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"The Pastor and His Family"

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We face many crises in our day. There is an ever-increasing stress in every sector of society. We are experiencing a shift that is sending us into a rapid down hill slide. We have the issue of redefining marriage and the family. We have the issues of homosexuality, euthanasia, and cloning. We have the movement to decriminalize marijuana. We face ... We could go on.

Some Facts

Stable family life

"Half the nations' children are now growing up in households quite different from the "Leave It to Beaver" model, according to several 1994 reports from the Census Bureau. While 51 percent of kids still live with both biological parents, the other 32 million are being raised with single parents, stepparents, half siblings, or grandparents seated across the dinner table. That's a big shift from the '40s, '50s and '60s, when nearly 70 percent of kids had traditional families. More kids than ever—27 percent—are being raised by a lone parent, twice as many as in 1970. And for the first time in history, those children are almost as likely to be living with a never-married parent as with a divorced one.

Fifty-four percent of all kids under 6 now live in families in which the sole parent or both parents work."

(U.S. News & World Report, December 26, 1994, pp. 111)

What do we learn? - **Children need stable homes.**

Aloneness

"With one in four young people now indicating that they have never had a meaningful conversation with their father, is it any wonder that 76 percent of the 1,200 teens surveyed in USA Today actually want their parents to spend more time with them?

Andree Alieon Brooks, a New York Times journalist, in her eye-opening book *Children of Fast-Track Parents*, describes her interviews with scores of children and parents who seemed to "have it all". "If there was one theme that constantly emerged from my conversations with the children, it was a surprising undercurrent of aloneness - feelings of isolation from peers as well as parents despite their busy lives."

(Mark DeVries, Family-Based Youth Ministry, (Downers Grove, IL, InterVarsity Press, 1994, pp. 40-41)

What do we learn? - **Children need the time and attention of their parents.**

Child/Parent Relationship

“Cornell University’s Urie Bronfenbrenner cites nine specific changes that have taken place during the past generation which have increasingly separated children and youth from the world of adults, especially the adults in their own families:

1. Fathers’ vocational choices, which remove them from the home for lengthy periods of time.
2. An increase in the number of working mothers
3. A critical escalation in the divorce rate
4. A rapid increase in single-parent families
5. A steady decline in the extended family
6. The evolution of the physical environment of the home (family rooms, playrooms and master bedrooms)
7. The replacement of adults by the peer group
8. The isolation of children from the work world
9. The insulation of schools from the rest of society

This last factor has caused Bronfenbrenner to describe the current U.S. educational system as “one of the most potent breeding grounds for alienation in American society.” When he wrote these words in 1974, this trend toward isolation was in full swing, and it has not been significantly checked since that time.”

(Mark DeVries, Family-Based Youth Ministry, (Downers Grove, IL, InterVarsity Press, 1994, p. 37)

What do we learn? - **Children need healthy contact with their parents and other adults.**

All of this leads me to remind us that marriage/family life is the second most important institution in the world. Next to God and His Church, marriage and family rank second. As Pastors we are **called to teach** about family life. As pastors we are **called to model** a biblical family life. One of the great needs of the hour is to strengthen the family. The sheep in our flocks need to hear from

us teaching that will help them with family life. The sheep in our care need to see from us the kind of family God's grace can produce. As Shepherds, we must be many things to our flock - theologian, counselor, motivator, leader, teacher, and encourager. In addition, we are to be as a family, a good model of how husbands, wives, and children can form a wonderful family unit.

Quotations to Motivate

Martin Luther was a reformer, theologian, pastor and musician. He was also a husband and a father. With his wife Katherine and their six children he enjoyed some 20 years of happy family life. He established and maintained an exemplary Christian home. Luther had this to say:

"Married people should know that they can perform no greater and no more useful work for God, for Christianity, for the world, for themselves and for their children, than to bring up their children well."

(Martin Luther - source unknown)

Merle Severy, writing in the October 1983 issue of the National Geographic (pg. 457) paints this picture of Luther. "We see him a child among his children. As little Martin is being taken up to bed, he says, 'Go to sleep, dear little boy. I have no gold to leave you, but a rich God.'"

More recently George Sweeting, President of Moody Bible Institute wrote:

"Motherhood and fatherhood are the most important callings on earth. If you are a parent, your responsibility to your children is more important than your job, hobbies, or anything else you could spend your life doing. And parenting has never been a greater challenge than right now."

(Moody June, 1981 George Sweeting)

Of all people, we should be the ones who enjoy a happy marriage and a well-adjusted family life. Of all people, we the recipients of grace, the shepherds of flocks, the teachers of truth, the doctors of souls, of all people we should be the ones who have the best family life in the community.

Having said that, we must stop to acknowledge that the joy, unity, and spiritual health of the family are determined by all the family members. The wife, the children, the teens, the young adult living at home, all contribute in a positive or negative way to the family life. A rebellious teen whose sinful unregenerate heart leads him into drug abuse will hamper the realization of family bliss.

So we recognize that the desired Pastor's Family may not be realized through the failure of others. We acknowledge that the health of the family unit depends on more than the Father's role.

Our task today is not to focus on members of the family who by their attitude or behaviour handicap the Pastor's family from reaching the biblical ideal, but to focus on the Pastor and his calling to be the head of a godly household.

The Biblical Demands on Pastors

When we open Paul's Pastoral Epistles to Timothy and Titus we find him mentioning the role of a Pastor as a family man. The demand of the Apostle is that Pastors who are married are to have a good and well-ordered family.

Every Christian man should possess the qualities listed in 1 Timothy 3. However, he will not be disqualified as a Christian and as a member of the Church if he fails in these areas. On the other hand, every Bishop should possess these qualities and will be disqualified from assuming the office of Bishop if he fails in these areas. The qualifications for leadership in the assembly are higher and more stringent than for membership in the assembly.

