so sure that his family would serve the Lord? Then one day I understood the basis of Joshua's assurance. He had taken his God-given position as priest, prophet and king in his home. Therefore he knew he could count on the faithfulness of God to honor him in that position by answering his priestly intercession for his family, by confirming his prophetic declaration made on their behalf, and by upholding his kingly authority over them. Joshua's assurance was based not on what he was in himself, but on *God's faithfulness* to the office of fatherhood which he held.

Let's turn to one of the most frequently quoted passages of the New Testament—Acts 16:30–31. The Philippian jailer, under deep conviction, asks of Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Their answer is, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, *and thy house*."

One day I was quoting this promise to a lady who was concerned for the salvation of her family, when the Holy Spirit spoke gently but firmly to my spirit: "You are misapplying that promise. It was not spoken to a woman, but to a man. As a husband and father, he had a God-given right to claim the salvation of his whole family." God has given to every father, *by virtue of his position*, both the right and the responsibility to exercise faith for the salvation of his family.

Does this mean that the other members of the family can be saved solely on the basis of the father's faith, without exercising individual faith for themselves? No, it does not mean that.

It means that through the faith and ministry of the father in his God-given office, each member of his family will come to personal faith in Christ and will thus be saved.

This is not to say that a family cannot be saved through the faith of a believing mother or some other member. Rahab, the harlot in Jericho, provides a beautiful picture of a woman whose faith and courage brought salvation to her whole family. Out of the midst of the total destruction of the city where she lived, "the young men . . . brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had . . ." (Josh. 6:23). All these were the fruit of Rahab's faith.

However, the father has a different relationship to his family from that of any other member. If he takes his God-given *position* as head of his house, there goes with it the God-given *right* to claim the salvation of his household. This right is based not merely on the father's individual faith, but on the *office* of fatherhood which he holds. God's obligation is to the *office*, not merely to the man.

RESULTS OF DELINQUENT FATHERS

The Word of God offers many warnings concerning the evil results that will follow when parents—especially fathers—fail to fulfill their God-given responsibilities in the home. In Deuteronomy 28:15–68 we find a long list of curses which God warned Israel would come upon them if they were disobedient to His law. While reading through this list one day, I was struck by verse 41: "Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but thou shalt not enjoy them: for they shall go into captivity." (This is addressed primarily to fathers, since the word "beget" describes the father's part in procreation.)

The simple thought occurred to me that children are given us by God that we may "enjoy" them. They are intended to be an ever-present source of delight to us as their parents. Yet how many parents today are really *enjoying*

their children? I remember once hearing a Baptist preacher with a large family pray, "Lord, help us to remember that our children are blessings, not burdens!" Somehow I formed the impression that he did not have much faith that he would receive an answer to his prayer.

Of one thing we as parents may be sure. Our children will recognize our true attitude toward them—whether we feel them as burdens or blessings—and they will react accordingly.

If we fail to discipline and relate to our children in such a way that we enjoy them, what will be the alternative? Deuteronomy 28:41 tells us plainly "they shall go into captivity." Has this not happened to millions of children in our western civilization? They have "gone into captivity" to drugs, to illicit sex, to the occult and to countless other snares of Satan. Such children are in captivity just as surely as if they had been carried off into slavery by some foreign power. The responsibility lies at the door of the fathers who have failed to teach their children the law of God.

Malachi 2:7 pictures the priest as the guardian and interpreter of God's law: "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth . . ." (The "knowledge" here referred to is the knowledge of God's law.) As priest in his home, each father has this responsibility—to guard and to interpret the

law of God for his family.

What if the father-priests in a nation fail in their responsibility? In Hosea 4:6 God sums up the tragic situation which results: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."

What a fearful thing it is when God Himself tells us that He will "forget" our children! When a father rejects the knowledge of God's law, he is no longer fit to exercise his priestly ministry on behalf of his family. As a result, the children lose the protection of a father's authority and covering, and become a prey to all the snares and deceptions of Satan. Why is our land today filled with *God-forgotten children*—children who are strangers to the covenant promises and provisions of God? Because their fathers *have forgotten the law of God!*

In Malachi 4:5–6 the final word left to us in the Old Testament is a curse, but it is also a promise:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord:

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

By prophetic revelation the Bible here depicts the most urgent social problem of the period immediately preceding the close of the age: divided, strife-torn homes, with parents and children alienated from each other. How accurate God's Word is! It is precisely this situation which confronts us today. Unless it can be reversed, there is only one possible outcome—a curse upon the whole earth.

However, God promises to send a ministry that will "turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." Thank God, the situation is not hopeless! Reconciliation and restoration in our homes are yet possible. This is the message of God's Spirit to us today.

But we must observe the order which God's Word establishes. First, the fathers must turn to their children. Reconciliation in each home must begin from the father's side. If the fathers will repent and humble themselves before their children, then the children will also turn to their fathers. *But the first move is with the fathers.*

Fathers, I challenge you to be men! I challenge each one of you to rise up and take your position, under God, as the head of your house! If you have been a renegade, repent and ask your wife and children to forgive you. Be reconciled with them. Then lead your family into God's full provision for them. 🍷

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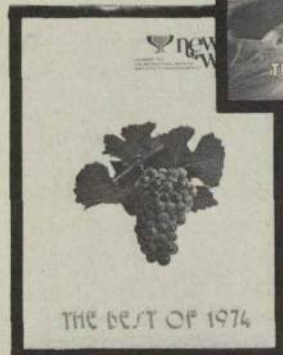
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God has set a divine order in His creation. Christians cannot afford to overlook this, regardless of the progress we make in the intellectual and spiritual realms. Whether it be a question on ecclesiastical order or male and female roles, we will keep ourselves from destruction by adhering to the Word of God. Only the Word can help us discern the truth as we observe the flow of society around us (Ps. 17:4).

