

THE CHARACTER OF A GODLY MAN

Psalm 1

The best gift a man of God can give to his family is strong spiritual leadership in the home. This position of leadership is a God-given role where the husband is called to be the **“head”** of the household...which means he is to be the **priest, protector, and provider** of his home (spiritually, emotionally, and physically). This leadership role must be first and foremost based on character...Christ-like character. Unfortunately, many men show great leadership at work or on the sports field, but fail to exhibit this quality in their home.

In Spiritual Matters...kids take their cues from Dad

by David Murrow

The Bible says that fathers are to be the spiritual leaders of the home. Now there's a study to prove it.

Researchers from Switzerland examined whether parents' religious habits were transmitted to their offspring. They studied different variables, but one critical factor towered above the rest...***the practices of the father determines whether children grow up attending church or not.*** And here's the shocker...***the habits of the mother have almost no influence over their kids' future devotion.***

Consider these findings:

- When ***Mom is a regular*** church attendee but ***Dad attends infrequently***, just **3%** of their kids go on to become regular church attenders.
- When ***Mom is regular*** but ***Dad never attends***, just **2%** become regular attenders.

What about if Dad is faithful:

- When ***both Mom and Dad attend church regularly***, **33%** of kids grow up to attend regularly.
- When ***Dad is regular*** but ***Mom*** only goes ***once in a while***, the figure jumps to **38%**.
- When ***Dad is faithful*** but ***Mom never attends***, **44%** of the kids end up as regular church attenders!

Bottom line: In spiritual matters, kids take their cues from Dad. If dads don't go to church, chances are very slim that their children will become regular worshippers. If the kids see religion as ***"Mom's thing"*** they are more likely to become disenchanted. If Dad leads by example,

children are **twenty-two times** more likely to become lifelong church attenders.

What is interesting is when this report is compared to findings from the Barna Research organization. They found that children's perceptions of their dads relationship to Christ was directly related to his involvement in church. When a dad's attendance was...

- One time per week...it was perceived as an event or activity.
- Two to four times per weeks...it was perceived as a commitment or passion.
- Four plus times per week...it was perceived in a detrimental way.

Swiss cheese...

You may want to dismiss the findings of this study because it's from Switzerland...the heart of Christianity's ***"dead zone."*** But this pattern is in U.S. churches as well. Curtis Burnam, a 20+ year veteran of youth ministry has seen it time and again. ***"Kids who are taken to church by Mom but not Dad are harder to keep in church. They tend to drop out at higher rates when they reach adolescence. They are also harder to engage when they do come to youth group. This is true for girls as well as boys."***

Why are these findings so alarming? Because men are dropping out of America's churches at an alarming rate. Consider this:

- In 1952, the typical U.S. protestant worship service drew an adult crowd that was 47 percent male. Today that figure is 39 percent...and falling.
- On any given Sunday there are 13 million fewer men than women in worship.
- Almost 25% of married, churchgoing women attend services without their husbands each Sunday.
- According to the Barna Research, men lag behind women in every area of Christian endeavor (except the Senior Pastorate).
- Few churches can establish or maintain a viable men's ministry.
- The majority of churchgoing men do nothing midweek to grow in their faith.

Two obvious questions come to mind: Why are churches losing men? And why are men so uninvolved? ***Jesus*** captivated men. ***Islam*** inspires fanatical allegiance from young men. What's the difference?

Today's churches create an environment where the emphasis is put on youth and children. We are always emphasizing the ***next generation.***

But when men depart...this in itself is a tragedy. But the greater loss comes years later, when the next generation turns its back on church, despite their mothers' attempts to grow them into spiritual champions.

It's time to face the truth: **if we're going to pass a lifelong faith to our children, we must re-engage men.** No amount of Sunday School, VBS, or youth group will do the trick. In fact, we might reach more kids by canceling the entire children's ministry and focusing our efforts on men. This strategy would, in the long run, produce more lifelong followers of Jesus.

Kids need one thing: *to see their fathers abiding with Jesus.*

A Godly man...

I. Seeks the COUNSEL of the GODLY...and orders his life around it. (vs. 1)

He doesn't go to the world for advice and counsel, he goes to those whom he has seen godly character and principles displayed and lived...Christian World View vs. Secular/Humanistic World View.

"The steps of a man are established by the Lord, and He delights in his way."

~Psalm 37:23

"The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, to turn aside from the snares of death."

~Proverbs 13:14

"Commit your ways to the Lord and your thoughts will be established."

~Proverbs 16:3

BLESSED, is in the plural form and refers to a "joyful state of contentment... secure ...fulfilled." A man that is honest with himself and life.

WICKED, refers to someone that is "morally wrong...actively unrighteous...condemned."

- He desires to **GROW**.
- He seeks **WISDOM** and not just **ADVISE**...no matter how good it sounds.
- He submits himself to **PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY**.

II. Seeks COMPANIONSHIP (intimate relationships) with OTHER BELIEVERS...not with the lost: (vs. 1)

Watch who your friends are...the conscience of a lost man is dulled...(we are to be separated but not isolated from the world).

"Do not be deceived; 'Bad company corrupts good morals.' Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame."

~I Corinthians 15:33-34

III. Is COMMITTED to TRUTH...knowing it, defending it, and depending on it. (vs. 1-2)

A godly man is not passive...he doesn't stand around and let others scoff and curse the Lord.

SCOFFERS, Heb. *Lits*, means "to mock"... "to deride in thinking"... "to scorn."

"The Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron."

~I Timothy 4:1

"Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts."

~II Peter 3:3

IV. DELIGHTS in the Word of God...daily (reading it, studying it, and meditating on it). (vs. 2)

He has a deep love for the Word of God and godly truth.

MEDITATE, Heb. *Hagah*, literally means "to talk to yourself." It is the picture of a cow ruminating or "chewing the cud"...to chew over and over again.

"Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. This book on the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."

~Joshua 1:7-8

"Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You."

~Psalm 119:11

V. Is **FIRMLY ROOTED**...and successfully withstands the storms of life. (vs. 3)

Firmly rooted in character and the principles of God.

“Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.”

~I Corinthians 16:13

“Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.”

~Colossians 2:6-7

VI. Is **FRUITFUL**: (vs. 3)

Doesn't just receive from God, but yields (fruit)...is interested in the quality of fruit. The godly man doesn't mind the Father "pruning" his branches.

John 15:1-8

VII. Is **CONSISTENT**: (vs. 3)

His *“leaf does not wither”*...when storms come, he remains consistent. You can count on him. He has a consistent testimony.

VIII. **PROSPERS** by following God's principles: (vs. 3)

He prospers...

- In his **HOME**.
- In his **WORK**.
- With his **FAMILY**.
- In his **RELATIONSHIPS**.

Whatever he does, he prospers.

“This book on the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”

~Joshua 1:8

God is overseeing everything he is doing, and is protecting it and directing it.

IX. Is **CONTENT**: (vs. 6)

He is not hurried, anxious, stressed, and fretful over circumstances of life. He has placed his full trust in the Lord...he is complete in the Lord.

WAY, refers to lifestyle, desires, and ultimate destiny.

HOW DO YOU BECOME A GODLY MAN:

1. **Accept** Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
2. **You** must be willing to bend your knees and come before the Lord admitting that you've blown it. Humble yourself before God. Take personal responsibility...
 - Receive God's forgiveness.
 - Recognize the holiness of God.
3. **Bend** your knee a second time and humble yourself before your wife. Is your family worth saving? Your wife...your children?