Here is Paul's list of required qualifications for Bishops. 1 Timothy 3:1-7

¹Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴**He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect.** ⁵**(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)** ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Different Translations of verse 4

NIV

⁴He must **manage** his own family well and see that his children **obey** him with proper **respect**.

⁵(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, **how can he take care of God's church?**)

NKJ

⁴one who **rules** his own house well, having *his* children in **submission** with all **reverence**

⁵(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, **how will he take care of the church of God?**);

NAS

⁴he must be one who **manages** his own household well, keeping his children **under control** with all **dignity**;

⁵(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, **how will he take care of the church of God?**)

Pastors are to:

1. Manage their family well
2. See that their children obey them with proper respect
3. Manage their families well if they are to qualify to manage an assembly.

The Greek Words

Manage: (proistemi)

Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament

"To stand before, to rule over, to manage"

Vine's Expository Dictionary

lit., "to stand before," hence, "to lead, attend to" (indicating care and diligence), is translated "to rule" (Middle Voice), with reference to a local church, in Rom. 12:8; perfect Active in 1 Tim. 5:17; with reference to a family, 1 Tim. 3:4,12 (Middle Voice); 1 Tim. 3:5 (2nd aorist, Active). See MAINTAIN.

Obey: (hupotage)

Vine's Expository Dictionary

Submission

Vine's Expository Dictionary

<C-1,Noun,5292,hupotage>

"subjection," occurs in 2 Cor. 9:13; Gal. 2:5; 1 Tim. 2:11; 3:4.

<A-1,Verb,5293,hupotasso>

primarily a military term, "to rank under" (hupo, "under," tasso, "to arrange"), denotes (a) "to put in subjection, to subject," Rom. 8:20 (twice); in the following, the RV, has to subject for AV, "to put under," 1 Cor. 15:27 (thrice),28 (3rd clause); Eph. 1:22; Heb. 2:8 (4th clause); in 1 Cor. 15:28 (1st clause), for AV "be subdued;" in Phil. 3:21, for AV, "subdue;" in Heb. 2:5, AV, "hath ... put in subjection;" (b) in the Middle or Passive Voice, to subject oneself, to obey, be subject to,

Respect:

Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament

"Dignity, stateliness. It describes the characteristic of the man who carries himself with the perfect blend of dignity and courtesy, independence and humility to his fellowmen ... The word avoids the suggestion of sternness yet retains the idea of natural respect (Guthrie). (Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament)

Vine's Expository Dictionary

denotes "venerableness, dignity;" it is a necessary characteristic of the life and conduct of Christians, 1 Tim. 2:2, RV, "gravity" (AV, "honesty"), a qualification of a bishop or overseer in a church, in regard to his children, 1 Tim. 3:4; a necessary characteristic of the teaching imparted by a servant of God, Titus 2:7. Cp. the adjective semnos, under GRAVE.

Commentaries on 1 Timothy 3:4

Donald Guthrie

"A most important principle, which has not always had the prominence it deserves, is next propounded. Any man unable to govern his children graciously and gravely by maintaining good discipline is no man for government in the Church. This principle is universal, for potential skill in a larger sphere can only be indicated by similar skill in a lesser sphere (cf. The rewards granted in the parable of the talents, Mt. xxv. 14ff.). ..."
 (Tyndale NT Commentaries - The Pastoral Epistles Donald Guthrie pg. 81)

Matthew Henry

"He must be one who keeps his family in good order: *That rules well his own house*, that he may set a good example to other masters of families to do so too, and that he may thereby give a proof of his ability to take care of the church of God: *For, if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God.* Observe, the families of ministers ought to be examples of good to all others families. Ministers must have their children in subjection; then it is the duty of ministers' children to submit to the instructions that are given them. ... (Matthew Henry's Commentary)

Gordon D. Fee

"The word for "manage" is used again of the elder in 5:17 (NIV, 'direct'). It carries the sense of either "to rule, govern," or "to be concerned about, care for" ... The clue to its meaning here lies with understanding the companion verb about the church in verse 5, **to take care of**, which carries the full force of that idiom in English. That is, **to take care of** implies both leadership (guidance) and caring concern. In the home and church neither has validity without the other.

(New International Biblical Commentary 1 And 2 Timothy, Titus Gordon D. Fee pg. 82)

William Hendrickson

"Now the ability to manage or govern well his own family becomes evident when the father keeps his offspring in submission (see 1 Tim 2:11). The so-called "progressive" idea of permitting the child to do as he pleases finds no support in Scripture. But thought authority must be exercised, this must be done "with true dignity," that is, it must be done in such a manner that the father's firmness makes it advisable for a child to obey, that his wisdom makes it natural for a child to obey, and that his love makes it a pleasure for a child to obey."

(New Testament Commentary I-II Timothy & Titus William Hendriksen pg. 127)

John Piper

John Piper declares that an Elder must be a "**Leader of a Well-ordered Household (*kalos proistamenon*)**. The home is a proving ground for ministry. He should have submissive children. This does not mean perfect, but it does mean well disciplined, so that they do not blatantly and regularly disregard the instructions of their parents. The children should revere the father (*meta pases semnotetos*). He should be a loving and responsible spiritual leader in the home. His wife should be respected and tenderly loved. Their relationship should be openly admirable."

(Biblical Eldership - Shepherd the Flock of God Among You © 1999 Bethlehem Baptist Church Published by Desiring God Ministries)

Two Questions

Two questions arise. “What are we to do if we are going to manage our family well? What is the measuring rod for evaluating a well-managed family? What do we **do** and how do we **know** we are making the grade?”