(Bible Study answers on page 30)

1. According to Isaiah 3:12, what group of people were oppressing the nation of Israel, and whose rule were they under? _____
2. Underline the word that best describes the condition into which their rulers were leading them. A. Error B. Peace C. Patriarchal society.
3. It's unwise to build a theological view on one verse without considering the context of that verse as well as other verses on the same subject. Read Galatians 3:26-29 and answer the following questions.
 - A. Is the main subject of these verses male and female roles or the believer's standing in Christ? _____
 - B. If you are Christ's, whose seed are you? _____
4. Answer these questions from 1 Peter 3:1-7.
 - A. Peter encouraged the women to conduct themselves as though they were in what relationship with Sarah? _____
 - B. Christian husbands were to give honor to their wives as what kind of vessels? _____
5. It would seem that if there were any time that the early Christians were "in the Spirit" it would be in times of public assembly. In line with this, why did Paul write 1 Timothy? (1 Tim. 3:14-15) _____
6. In this setting, women were to learn in _____ (1 Tim. 2:11-15).
7. What position of authority was offered them? _____
8. Name the authority or head of the following persons: Christ, the man, the woman (1 Cor. 11:1-5). _____, _____, _____
9. What two important public ministries were women encouraged to exercise? (1 Cor. 11:1-5) _____
10. What king negated his authority and allowed his wife to take the reigns of authority? (1 Kgs. 21:4-10) _____
11. What two works of the flesh, which can also be demonic, was Jezebel guilty of? (2 Kgs. 9:22, Gal. 5:19-21) _____
12. With the scriptures from the previous two questions in mind, underline the word that would best describe Jezebel. A. Peacemaker B. Manipulative C. Submissive.
13. There are many tactics that people can use to get their way or even attempt to avoid judgment. Read 2 Kings 9:30-33 and Judges 16:6-17, and underline the three tactics used by Delilah and Jezebel. A. Nagging B. Looking pretty C. Accusing others of having no love D. Silence E. Fasting F. Prayer.
14. If a person rebels against the truth of divine order in home and church, it is just as serious an offense as refusing a fundamental truth such as the resurrection. We know this because 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 teaches that if we do not _____ the _____, we will be sent a _____ that we should believe a _____.
15. Whenever a person receives wisdom that is not truly from God, he is open to revelation that gets continually worse. According to James 3:14-15, it is first earthly, then _____, and finally _____.
16. Where you find envying and strife over authority, you will also find _____ and every _____ work (Jas. 3:16).
17. List eight spiritual qualities that the wisdom from above produces in people, in a home or church (Jas. 3:17-18). A. _____ B. _____ C. _____ D. _____ E. _____ F. _____ G. _____ H. _____
18. Even unsaved men can have an innate sense of what is best for their families because God's law is _____ in their _____ (Rom. 2:14-15).
19. A virtuous woman's husband will have a _____ that will _____ trust in her and she will do him _____ and not _____ (Prov. 31:11-12).

Jesus is the pastor's pastor. Peter, himself a great pastor, called Jesus "the chief Shepherd." Jesus was his pastor, and Peter never stopped talking about the experience.

Many of us have made New Testament Christians the paragon, the mark of excellence, the standard for which we should strive. Exemplary as the New Testament church was, it is not the standard; Jesus is. Paul, who was used by the Holy Spirit to write much of the New Testament, confesses that he fell short, but made Jesus his goal. The book of Hebrews tells us to run the race with our eyes on Jesus. On one occasion, Paul wrote that all of God's mystery, wisdom, knowledge, deity, and authority dwell in Christ. His life, more than anything else, will show us how to build strong relationships with those we are caring for.

