

The Responsibility God Places Upon All Fathers to Lead in Family Worship

Geoffrey R. Kirkland
Christ Fellowship Bible Church

Men must lead. God appoints men as leaders and heads of their households. God does not ask a man to be the head of the home. God appoints the man as the leader and authority of the home and he must lead in a way that is Christlike — sacrificial, humble and others-oriented. In the daily family life, it is the father who should take leadership and gather the family together for daily worship before the Lord of glory.

1. God Appoints Men as Leaders in the Home.

God created Adam first and then God created Eve. God created man and then created Eve from the rib of Adam. God gave Adam the duty of naming all the creatures, including Eve herself. It was Adam who took Eve to be his wife. Since the very beginning of human history, God gave the responsibility of leadership in the marriage (and in the home) to the husband/father. He is the head of the wife, just as Christ is the Head of the church.

2. God Instructs Men to Lead in Daily Family Worship.

Fathers should teach their children so that the next generation might teach God's truths to their children (Psalm 78:5-6). Fathers must instill in their children a fear of the Lord so they would honor and obey God all their days (Deut 4:10). God chose Abraham so that he would teach his children to keep the way of the LORD and do righteousness (Gen 18:19). It was Job who offered burnt offerings for his children if perhaps they had sinned against the Lord (Job 1:5). Thus, it is the men who lead, the men who instruct, and the men who teach the families to fear God, obey Him, and walk in His ways.

3. God Intends that Men Gather the Family Together and Preside Over Family Worship.

The Apostle Paul instructs fathers to not provoke their children to anger but rather to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph 6:4). It is the men who must take leadership in making family worship a priority so that the family knows that *each day* every member should gather together at the set time and place to worship the Lord. The father should gather the family and provide leadership over the family worship time. He should plan what to sing, what to read, what to pray for, and other elements that may be included. He serves as the family shepherd and as the one who points his children to Christ and His cross daily.

4. God Ordains Men to Instruct their Children in the Ways and Word of God.

The Proverbs overwhelmingly speak to fathers as those who must give instruction to their children. Solomon models this as he says: "Listen my son and be wise and direct your heart in the way" (Prov 23:19). Furthermore, "my son, observe the commandment of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother" (Prov 6:20). A Godly father says to his son: "let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments and live" (Prov 4:4). Let all heads of households lead in this way of instructing their own hearts (Deut 6:4-6) and then they must teach and instruct the children in the home (Deut 6:7-9). God has commanded the fathers to teach their children the ways of God (Ps 78:5).

5. God Holds Men Accountable for the Spiritual Progress of Each Member in the Home.

Just as a shepherd must give an account for each of his sheep in the fold, so God will hold every father accountable for every soul He entrusts to him. As a pastor must give an account for every member of the flock, so every father will give an account for every child in his little flock at home. Let every father beseech God in prayer and ask for God's grace and mercy to assist him in training his children. Let every father diligently and daily pursue the instruction of his children and Christ-exalting conduct in his home. Let every father disciple his wife as he prays for and *with* her and as He reads the Word with her and washes her in the Scriptures. Let every father disciple each of his children so he knows them, their hearts, their condition before the Lord, their sins, their struggles, and their temptations. The father must pray for and *with* his children and must read the Word with them. He must constantly minister the gospel of grace to them.