I am sure we have all silently (even publicly) said, “Lord why did you not give us more revelation on this matter? We need more than the command. We need some ‘How tos’”. Having been told of the need for a well-managed family, we are left with the question, “What is a well managed family?” In thinking about this I was led to the fifth and sixth chapters of Ephesians. We have there a description of what a Christian Family is to be like. In part the “How” is answered. The Pastor’s Family is to be the kind of family described in Ephesians 5-6.

1. Before managing/ruling others, we must first of all manage/rule our self. We must be Spirit filled. We must be Christlike in character.
2. In seeking to manage/rule our home, with respect to our wife, the operative word is LOVE.
3. In seeking to manage/rule our children, we must not (exasperate) provoke them to wrath.
4. We are to treat all in your house with respect. We must not be threatening in our dealing with them.

We could then say that if an Elder is going to rule his house well he must be a:

- Pastor who is a Spirit filled man – under the Spirit’s control.
- Pastor who passionately loves his wife.
- Pastor who lovingly leads his children without frustrating/angering them.
- Pastor who does not rule by issuing harsh words or threats - Fair & Gracious

Respect is not something that we can simply demand. It is to be earned.

The second question remains unanswered. How do we measure what is an acceptable standard of a home that is well managed? Where do we draw the line in the sand as to who and who does not qualify to be an elder, based on his failing to manage his house well?

Some Implications

Our failure to give good leadership in our home will be most damaging.

1. Your Family needs you as *the Head of their household.*

When Brad Powers presented his paper in September we observed how important it was for Titus to get qualified elders in place, they would have a profound influence on the assembly. They would serve to promote truth, to protect from error, to prevent corruption and check ungodly behavior from spreading in the assembly. Without the elder, things can easily unravel.

When I left Essex, Mrs. Teskie (one of the senior members of the assembly) expressed to me that she always dreaded the period when there was no Pastor. From experience she knew how easily it is for things to unravel without an elder to rule. With his removal is the loss of that steadying influence; - diminished is the promotion of truth, the protection from error, the preventing of ungodly practices. Things come apart so quickly without a capable leader.

Allow me to transfer this to the absence of a father in a household. When fathers are not functioning as the head of their family the home is at a greater risk. Pastors need to be there for their family as:

- Provider
- Protector
- Promoter of Truth
- Stabilizer

“As early as 1982, when Norlan Harmon wrote his classic work *Ministerial Ethics and Etiquette*, he warned both experienced and prospective pastors that “foremost among the duties of a minister are those he owes to his home and family. This is universally conceded, but too often the minister’s home is immolated upon the altar of his work. The pastor has a hard task, but the pastor’s family often has a harder one.”

“If that warning was appropriate to Harmon’s day, how much more relevant it is to our day. In the years since Harmon wrote, our society has experienced changes greater than those in all the centuries prior to that time. Life has become exceedingly complex.”

(The Effective Pastor – A Practical Guide to the Ministry Robert C. Anderson pg. 89)

Men, our family has physical and emotional needs that we must meet. It is only we, as husband and father, who can meet those needs. We can only meet those needs by setting aside quality time to spend with our wife and children.

The point: The lack of our leadership in our home damages our family unit.

2. Your Church needs you as *an example* of leadership in the home.

The qualifications of an elder clearly indicate that the Elder is to function as a role model. All the members should be able to pattern their life after his. He is to model godliness, self-control, leadership, and good management skills. He is to show the flock how to live the Christian life. Ours is not just a ministry of words. Our preaching is to be under-girded by our living.

Examine the requirements Paul gives for the office of Elder. How he lives is crucial to his leadership in the assembly. Later in the same epistle we have Paul exhorting Timothy:

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but **set an example** for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity."
(1 Timothy 4:12).

"Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, **so that everyone may see your progress.** Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." (1 Timothy 4:15).

Our life as an individual and as a family man is to be on display for all to learn from.

We have Paul presenting himself again and again as an example. He called men to follow him. We too, must be able to do this.

1 Corinthians 4:16-17

"Therefore **I urge you to imitate me.** For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will **remind you of my way of life** in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church."

Philippians 3:17

"Join with others in **following my example**, brothers, ..."

Philippians 4:9

"Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, **or seen in me - put it into practice.** ..."

2 Thessalonians 3:7-9

"For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food with out paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, **but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow.**"

This teaching that elders are to be examples to the Church is also borne out in Peter's teaching. In 1 Peter 5:3 we read his plea - "not lording it over those entrusted to you, but **being examples to the flock.**"

Modeling is key. Setting the example is essential. Have you heard this complaint from a parent?

***"No matter what I teach my children
They insist on behaving like me."***

No matter what we teach our congregation, they insist on behaving like us. Example is more powerful than words.

The point: The lack of our leadership in our home damages the assembly.

3. Lack of ones ability to "manage" the Family unit raises the question as to ones ability to "take care" of the Church.

You need to manage your home in order to be qualified to oversee the Church.

If a person cannot manage a unit of six people, how can he be expected to manage a unit of 60 or 160 people? Those who prove themselves capable of handling the small things, to them will be entrusted larger responsibilities. This is the scriptural principle.

The man who has not proven himself capable of managing his family should not be given the responsibility of managing the Church. The question that remains is this, "What constitutes failure to manage ones family?"

Various Commentators

Albert Barnes

"Now, if a man cannot govern his own family well; if he is severe, partial, neglectful, or tyrannical at home, how can he be expected to take charge of the more numerous "household of faith" with proper views and feelings? If with all the natural and strong ties of affection, which bind a father to his own children; if, when they are few comparatively in number, and where his eye is constantly upon them, he is unable to govern them aright, how can he be expected to preside in a proper manner over the larger household, where he will be bound with comparatively feebler ties, and where he will be exposed more to the influence of passion, and where he will have a much less constant opportunity of supervision? Confucius, as quoted by Doddridge, has a sentiment strikingly resembling that before us: "It is impossible, that he who knows not how to govern and reform his own family, should rightly govern and reform a people."