PASTORING IS PERSONAL

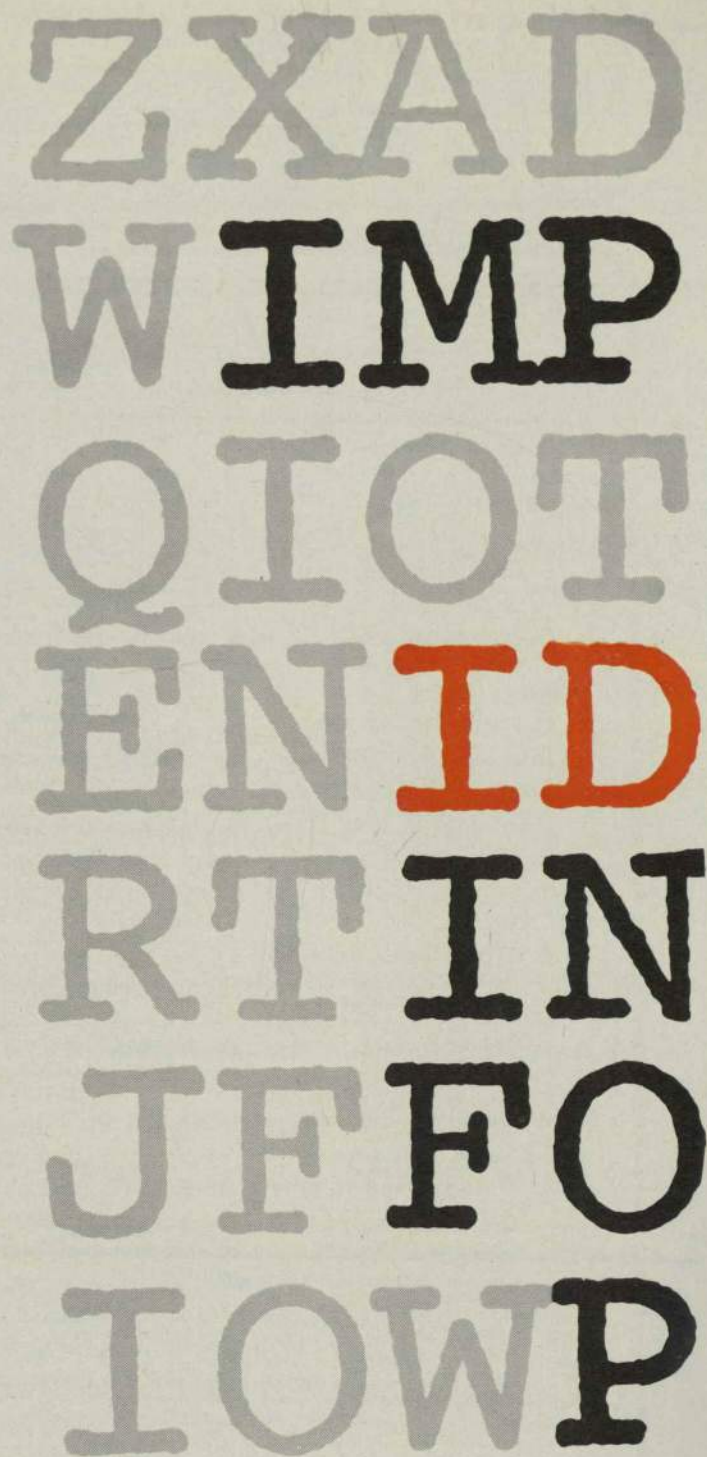
Jesus' relationship to his flock was far from mechanical or impersonal. Each person found in Jesus a personal Messiah. Herein lies much of his success in building relationships with people. He was not more committed to the group than to the individual within the group. His covenant love for each person would not be forfeited in favor of an abstract goal or impersonal end.

I have been repeatedly impressed at how often Jesus saw individuals in the multitude. No one can deny that Jesus loved the whole world, attracted masses, and had a vision for the nations. Crowds followed him and, on various occasions almost trampled him. Yet he saw Nathaniel under the fig tree, Peter in the boat, Zaccheus in the sycamore tree, and Matthew at the table. The woman with an issue of blood touched the hem of his garment while a throng was pressing in, and he said, "Who touched me?" He felt the touch of an individual.

He brought his great, universal truths down to the personal level: "A certain man had a hundred sheep and one was missing. A certain woman lost a coin. A certain man had two sons, and the younger of them . . . Not a sparrow falls to the ground, but . . ."

The population explosion and the moral decline of society have contributed to the depersonalization and devaluation of human life. But if we cease to value the individual human life in our pursuit of mass or impersonal goals, we lose our soul, we adulterate our covenants, we erase our likeness to God. Only when we can walk in faithful, covenant love with one person can we begin to comprehend what it means to love many. I can believe that Jesus loves the world by the way he lovingly responded to individuals: Peter's denial, James's and John's argument, Thomas's doubt, his murderers' attack.

After pastoring several years, I evaluated my life and ministry. I found myself so in love with our church goals, our church growth, our church doctrines, that I had little time for people, except as they fitted into those things. I decided that I must either quit the



"Spiritual children need to

pastorate or see the Holy Spirit change me in a radical way.

The latter happened, and my ministry took a drastic

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by Charles Simpson

be fathered; in fatherhood they discover their identity."

turn toward becoming more personal with God and people. Gradually a new criterion for success developed. Growth of the people involved became more important

than growth of the number of people involved. In the long run, concern for personal relationship did not sacrifice numerical growth. Ultimately, people are drawn

to those who will love them and not just use them for other purposes.

INSPIRING CONFIDENCE

Why did the disciples leave all and follow Jesus? This was an unusual display of commitment. The foundation for such commitment was confidence. The commitment Jesus' flock made to him is evidence that he inspired great confidence. Their confidence in him made them willing to sacrifice. Even more, their confidence in Jesus outweighed religious, social, and political pressure.

Someone might suggest that his disciples followed him because they knew he was the Son of God. But the Scriptures do not confirm this explanation. While Andrew suggested that Jesus was the Messiah, there was apparently a lot of doubt. After three years of ministry Jesus asked his disciples who they thought he was. When Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God," Jesus seemed surprised that Peter knew. Jesus declared that *the Father had told him*. If the disciples did believe Jesus was the Messiah, it was only gradually that Jesus was able to teach them what messiahship meant.

The reason for much of Jesus' success lay in the fact that he *pastored each one personally*. His follower's confidence in him was born out of a personal relationship to him; therefore, Jesus' corporate leadership was well-rounded and effective. It was strong enough to bring his disciples through vital conceptual changes, to refine their goals and their love. One cannot lead a church through significant change unless he leads the individuals on a personal basis. He must "know his sheep by name."

JESUS' SENSE OF IDENTITY

If the disciples were not sure of Jesus' identity, he was. By the time Jesus entered his public ministry, his identity had been well established in his own mind.

Identity was much more important to the community-minded and family-minded Jews, than it is in Western culture. "We be Abraham's seed," was not only a boast of their identity, but a challenge to Jesus' identity. "Who is this man?" meant more than, what's his name? "By what authority does he do these things?" was not really a question, but a charge of unauthorized ministry.

Statements and charges of this nature would easily have wrecked Jesus' self-confidence and ministry had he not known himself. Anyone who attempts to lead unbelieving men and women into the Christian faith, will find his sense of identity and his authority sorely challenged. There is no more vital element in building confidence in others than having confidence within one's self.

Jesus had several sources of identity, all of which are important to solid leadership.

The first was *family identity*. Family identity is becoming increasingly important to our transient, confused society. *Roots*, a recent book depicting one black man's search for his historical family became a bestseller. The TV version of *Roots* broke numerous viewing records. The public identified with the hunger to find a history, a reason, and a vision.

Jesus' family contributed to his confidence in who he was. His biographers could say of his lineage, "And to David was born Solomon . . . and to Solomon was born Rehoboam," and so on until, "to Jacob was born Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." In the surroundings of his natural family, he matured in his understanding of who he was. "I must be about my Father's business," he said as a 12-year-old, in reference to God. The same passage declares that Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. This maturation of purpose, character, and social adjustment occurred in family context.

Christian leaders can emerge without Christian family identity. But such a handicap is formidable and must be compensated for in other ways.

RECOGNITION BY PEERS

Jesus also had *peer identity*. John the Baptist was a relative of Jesus and only a few months older. He was a fellow servant of God. One day as a large crowd stood by, he pointed to Jesus and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

A leader cannot determine the identity he receives from family background. However, peer relationships are another matter. A leader's actions and character should make his identity and calling apparent to his fellow servants of God. We cannot point to ourselves and say, "Behold." Others must do that, if it is to be done. Until they do, it is good for us to serve quietly.

As those that follow our leadership see us in strong peer relationships, their confidence in us is strengthened. What our peers say about us and how they act toward us help our flock to identify us.

I am blessed to have strong relationships with other men of God who exercise a teaching ministry. I highly esteem these men and have taught my people to do so. Whenever possible I invite them into the fellowship of our people. Our people are not only blessed by their teaching, but they come to see me through the eyes of my peers. It strengthens their confidence in my leadership to know that such men stand close beside me.

There is another relationship that helps those who follow my leadership relate to me. I am privileged to have a father who also pastors. He recently retired from his last pastorate after being with that congregation 35 years. Whenever possible I bring my father into fellowship with those I pastor. Our relationship serves to identify me more clearly to them. My people see me not only as a clergyman but as a son and a man.

SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD

Another vital source of Jesus' sense of identity was *spiritual fatherhood*. Of course, Jesus was unique in his sonship. God was his father in a unique way. "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," was the ultimate confirmation of identity.

Jesus' constant goal was to please the Father and serve the Father's will, word, and work. Through Jesus, we learn how to relate to the Father and grow in sonship.

As pastors, we need to understand the nature and necessity of spiritual fatherhood. As we grow into maturity we ought to become spiritual fathers. John writes to the spiritual fathers in 1 John 2. Paul declares his fatherhood to the church at Corinth. Part of our calling is to represent the fatherhood of God to our people as Jesus did to his disciples. Disciples are not self-made men. The self-made man's "I did it my way" attitude is a denial of family and community principles. Spiritual children need to be fathered; in fatherhood they discover their identity.

I recently realized that when young Christians are drawn to me they are not searching for me, but for a certainty about themselves. They come in the hope that I can show them what and who they are.

Recently, a young man invited me out to lunch. We reviewed our relationship, which has spanned nearly 20 years. He was a boy when I became his pastor. I have seen him grow in every way, and now he too is a pastor.

As we sat talking, he said something that penetrated me with a sense of responsibility. "I just want you to know that what you think of me matters. It has for a long time, although I've never told you. Your approval is important to me."

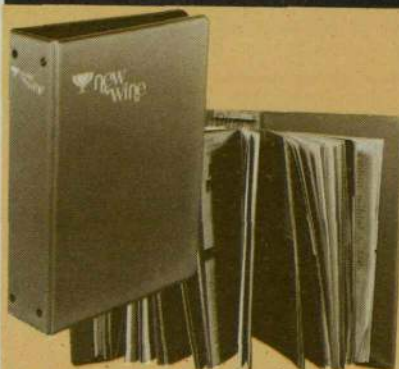
I sat a moment wondering if I had ever told him how much I loved him and thanked God for what he was. I

began to tell him. I told him my honest evaluation of his strengths and weaknesses. (Paul's statement to the Roman Christians—Romans 12:3—that they should not think too highly of themselves, was not only a warning against pride, but an exhortation to evaluate themselves properly, to see themselves with sober judgment.) My evaluation put into words my insight into his identity. I knew that his flock would greatly benefit from his seeing himself accurately. He and I were in a father-son relationship.