(Barnes' Notes on the New Testament Albert Barnes pg. 1140)

"If there is failure here, there is self-evident unfitness for the wider and more complex administration of the church" (The Pulpit Commentary vol. 21 pg. 58)

John Piper

Now the third thing to notice as we move back to the front of the verse is that one crucial evidence of fitness for being an overseer in the family of God is that a man manages his own natural family well. "If a man does not know how to manage his own household, how can he care for God's church?"

The word "manage" is a wonderful word with at least two dimensions of meaning to it. It means literally "to stand before." And you can stand before as one who leads, and as one who protects or provides. The focus in this verse is care. You can see that at the end of the verse. The verse starts with a reference to managing or leading the home, but it ends with a reference to caring for the church.

So what we have here is another Biblical illustration that leadership in the church is to be servant leadership or caring. The aim of leadership is not coercion but care. It's just what Jesus said in Luke 22:26, "Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves."

So what Paul is saying is that the way a man manages his own household is a good test of whether he can provide what the church really needs, namely, leadership.

(Sermon - He Must Manage His Household Well - John Piper May 1, 1988)

"Very practically what this means is that if one of my four sons were to ever rebel against me and become totally insubordinate and defiant and became delinquent or criminal, he would be responsible. He would have to reckon with the judgment of God, and with the inevitable consequences of conscience and social stigma and legal repercussions. He is accountable.

But that would not be the whole story. The text teaches that I am responsible for my son's submissiveness and respect. I am responsible that they be obedient. If one of them rebels against what I teach and becomes insubordinate and defiant and delinquent, I too would be held accountable. I would have to reckon with God's discipline and with the consequences for my own ministry, which could be interrupted or even ended."

(Sermon - He Must Manage His Household Well - John Piper May 1, 1988)

The point: The lack of our leadership in our home disqualifies us from eldership.

1. Your Family needs you as *the Head* of their household.
2. Your Church needs you as *an example* of leadership in the home.
3. Lack of ones ability to "manage" the Family unit raises the question as to ones ***qualification*** to "take care" of the Church.

Practical Advice

We begin by recognizing that, just like all families, there are different stages in the Pastor's family. It is impossible to speak directly to all the needs represented today.

Seasons in the Pastor's Family Life experience

Different seasons.

1. Marriage and the honeymoon season
2. Infancy and Toddlers
3. Primary grades
4. Teen years
5. College, university and Careers
6. Marriage and in-laws
7. The empty nest syndrome
8. Grandchildren
9. Senior years
10. Finishing well

Once you have children, you are never rid of them.

The Reader's Digest tells us about a grandparent who was enjoying the grandchildren. Grandma said, "If I knew grandchildren were so much fun, I would have had them first."

Each age group brings it unique stresses, trials, blessings and enjoyments. We need to response well to our family in each season.

Priorities - God is First - Family is close behind

God is to be first. Family is close behind. So close that you may think that it is about to nudge God off of his throne. The scripture clearly teaches the importance of the Pastor's family life.

No one else can do your job. You are the only one who can fulfill the biblical role of loving your wife and parenting your children. You can be replaced at the Church. And you will be. You cannot be replaced at home. And you must not be. It is essential that you fulfill your role as the man of your household.

I have read some biographies that leave you with the sense that the only way to accomplish something significant for God is to so pour your life into the ministry that there is little or no time for your family. When I read of Hudson Taylor or Jonathan Goforth, I sensed that theirs was not a "normal" family life. I found myself saying, "If this is what it takes to leave a mark for Christ, I am not sure I am ready to pay the price". Have you ever had that response while reading the life stories of some of these great men of God? I have been in the homes of some Pastors who have poured their lives into ministry yet I sensed no warmth or close family life.

Ministry is demanding. The greater the shepherd heart you have the greater the demands on your time and emotional energy. The more you love, the more of oneself you will give to others. One can end up giving away so much of yourself that you have little left for your family. And some have done that.

We have other records of men who were mightily used by God who maintained a healthy and happy family life. I think of C. H. Spurgeon and of Martyn Lloyd-Jones. They prove that one can have a full and effective ministry while managing one's house well.

A Pastor's Work Week:

Researcher George Barna says that the average pastor works "far beyond" 40 hours a week".¹ (*Today's Pastors, George Barna*)

Statistics indicate that along with other professionals, pastors are putting in 50 and 60 hour work weeks. Even vacation time is eaten into with cell phones and e-mail connections. The work of caring for the flock is never complete. It is like caring for a family, you are always on duty. Let me share a personal note here.

During my last week of vacation:

- On Monday night - death of a daughter of one of the seniors in our assembly. This required a visit to her home.
- On Friday afternoon – a counseling session with a mother who was facing a crisis with her teen – this made me three quarters of an hour late picking up my daughter.
- Sometimes, these things cannot be avoided.

A word to the Pastor's wife: You have to share your husband with many others in a way that other wives do not have to share their husbands. You must pray to God for grace to have a willing spirit in this regard.

A warning to the Pastors: You must learn to guard your schedules and reserve what is needed of your time and energy to "manage your family" as God has commanded you.

A George Barna research finds that "On a personal level, half of all pastors (49%) reveal that their family life has suffered significantly as a result of the pressure and demands of their ministry. (1998)"

Fatherhood - The Importance of the Father's Presence

It is absolutely necessary that you spend time with your family. You must be there in order for your influence as a father to be felt.

- Your influence as a father on your sons is important
- Your influence as a father on your daughters is essential

Even if your children are not regenerated, will they like you as their dad? Will they grow up to say, "I had a great father"? Will our unregenerate children love us because we were there for them? Let us not excuse ourselves by saying, "Well, what can you expect from unconverted children?" It is a sobering thought when we consider that there are many unconverted children who deeply love their parents - because they have been good parents.