IDENTITY IN THE SPIRIT

One other factor played a vital role in Jesus' identity: the *Holy Spirit*. John the Baptist said, "The one who sent me said that the one upon whom I saw the Spirit descend and remain was the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit." "Christ" means "anointed one." Jesus was born of, anointed with, and led by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God gave Jesus a deep and abiding awareness of who he was and what he was to do. Because of the Father, because of his natural family, because of the Holy Spirit, because of John the Baptist, and by the kind of fruit Jesus bore, he knew who he was. In the midst of that confusing and unstable period of history, no characteristic could have served more to build pastoral relationships than godly confidence.

Several years ago the church I pastored underwent a real test. An air force base employing 15,000 civilians was being phased out. One half of our 300 people were employed at that base. Just prior to the public announcement, we had borrowed \$100,000 for a building enlargement. We were also experiencing God at work in the congregation in new ways, and some families were leaving. The chairman of our finance committee said, "Pastor, I'll give you 90 days. Then this church is going under."



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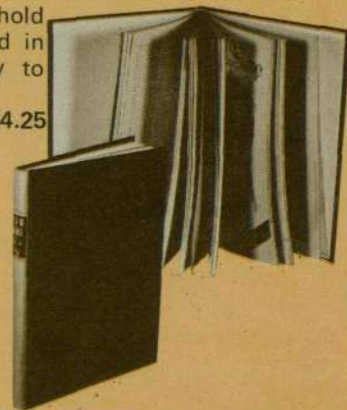
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My dad, a pastoral veteran, gave different counsel. "Don't panic; the Lord is in control. Remember, you are the shepherd, the sheep are watching you. If you show fear, they will scatter. Stay calm, work diligently, and trust God. Be confident, and those that are yours will follow you." They did, and we survived and grew.

CHARACTER

Because projecting an image is easier than building character, we often opt for image-making externalities, rather than the exercises of character building. But because real pastoral relationships are personal, our people will eventually get to know us. If character is not solid and godly, "the jig is up." Many pastors stay just long enough to become known—then it's moving time. They leave just when mature relationships would be possible.

Jesus once asked, "When the Son of man comes will he find faith in the earth?" Seldom, if ever, has one generation had so much faith destroyed as this one. Faith in leadership, faith in government, faith in religion, faith in money, faith in the family—all have been sorely shaken. Now, because we have lost our confidence in clichés, traditions, and humanism, faith must be rebuilt on proven character.

Character is more than ethical goodness; it is the fiber of endurance. Paul spoke of it in Romans 5: "Tribulation works perseverance and perseverance works proven character." The kind of character that builds confidence in our pastoral relationships is unwavering endurance.

A litter of broken relationships is all about us. If God's people are ever going to grow into maturity and fulfill his purpose, pastoral relationships must survive all that Satan and social change can bring against them.

Pastors must have loyalty and integrity which people can depend on.

CHARISMA

Jesus was good, consistent, and totally virtuous. He was not, however, dull! Somehow people who do not know better have associated virtue with boredom. The life of Jesus could not have been more exciting, mysterious, and magnetic. The gift of the Holy Spirit, with his accompanying gifts, was evident daily in Jesus' life. A concise word of wisdom, revelation, discernment, or a sensational miracle were daily occurrences. Obviously, Jesus was not a sensationalist or one who sought to draw crowds. He was so full of life, however, that people were drawn to him, and sensational things happened. Even when he tried to be alone people sought him out for "words of life."

It is not as though Jesus had a corner on charisma or came to give man one brief glimpse of true charisma, then take it all back to heaven. He definitely meant to deposit his charisma, his gifts, in an earthly body. "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me, the works that I do shall he do also." Numerous chapters take up the subject of that new body which Jesus came to build and into which he poured his life. That life is not only God's virtue, it is God's ability as well. Pastoral relationships are bridges for imparting both character and charisma.

VISION

Another vital reason for Jesus' success in building pastoral relationships was that he came with divine purpose. He was the possessor and proclaimer of spiritual vision. He saw what he wanted to accomplish before he began doing it.

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Even at 12 years he said, "I must be about my Father's business." In session with his disciples 20 years later, that business was clearly stated, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The overriding purpose of God drew him to and through death; it drew his followers after him.

Our ability to build strong pastoral relationships depends greatly on the intensity of our vision. One legend states that when Andrew, Jesus' disciple, was being led to his martyr's death, he shared his testimony of relationship to Jesus with the soldier who led him. So moved was the soldier that he too acknowledged Jesus as Lord, then he turned himself in to die with Andrew, his father in the faith.

Spiritual babysitting will not challenge the commitment of strong men and godly women. But a God-revealed vision, communicated by one who has seen it and has it burning deep within his spirit, will move strong men and nations, as Moses did Israel. Eloquence without vision is mere entertainment. Vision, with or without eloquence, is a consuming fire.

LOVE

Obviously, I have saved the best for last. All of the above qualities without love are mere noises. The motivating force in Jesus' mission was his love for the Father and his love for the people. I mention his love for the Father first, because love for God will keep love for people pure and properly directed.

Jesus loved his disciples and laid down his life for them. They began as servants, but became friends. Later, John wrote at the beginning of his first epistle, "What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write, so that our joy may be made complete" (1 John 1:3-4). John went on to speak of our fellowship with one another.

From these and other verses I see this picture: In the beginning the Holy Trinity had a perfect fellowship. Man was created to be brought into that fellowship. Divine fellowship is not a means to an end, but an end in itself. Because of Adam's irresponsibility he was judged unworthy to have that fellowship. Jesus came to share God, life, and fellowship with obedient men, born again with a new nature. John became one of those. That fellowship which John entered was so wonderful and full of joy that he desired to bring others into it. Fellowship in the love of God is the goal and reward of the obedient Christian.

Love for others will cause a person to communicate and be generous with them, to serve them, to humble himself before them. People are more than bricks for our towers, or grist for our mill: they are objects of God's love and candidates for our fellowship. Love is the only motive that is acceptable for building pastoral relationships.

"There is no more vital element in building confidence in others than having confidence within one's self."

ships. Ambition to prove a doctrine, method, or concept is not a worthy motive and will not ultimately succeed. Such a motive causes us to adulterate, not build pastoral relationships.

KNOWING AND BEING KNOWN

Jesus told his disciples that he would make them fishers of men. History proves that he did what he set out to do.

A good fisherman does not operate on luck. He knows what kind of fish he is trying to catch. He knows when and where to find the fish. He knows what kind of tackle and bait to use. He knows when to cast, when to angle, when to reel in, and much more.

I have a cousin who is a commercial shrimper in southern Louisiana. He is quiet and steady, a lover of wildlife and water. His equipment is modest and practical; he depends on it. His boat is solid, not fancy.

One day we were moving down a small bayou toward the open Gulf when some fancy fishing rigs passed by at high speed, making large waves. "There go some of those 'sportsmen,'" he said.

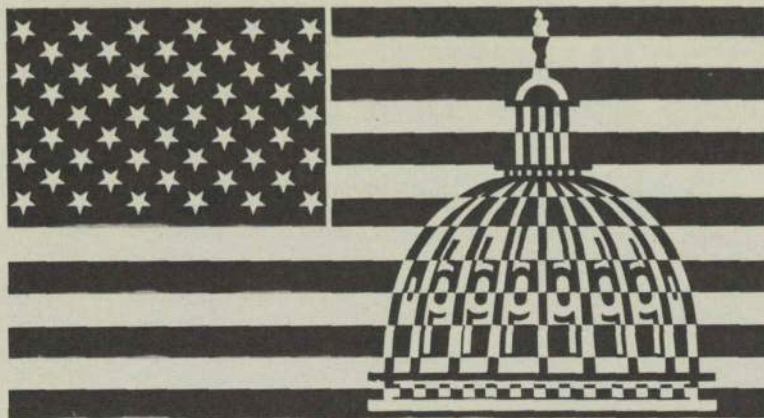
At first, I didn't fully understand what he meant, but I knew it wasn't a compliment. Gradually, I came to see that there is an important difference between a serious fisherman and a man out for fun. A good fisherman is not necessarily a man with a fancy boat and tackle, a big engine, or even a license. A good fisherman is a man with the fish.

Some of us have mistaken fishing equipment for fishing ability. We judge a man by how many seats he has in his boat, or where he got his license, or how artfully he attaches the artificial bait. True, equipment can be a great help—but only if you know fish.

It's impossible to truly love people you do not know. Getting to know, and be known, by those to whom God directs you is the necessary beginning to building strong pastoral relationships. ♡

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INTERCESSORS REPORT

by John Beckett

A remarkable phenomenon is challenging a morally and spiritually weakened nation. It is called the "women's movement."

Its promoters have gained national attention in two ways: promotion of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and sponsorship of the International Women's Year (IWY)—a government-financed series of women's conventions attempting to answer the question, "What do women want?"

These activities have brought together women who in one way or another are frustrated with the way things are. They are convinced that a constitutional amendment, coupled with legislative change on behalf of women, will alleviate inequities that have denied them basic freedoms throughout history.

The chief focus of their efforts has been passage of ERA. The proposed constitutional amendment was passed by the U.S. Senate in 1972, and within three years, ratified by 33 of the required 38 states. Many state legislatures barely gave ERA a second look in passing it, some even vying to be first to ratify. As concern for the implications of ERA became apparent, three states that had formerly voted for passage changed their minds and voted to rescind, although the U.S. Attorney General has ruled that rescission is not valid. In the last three years, only two states have approved the amendment, bringing the total to 35, and state after state where it has been reintroduced has voted it down. In the words of columnist Patrick Buchanan, "The more people look at ERA, the less they like it."

The IWY conventions, held first at the state level, culminated with a national convention in Houston last November. State conventions were intended to determine grass-roots thinking of American women, and elect delegates and pass resolutions reflecting these views for consideration at the national convention. However, tight control of state conventions by leaders of the women's liberation movement produced predictable results in Houston: 80% of the 2,000 official IWY

delegates were selected on the basis of their known bias for the women's lib movement. The national convention passed resolutions endorsing not only ERA, but also federally financed abortion, full legality for homosexuality and lesbianism, and federally financed day care centers for children. The 2,500 media personnel covering the IWY convention saw not only this terribly misrepresented view of the desires of American women, but also saw flagrant, obscene support for the pornography and pro-lesbian literature on IWY authorized display tables.

Fortunately, another convention held in Houston at the same time by some 15,000 representatives of numerous pro-life, pro-family organizations clearly demonstrated that women's libbers do not speak for the majority of women. This gathering massed more than 300,000 signed resolutions calling for a human life amendment to protect unborn children, assurance that child development programs will be controlled by the private sector, opposition to ratification of ERA, and laws preventing homosexuality, lesbianism, or prostitution from being taught or promoted as alternative life-styles in American schools.