Family time together

1. Meal Time

It is important that we be home on a regular basis for meals. Place it as a priority on your agenda. Place great value on the family meal, seeking to use it as a time for the entire family to connect and to share. Do not allow TV, radio, or books to disrupt this precious time. Do not rush through the meal; rather work at making it a sharing time and a happy event as you devote an hour to your family.

2. Day off - Safeguard it.

Safeguard your day off and make sure you spend time with your family. Healthy relationships require time. I heard this joke about "True Love".

"To prove his love for her, he swam the deepest river, crossed the widest desert and climbed the highest mountain. She divorced him. He was never home." - (Rose Sands -The Saturday Evening Post)

We may deeply love our family, but if we are never there for them to experience that love, do not be surprised if they feel unloved.

On CBC's Life and Times (Nov. 26th 2002) Rich Little shared one of the reasons for the break up of his 1st marriage is that he was away so much that when he was at home he and his wife had little or nothing in common to talk about or share in.

3. Family Night

Develop a "Family Night". On your calendar this night is marked off as an appointment. For us it was Friday night. We ate supper in the family room as we watched a movie. We curled up on the couches and "snuggled in". I recall, on one occasion, how Karyn did not want to go babysitting because she would miss "Family night". This is needed in the younger years. It is then that you will build a reservoir of intimacy that can help in the more difficult teen years.

4. Vacations

Vacations are essential.

Make vacations good times. Give it your attention. Make it a priority. Work at it so that we can avoid Robert Orben's observation: He said:

"Who can ever forget Winston Churchill's immortal words: "We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills."

It sounds exactly like our family vacation. (Robert Orben -Source unknown)

Ever been there? Work at avoiding this the next time.

Some advice on vacations:

- Choose events beneficial for the children. This will vary with age.
- Avoid places that will take you away from your family.
- Plan early and prepare for it. This says to your children – being together with them is something you treasure.
- Start to wind down before you go.
- Go somewhere where you cannot be reached.
- Have fun.
- Take pictures to remind you of the good times.
- If you are an empty nester, gather your extended family and do some fun events with them (e.g. rent a cottage and invite them to join you for all or part of the time – have the grandkids sleep in tents.)

5. Touch and Talk

Show them affection by the things you say to them and with warm embraces and kisses. Make sure there are lots of hugs and kisses. Show affection to your wife in the presence of your children. Build their self-esteem by speaking affirming words and giving them compliments. Tell them when they have done well, look beautiful, and make you feel proud. They need to be made to feel loved, appreciated and secure by our words and warm physical contact.

6. Dates and Special Times together

We have been told again and again that we need to keep dating our sweethearts. It is recommended that we spend time with each of the family members (wife & children) on a one to one basis. This could be taking your daughter out for lunch, or driving that one child to their team practice and using this time to connect on a personal level. "The importance of spending time with your children [and wife] is a truism that needs to be repeated as much as possible. Why? Because time is a non-renewable resource; once it's gone, it's gone."

7. Family Devotions

Establish and maintain family devotions. We must be pastors to our own family. This will involve the reading of Bible Story books when the children are younger. Later we graduate to the reading of the Bible, singing of songs and hymns, and family prayer. We will need to tailor fit family devotions to our own family needs. (When we come to the discussion time I would like to have us share what we have done in the past that has been effective for family devotions.)

Present Ministry in a Positive Light & Protect your Family

We need to protect our family from the "bad" news. We move from one individual crisis to another crisis, from one church problem to another church problem. Our family does not need to know all that is going on in the life of the assembly. We must not allow them to come to view church as a bunch of "sour grapes". By being constantly called into crisis situations our children can begin to see Christians simply as "problem people". Seek to prevent this by limiting the information that comes into your family circle.

I have chosen not to share the crises of individuals and their family members with my wife. I keep her in the dark by "leaving it at the office". Why bring a dark cloud into her life and over our family and burden her with issues that she cannot solve. There is no end to these problems – you solve one only to have another show up the next week. Not knowing protects her from having to deal with her own emotional response to the individuals and from struggling with forming opinions of the individuals. This way she is free to relate to them not knowing the issues.

There are positives and negatives to this. Stress is kept out of the family circle and they are happier for it. The membership will learn that "Pastor" keeps their confidence when they say to our wife, "*Oh, you did not know ...*" and your wife replies, "*No, he did not mention it to me*". It makes ministry all the lonelier, for there is simply no one we can share with. As husband and wife we do not get to pray for people in need or for the issues the Church is facing. I however believe that the benefits outweigh the negatives.

Accent the positive and minimize the negatives

- Watch your comments about the ministry - your attitudes
- Guard your conversations on the phone when others can hear
- Share the good news and the blessings

Don't allow members to use your wife or children as a channel to get to you

- The Pastor's wife must learn to say, in a warm and encouraging way, "You need to share that with the Pastor", or, "That is something you should talk to the Chairman of the ... committee about. I am sure it will be helpful for them to know ...". In time the members will learn that they do not have, through your wife, a direct link and influence with the pastor.
- In the initial stages we may need to respond to some of these appeals by going to the individual and saying, things like, "My wife mentioned to me that ..., it would be helpful if you talked to Mr. ... about this. They are in charge of ..."
- *The Pastor's wife must learn when and when not to share information passed on to her with her husband, so that he too will be able to say, "No, my wife did not inform me about ..."*

Protect them from unfair demands

- Protect your wife from unfair demands
- Protect your children from unfair demands.

While recognizing that the Pastor's wife does play a special role in the assembly, we must educate the assembly that the Pastor's wife and the PKs are to function in the Church like any other member should. They are not to be expected to function in a role that God has not gifted them for. This means that they may not sing in the choir, or teach a Sunday School class, or speak at the Ladies Fellowship, or head up the Social Committee. As we do not force members to function in an area God has not gifted them for, so the assembly must be taught that the same principle applies to the Pastor's family. They are to function in the assembly as God has gifted them.

Men, we need to be more sensitive to the pressures placed on our children, and especially on our wives. Not only does the congregation make significant demands on them, but also, we lean heavily on them. For many of us, our wives are our "right hand" in the work. One Pastor's wife wants all pastors to hear this – *"Don't make your wife feel guilty if she chooses not to be at every meeting of the church"*. Men, we need to cut them some slack and to be more expressive of our appreciation for them.

After she had typed up the response from the questionnaire to the pastor's wives, I asked our church secretary what was her reaction? She immediately responded, "I did not realize how many demands are placed on Pastor's wives." The folk in the pews do not realize the pressure our wives are under.

Charles Spurgeon Jr. reports the words of his father given at his wedding. Mr. Spurgeon said: "It is exceedingly necessary that a minister, especially a young minister, should have a wife. The duties a minister's wife has to fulfill are very important, for **she is expected to be a combination of all impossible virtues; in fact, altogether a wonder.**' Charles then tells us that "Glancing lovingly at my dear mother, he said: **'I know one minister's wife who has greatly strengthened her husband in the Lord'**."

(C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography: 2 The Full Harvest pg. 275)

To all the Pastor's wives present today and those who will read this paper, we want to look at you and say, YOU TOO have been a great support and encouragement to your husband in the work of the ministry. You are *"altogether a wonder"*, and we thank God for you.

Conclusion

Fellow Pastors, how do our wives view us as husbands and leaders in the home? How will our children remember us? What legacy are we leaving? We do affect our children and we are leaving a mark upon their lives forever.

Let us take a glimpse at part of the legacy left by C. H. Spurgeon. I will read to you the opening and closing paragraph of the 16th chapter in C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography: 2 The Full Harvest. The title is *A Son's Memories* by Charles Spurgeon Jr..

He begins: "The earliest recollections of my father which I have retained are naturally those associated with my childhood, and my heart is filled anew with joyful pleasures as I think again and again of the doing of the days gone by. I must have been a very small boy when I capered about with great delight, because my father had provided for the entertainment of the natives of Walton-on-the-Naze, a firework display on the sands; and, among the visitors at the then slightly-known and out-of-the-way watering-place, little Charlie was made glad by looking at sky-rockets, and listening to the bang of squibs. This may seem a small matter to report, but is indicative of a prominent feature in my father's character, inasmuch as **he constantly rejoiced in giving pleasant surprises wherever he could**; nor was this the only time when, to give his children some fun, he made the fifth of November an excuse for indulging in a work of fire."

Charles concludes: "There was one trait in his noble and godly character, which, among many others, always shone with a luster peculiarly its own. His humility was of a **Christlike character**. ... His blameless example, his holy consistency, his genial love, his generous liberality, his wise counsel, and his fearless fidelity to God and His truth, are all on a par with his fatherliness; and in my heart, as in all those with whom he came into contact, these qualities have been enshrined. **The matchless grace and goodness, manifested in the home, found their counterpart in his public career, and proved how completely the spirit of the Master permeated the whole life of His servant**. What my father was to me, to the church of Christ, and to the world at large, none can fully estimate, but those who knew him best understood the secret of his magic power, for they felt that he 'had been with Jesus,' and that Jesus lived in him."

(C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography:2 The Full Harvest pg. 267, 278-279)

If C. H. Spurgeon could take the time to trifle in fire works, surely we can find time in our busy schedules for childish pleasures with our children. We too can and must show grace and goodness to our family, reflecting that we have been with Jesus.

Let us be diligent in creating happy stories for our wives, children, and grandchildren to recall? As managers of their lives, let them have in us a godly and Christlike leader to emulate.

Supplementary Material

1. An interesting story from the life of Mrs. Spurgeon

“The young minister had not much time to spare from his duties, but he usually came to see me on a Monday, bringing his sermon with him to revise for the press; and I learned to be quiet, and mind my own business, while this important work was going on. It was good discipline for the Pastor's intended wife, who needed no inconsiderable amount of training to fit her in any measure for the post she was ordained to occupy. I remember, however, that there was one instance of preparation for future duty, which was by no means agreeable to my feelings, and which, I regret to say, I resented. As a chronicler must be truthful, I tell the story, and to show how, from the very beginning of his public life, my dear husband's devotion to his sacred work dominated and even absorbed every other passion and purpose of his heart. He was a "called, and chosen, and faithful" servant of Christ in the very highest degree, and during all his life he put God's service first and all earthly things second. **I have known him to be so abstracted, on a Sabbath morning at the Tabernacle, just before preaching, that if I left his vestry for a few moments, he would, on my return, rise and greet me with a handshake, and a grave "How are you?" as if I were a strange visitor; then, noting the amused look on my face, he would discover his mistake, and laughingly say, "Never mind, wifey dear, I was thinking about my hymns." This happened not once only, but several times, and when the service was over, and we were driving home, he would make very merry over it.**

But I must tell the promised story of the earlier days, though it is not at all to my own credit; yet, even as I write it, I smile at the remembrance of his enjoyment of the tale in later years. If I wanted to amuse him much, or chase some gloom from his dear face, **I would remind him of the time when he took his sweetheart to a certain service, and there was so preoccupied with the discourse he was about to deliver, that he forgot all about her, and left her to take care of herself as best she could. As I recalled the incident, which really was to me a very serious one at the time, and might have had an untoward ending, he would laugh at the ludicrous**

side of it till the tears ran down his cheeks, and then he would lovingly kiss me, and say how glad he was that I had borne with his ill manners, and how much I must have loved him.