Many Americans, particularly Christians, have watched in amazement and disbelief as the women's liberation movement has attacked the traditional values and authority structures of American families. Our nation's citizens—less sure of their spiritual, moral and ethical values than their forefathers—have been dazed as radical elements have crusaded for their anti-family views. TV viewers now see a steady diet of anti-family programming which berates fathers and wholesome home relationships, while promoting the bizarre world of sexual perverts in pursuit of "alternate life-styles." Gradually, we begin to think this is *normal*, and we're *abnormal*. We are stunned as we realize that each year the lives of over 1.2 million babies are snuffed out in their mother's wombs, but we're told this is a "mother's right." We are incredulous as we watch church bodies



Don't forget: April 7 is a

allow practicing homosexuals into the ministry, and see gay activists come into the White House to press for "equal rights" in teaching, the military, and other employment.

Dogmas of the Woman's Liberation Movement

There is no doubt that responsibility for much of the decline in family values must be laid directly at the doorstep of the woman's liberation movement. To understand this movement, we need to examine some of the basic dogmas of women's liberation.

The first dogma is that someone—perhaps God—dealt women a foul blow by making them female. This attitude of self-contempt is expressed in an advertisement designed by NOW, the National Organization for Women. It shows a cute, curly-headed girl with the caption: "This healthy, normal baby has a handicap. She was born female." The women's liberationist solution is for women to "agitate and demonstate and hurl demands on society in order to wrest from an oppressive, male-dominated social structure the status that has been wrongfully denied to women through the centuries."¹ Man therefore becomes the enemy. More misguided than this, however, is the blame that is placed on God for creating women different from men. Such resentment ultimately leads to denial of God and rejection of His authority—certainly a primary goal of Satan as he seeks to deceive and destroy mankind.

The second dogma is that a cruel injustice has been perpetrated upon women in that they have babies and men do not. Women's liberation opponent Phyllis Schlafly says, "the abolition of this overriding inequality of women becomes a goal to be achieved at any cost—to the woman herself, to the baby, to the family and to society. Women must be made equal to men in their ability *not* to become pregnant and *not* to be expected to care for babies they may bring into the world."²

This explains the compulsive drive to make abortion and child care centers totally acceptable and available for all women. As these plans are fulfilled, responsibility for bearing and rearing children is permanently altered, and the already weak fabric of the American family further deteriorates.

There is another way women's liberation expresses its resentment that women have babies. With man viewed as an adversary and women seeking to avoid pregnancy and its consequences, lesbianism becomes a logical alternative. So the women's lib movement seeks to remove any restraint on "expressing their own sexuality" and "choosing their own life-style." As a sisterhood fighting for every woman's "sacred right to be her own person," the feminists have fully embraced lesbians in their ranks. This was clearly evident in the Houston IWY convention.

The third basic dogma of the women's liberation movement is that the only difference between men and women are the actual sex organs. So the notion arises that any job or any physical activity can be done equally well by either sex, given comparable education and training. In holding this view, women not only aspire to activities for which they are not suited physically, such as heavy lifting and military combat, but they demean themselves in areas where they are clearly more able than men—activities requiring the unique physical, cognitive and emotional attributes with which God has endowed them.

It is from these three basic dogmas, then, that the women's liberation movement derives its philosophical basis. These concepts provide the motivation for passage of ERA, and ERA, if ratified, will lend itself well to these objectives.

The Threat of ERA

ERA "will mandate the gender-free, rigid absolute equality of treatment of men and women under every federal and state law, bureaucratic regulation and court decision, and in every aspect of our lives that is touched directly or indirectly by public funding."³ There is no question that such a result would be hurtful to women, men, children, families, and society as a whole.

But ERA would further injure the family by removing restraints against abortion on demand. Since the ERA mandate is for sex equality, abortion is essential to relieve women of their unequal burden of being forced to bear an unwanted baby. Bella Abzug, a feminist leader, has defined the goal: "to enforce the constitutional rights of females to terminate pregnancies they do not wish to continue."

ERA is also the avenue through which homosexual marriages might be legalized. The *Yale Law Journal*, states: "The stringent requirements of the proposed Equal Rights Amendment argue strongly for . . . granting marriage licenses to homosexual couples who satisfy reasonable and nondiscriminatory qualifications."⁴ Senator Sam J. Ervin, Jr. made the point even more clearly in a February 1977 speech in Raleigh, North Carolina: "I don't know but one group of people in the United States the ERA would do any good for. That's homosexuals."

What Are the Solutions?

In surveying the relentless and largely misguided push by women liberationists, one wonders how the situation will be righted. What are the solutions? No doubt the spreading of information on the tenets of the woman's movement and on the perils of ERA will be a factor.

national day of prayer and fasting.

This is evident as opposition to ERA mounts. No doubt, the prayer of God's people has been and will continue to be a factor, particularly where biblical principles of marriage and family are being threatened. Because spiritual forces are at work, prayer is essential if there is to be any meaningful and lasting solution.

But perhaps no single factor would have more impact than for husbands to learn how to be husbands, and for fathers to learn how to be fathers. The solution must involve a reordering of priorities and authority in the home. Indeed, it is an absence of godly male leadership that has provided the vacuum into which women have moved. With the male element absent or silent, women—most of whom are well intentioned—have become vulnerable to deceptive spiritual forces. A leader in the women's movement confessed openly that neither she nor very many of her co-workers would be asserting themselves as they are if they had strong husbands who loved them and cared for them.