This is the story. He was to preach at the large hall of "The Horns", Kennington, which was not very far from where we then resided. He asked me to accompany him, and dined with us at St. Ann's Terrace, the service being in the afternoon. We went together, happily enough, in a cab, and I well remember trying to keep close by his side as we mingled with the mass of people thronging up the staircase. But, by the time we had reached the landing, he had forgotten my existence; the burden of the message he had to proclaim to that crowd of immortal souls was upon him, and he turned into the small side door where the officials were awaiting him, without for a moment realizing that I was left to struggle as best I could with the rough and eager throng around me. At first, I was utterly bewildered, and then, I am sorry to have to confess, I was *angry*. I at once returned home, and told my grief to my gentle mother, who tried to soothe my ruffled spirit, and bring me to a better frame of mind. She wisely reasoned that my chosen husband was no ordinary man, that his whole life was absolutely dedicated to God and his service, and that I must never; never hinder him by trying to put myself first in his heart. Presently, after much good and loving counsel, my heart grew soft, and I saw I had been very foolish and willful; and then a cab drew up at the door, and dear Mr. Spurgeon came running into the house, in great excitement, calling, "Where's Susie? I have been searching for her everywhere, and cannot find her; has she come back by herself?" My dear mother went to him, took him aside, and told him all the truth; and I think, when he realized the state of things, she had to soothe him also, for he was so innocent at heart of having offended me in any way, that he must have felt I had done him an injustice in thus doubting him. At last, mother came to fetch me to him, and I went downstairs. Quietly he let me tell him how indignant I had felt, and then he repeated mother's little lesson, assuring me of his deep affection for me, but pointing out that, before all things, he was *God's servant*, and I must be prepared to yield my claims to His.

2. One Brothers' Honest Sharing on "What I did Wrong"

1. Questions

Allow them to ask questions without becoming angry with them, even when they question things we hold dear. We need to walk through the questions with our children. Allow them to question. Allow them to disagree. Allow them to become their own person even if they come out in opposition to your position.

2. Model the Christian life.

Do not allow it to become "What I do".

Rather, work at presenting to your Children a "What / Who I am".

Let them see you first of all as a Christian man and not a "Pastor".

3. Rules

Avoid shaping your family life with *"We don't ..."*

Avoid filling your life with rules that are justified with *"Because that's the rule"*.

Play down rules, and make more of principles.

4. Let go

Learn to let go and to allow your children to find their own way.

5. Stay home more

You are needed at home.

6. Is it you or your religion?

One of my children said, *"It is not you but your religion that gets in the way."* The child went on to say *"There is no joy in your religion. Christianity removes all pleasure."*

This question arises: It is possible to have a happy and healthy relationship with a family member who is not a Christian? Lloyd-Jones may be of some help to us on how to relate to unregenerate family members.

3. Never Foist Your Views On Your Children (D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones)

'How do I avoid all these evils?' you ask. One good rule is that we should never foist our views upon our children. Up to a certain age it is right and good to teach them certain things and insist upon them, and there will be no difficulty about that, if done properly. They should even enjoy it. But shortly they come to an age when they begin to hear other views and ideas from their friends, probably in school or other associations. Now a crisis begins to develop. The parents' whole instinct, very rightly, is to protect the child, but it can be done in such a way as, again, to do more harm than good. If you give the impression to the child that he has to believe these things simply because you believe them, and because your parents did so, you will inevitably create a reaction. It is unscriptural to do so. And not only is it unscriptural, but it betrays a dismal lack of understanding of the New Testament doctrine of regeneration.

An important principle arises at this point, which applies not only in this realm, but also in many other realms. I am constantly having to tell people who have become Christian and whose loved ones are not Christian, to be careful. They themselves have come to see the Christian truth, and they cannot understand why this other member of the family – husband, wife, father, mother, or child – fails to do so. Their whole tendency is to be impatient with them and to dragoon them into the Christian faith, to foist their belief upon them. This must on no account be done. If the person in question is not regenerate he or she cannot exercise faith. We need to be ‘quickened’ before we can believe. When one is ‘dead in trespasses and sins’ one cannot believe; so you cannot foist faith on others. They do not see it, they do not understand it. ‘The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned’ (1 Corinthians 2:14). Many parents have fallen into this error just at this point. They have tried to dragoon their children in the adolescent stage into the Christian faith; they have tried to foist their views on them, they have tried to compel them to say things that they do not really believe. This method is always wrong.

‘Well, what can one do?’ I shall be asked. Our business is to try to win them, to try to show them the excellence and the reasonableness of what we are and of what we believe. We must be very patient with them, and bear with their difficulties. They have their difficulties, though to you they are nothing. But to them they are very real. The whole art of exercising discipline is to recognize this other personality all the time. You must put yourself into his place, as it were, and with real sympathy and love and understanding try to help him. If the children refuse and reject your efforts, do not react violently, but give the impression that you are very sorry, that you are very grieved for their sakes, and that you feel they are missing something most precious. And at the same time you must make as many concessions as you can. You must not be hard and rigid, you must not refuse everything automatically without any reason, simply because you are the parent, and this is your method and manner. On the contrary, you must be concerned to make every legitimate concession that you can, to go as far as you can in the matter of concession, thereby showing that you are paying respect to the personality and to the individuality of the child. That in and of itself is always good and right, and it will always result in good.