This is a telling indictment on us men, and should prompt us to pursue more closely our God-given responsibilities as husbands and fathers. Where men are doing this, women are flowering, not through "demanding their rights," but by functioning under their husband's authority with all the security and sense of purpose it brings. They have come to see that their equality before God is not dependent on equality of function. They have come to appreciate both the laws of

society that provide for their protection and the authority structures ordained by God for our well-being. When they embrace these structures, they find freedom to be themselves and to pursue what God wants for them.

Nothing is more crucial in the restoration of family life and the fulfilling of our proper roles as men and women than for men to lay hold of this challenge. And deep down, there's nothing a woman would rather see in her husband than the qualities of moral strength, spiritual maturity and overall leadership that will enable him to truly function as head of the family.

To this end, our prayer and concerted action should be directed. "Rise up Oh Men of God" must be more than the Sunday morning recessional. It must be a creed by which, under God, the men of America, and especially men in the Body of Christ, will come into their place in God. If this happens, their wives will gladly follow and will realize a measure of liberation that all amendments, and all the marches and all the rhetoric in the world will never bring. ♣

1. Phyllis Schlafly, *The Power of the Positive Woman*, Arlington House Publishers, New Rochelle, NY 1977; p. 11.

2. *Ibid*, p. 12.

3. *Ibid*, p. 68.

4. Samuel T. Perkins and Arthur J. Silverstein, "The Legality of Homosexual Marriage," *Yale Law Review*, January 1973.

(continued from page 13)

even after he repented, he only wished to return to his father's house as a servant. But the father nevertheless insisted that he was indeed his son, and gave him full welcome back home as a son. How the prodigal behaved did not change the basic reality that he was his father's son—and did not change his father's love for him.

What is fundamental for us is the relationship of sonship that Jesus has established between those who confess Him as Lord and His Father. What is of primary importance to us as Christians is our acknowledging that relationship and entering more fully into it. How we behave is also important: no parent wants his children to be disobedient. But the most basic reality is simply the reality of sonship.

Understood in this light, Jesus' words "whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it" (Mk. 10:15, RSV) are not an exhortation to adopt childlike character traits in our lives—much less to act childish. Rather, Jesus is requiring us to acknowledge the sonship to His Father that He is giving us. He is saying most solemnly that unless we enter into sonship, we will not be part of the Kingdom of God.

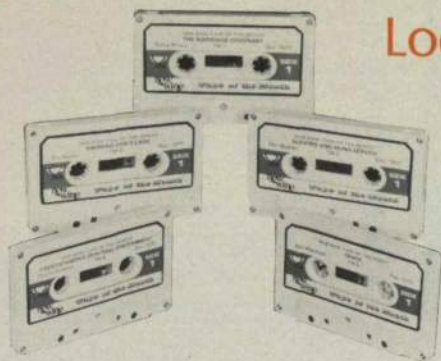
Jesus brought us the full revelation of who God is: He brought us the revelation that God is our Father. He was able to bring us this revelation precisely because

God was Abba, His Father. Through Jesus, we both see the Father and have access to Him. When we pray, "Our Father," we are making a very bold proclamation of who we are. When we pray, "Our Father," we are speaking from within an intimate relationship with God—a relationship established for us by Jesus Christ. When we pray as Jesus taught us, we pray with confidence to God our Father . . . our Abba. ♣

BIBLE STUDY ANSWERS

(From page 21)

1. Children, women; 2. Error; 3. A. Standing in Christ, B. Abraham's; 4. A. Daughters, B. Weaker; 5. So that Timothy would know how to conduct himself in the house of God; 6. silence; 7. None; 8. God, Christ, the man; 9. Praying, prophesying; 10. Ahab; 11. Witchcraft, idolatry; 12. B. Manipulative; 13. A. Nagging, B. Looking pretty, C. Accusing others of having no love; 14. love, truth, delusion, lie; 15. soulless, devilish; 16. confusion, evil; 17. A. Purity, B. Peacefulness, C. Gentleness, D. Easy entreatment, E. Mercifulness, F. Good fruits, G. Impartiality, H. Being without hypocrisy; 18. written, hearts; 19. heart, safely, good, evil.



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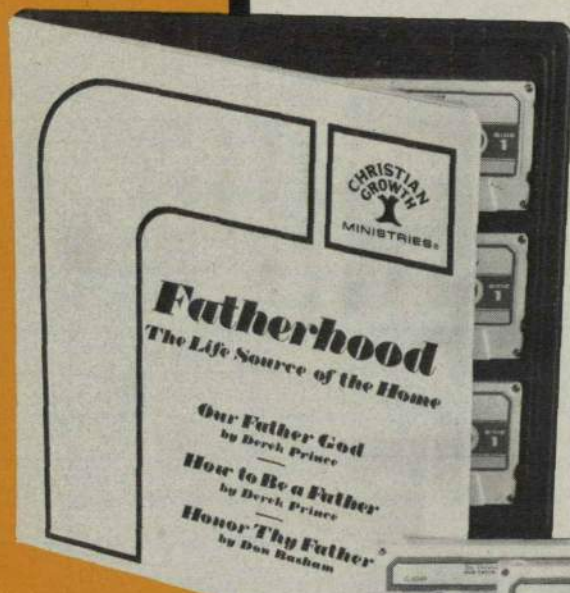
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