(Life In the Spirit Ephesians 5:18-6:9 pg 285-286 D. Martyn Lloyd- Jones)

4. Memo: From a Child to a Parent

1. Don't spoil me. I know quite well that I ought not to have all I ask for – I'm only testing you.
2. Don't be afraid to be firm with me. I prefer it; it makes me feel secure.
3. Don't let me form bad habits. I have to rely on you to detect them in the early stages.
4. Don't make me feel smaller than I am. It only makes me behave stupidly "big".
5. Don't correct me in front of people if you can help it. I'll take much more notice if you talk quietly with me in private.
6. Don't make me feel that my mistakes are sins. It upsets my sense of values.
7. Don't protect me from consequences. I need to learn the painful way sometimes.
8. Don't be too upset when I say, "I hate you". Sometimes it isn't you I hate but your power to thwart me.
9. Don't take too much notice of my small ailments. Sometimes they get me the attention I need.
10. Don't nag. If you do, I shall have to protect myself by appearing deaf.
11. Don't forget that I cannot explain myself as well as I should like. That is why I am not always accurate.
12. Don't put me off when I ask questions. If you do, you will find that I stop asking and seek my information elsewhere.
13. Don't be inconsistent. That completely confuses me and makes me lose faith in you.
14. Don't tell me my fears are silly. They are terribly real and you can do much to reassure me if you try to understand.
15. Don't ever suggest that you are perfect or infallible. It gives me too great a shock when I discover that you are neither.
16. Don't ever think that it is beneath your dignity to apologize to me. An honest apology makes me feel surprisingly warm toward you.
17. Don't forget I love experimenting. I couldn't get along without it, so please put up with it.
18. Don't forget how quickly I am growing up. It must be very difficult for you to keep pace with me, but please try.
19. Don't forget that I don't thrive without lots of love and understanding, but I don't need to tell you, do I?
20. Please keep yourself fit and healthy. I need you.

5. What Pastors' Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Them

by Barbara Milioni

My husband and I know that for us to have a good relationship, we need to understand each other's needs and expectations. Dr. James Dobson wrote a wonderful book-- explaining women called *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women*. Here are a few additions -- especially for pastors.

Love Me. The apostle Paul wrote, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church" (Ephesians 5:25). I need to know I am more important to my husband than board meetings and men's gym night. I appreciate Mark making time to spend with me, doing things we can enjoy together.

Love Our Family. There are many ministers, but our kids have only one dad, and they need him to make time too. Every morning Mark drives our children to school, giving them a chance to talk, laugh and have a few minutes of undivided attention from Dad.

Know My Limits. Contrary to popular belief, pastor's wives are not auditioning for the role of Superwoman. Mark and I try to set goals and priorities together and then work to achieve them. We pray before committing to anything to make sure *God* is leading us more than our own desires. We've learned we can say no to a certain task and God could supply the right person.

Protect Me -- physically, spiritually, emotionally. When our ministry began, deacons' wives would sometimes ask me about some juicy tidbit of information their husbands had told them after a meeting. The other wives were shocked to realize I had no clue as to what they were talking about. It wasn't that Mark was leaving me out; he was protecting me.

Laugh With Me, Never at Me. Though my early efforts at "tuna-spaghetti casserole for two" could have helped Jesus feed the 5,000, Mark waited until I laughed first before he joined in and turned the situation into one that we could laugh at together. But there are some things I'd rather the congregation not know about. I don't want to be the subject of a sermon illustration or joke if it will hurt my feelings or humiliate me. And I never want Mark to use a story from our lives without first asking my permission.

Pray For Me. I struggle not only with my own battles, but also with the awareness of my husband's burden for the flock. I know how much it hurts when someone strays, the energy he expends with a family in crisis, the hours he spends preparing to feed the sheep.

So I want Mark to pray that I will be sensitive to his needs, that I will be wise in my counsel, that I will be gentle with my tongue and that our home will always be one where he is happy to return. And while he's at it, I also want him to pray just for *me*, personally.

6. **A letter From Strawtip** by Louis McBurney

For Discussion

1. **Devotions - Building spiritual lives**
 - What has worked for you?
 - What books have you used for family devotions?
2. **Special Family events - Building fond memories**
 - What kind of fun events can be created?
 - Keep a book of sayings and events
 - Pictures and videos reminders of good times
 - Family gatherings
 - Family vacations
 - Annual events
 - Non-expensive outings
3. **Time with your spouse - Building a deep relationship**
4. **Teachable Moments - Building informed minds**
5. **Regrets - Things I regret not doing.**
6. **From the Questionnaire**
 3. **(a) What one thing do you wish your husband did more of for you (his wife)?**
 - a) Pray with me more.
 - b) Communicated more with me.
 - c) More time together.
 - d) To develop friendships (as a couple) outside the ministry.
 - e) When he has more than one thing to do he would write things down!
 - f) Be more particular about his appearance (i.e. colour co-ordination).
 - g) Getting chores around the house done.
 3. **(b) What one thing do you wish your husband did more of for the family?**
 - a) Help with the housework.
 - b) Sit and relax and enjoy what is going on.
 - c) Tell his family that he loves them a little more.
 - d) Spend more time with the children and with each child individually.
 - e) A family getaway beside summer vacation (not lengthy or expensive but non-ministry related).
 - f) Do more fun things.
 - g) Always take your day(s) off.
4. **If you had the opportunity to speak to the Pastors at FRPS what three bits of advise would you give with regard to them as husbands and fathers in the home?**
 - a) Be as active about shepherding your family, as you are your flock.
 - b) Laugh a lot.
 - c) Don't neglect care for yourself with good food and exercise and enough sleep.
 - d) Don't neglect to take your day off.
 - e) Don't be afraid to show your wife and children that you love them – especially verbally.
 - f) Be spiritual leaders – at a young age teach your children to sit and listen as you read and talk to them.
 - g) Give your wife some time alone.
 - h) After our love for God our most important task is our family. There are sometimes when family must come before some meeting or gathering.
 - i) Must look after his own health - don't be afraid to admit you are weary and need a few days to relax.
 - j) The wife is not employed by the church – her work within the church is voluntary like any other member.
 - k) Don't make your wife feel guilty if she chooses not to be at every meeting of the church.
 - l) Be diligent about how you manage your time.

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