



### Ministering Leaders are Spiritual Fathers and Mothers

Just as a father is an example to his sons, so is he to his daughters. The mother role is just as important to the sons as it is to the daughters. In this study we call father and sons, but at the same time this also applies to mothers and daughters!

### Learn to Speak the Words of the Father

*John 1: 1-4*

Jesus is the best example of a life that grows into wholesome service and leadership. The first thing John teaches us is that Jesus was as the Word with God.

Jesus is called here the Word of God. When Jesus speaks later, He regularly mentions that He speaks about what He has heard from God, His Father.

*John 5:19* Jesus recognizes the Father's authority. He here calls Himself His Son.

*Joh 5:22* The Father has given the right to judge to His Son Jesus.

The example Jesus sets for us is that He wants to learn from the Father, obey Him, and speak His words.

### What 's the Kingdom of God and our identity

In parts Follow 1 and Disciple 1 we saw God's purpose for man. Here's a quick summary:

God first gives an identity to Adam and Eve. He loves them, gives them value, a destination, and a *free choice* to follow Him. Then God *blesses* Adam and Eve.

Next God gives them a commission with *authority and responsibility*.

Throughout this plan, God longs for us to have *a relationship with Him and with each other*.

The purpose is that God lays the foundations of His Kingdom and man can then follow Him and be as He is.

Jesus learned from the Father and then teaches it to His disciples. What can we learn from this?

### Jesus is Looking for Others who can Complete His Work.

*Luk 9: 1-2 and Luk 10: 1-2*

Right at the beginning of His public ministry, Jesus selects people who can later complete his commission. We also see this principle in the OT. Moses trains Joshua, Elijah trains Elisha. In the NT we also see Paul doing the same. These leaders develop a father heart.

Spiritual fathers fall, but they stand up as examples to follow so their children can continue and complete the assignment.

Moses was not allowed into the Promised Land himself. Still, he instructed Joshua to proceed.

Elijah did not complete his assignment, but sought Elisha to do so.

Jesus died for us, and after His resurrection He commanded us to take His message all over the world. The message is to love God and love your neighbor as yourself.

At first Paul was not included in the council of apostles. Barnabas sought him out and helped Paul get into his ministry. Paul himself again became a spiritual father to many sons.

### Fathers Know Jesus and Speak His Words.

Spiritual fathers know Christ and hear His words. This word, the living bread, they share with their spiritual children. These fathers have a passion to see Christ live in their children.

### Dads Know Where They are Going.

Spiritual fathers are driven by a God-given passion and dedication. This gives them vision in life. It is vision to mold the character of Christ in their spiritual children. Spiritually grown children know Jesus and know how to walk in His ways. In doing so, they develop Jesus' values and standards. These



aspects are important and provide direction. Because of this, sons and daughters know what to do and what the heart of the matter is!

### **Fathers Multiply Themselves by Being Together**

*1 Cor 4:14*

Spiritual fathers enable children to live close to them. Just as Jesus was in heaven with God and later on earth, Jesus took 30 years to get to know Father. He spent time daily with His Father. So children should not only receive education and training, but they should live together in life.

### **Fathers Give Love, Value, and Purpose**

*John 15: 9-15*

God the Father affirms His love for Jesus. Jesus acknowledges His love for His disciples and calls them friends. Love is the engine of the Kingdom. This makes people flourish. Spiritual fathers want to give this to their children.

In love they give encouragement, order, advice and correction. Fathers give value and affirmation to their children. That is why it is important that there is time and personal attention. Spirit fathers not only teach but live with their children so they can follow their example. Fathers see to it that the instructions are carried out.

### **Fathers Raise**

*Heb 12: 5-13*

We learn here that sons go through a school. Instructions are given in that school. This sometimes requires discipline and correction.

### **Fathers Forgive Their Children and Give Them New Opportunities**

*John 21: 15-17*

When Peter said he didn't know Jesus, something broke in him. He had denied his master. Worst of all, Jesus saw everything. Still, Jesus restored Peter and even commissioned him to care for God's flock.

God as Father makes it possible to be reconciled to Him through the sacrifice of Jesus. Jesus gives the finest example of grace here.

### **Fathers Pass on God's Blessing.**

*Deut 7: 9, John 20:21-22, 26*

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob bless their children. Moses blesses his people and David also blesses his son Solomon.

Jesus leaves His disciples with a blessing.

### **Authority From the Father Passes to His Children.**

*1 Tim 4:12, 2 Tim 1: 6,7*

As Jesus receives authority from the Father, Jesus gives authority to His disciples.

Paul is like a real father to Timothy. In the two letters to Timothy, Paul encourages Timothy to stand in his ministry and not look at his age. He encourages Timothy to live in the authority that has come to him through the prophetic word.

### **Fathers Let Go with Confidence and Faith.**

*Gal 4: 4-7*

Fathers know when it is time to hand over the assignment and entrust their children to carry it out. Jesus even tells His disciples that they will do greater things than Jesus Himself.

When sons move to another place, the father trusts that the real sons will always return home. The father can let go. Sometimes the son is mature and ready to serve others or start ministries of his own, but there is always a connection with the spiritual father.

## **EXERCISE**



*In what areas do you see that you have had a spiritual father and mother? Look at the different topics and describe for yourself how this has shaped your life.*

*Perhaps it is good to thank your spiritual father and / or mother for what they have meant to you.*



*In what areas do you need a spiritual father or mother? Ask God the Father to give you such a person. Maybe even a name comes to mind. Consider approaching this person with the question you just formulated.*

## **PRINCIPLE**

***In the Kingdom of God leaders are multiplied by spiritual fathers and mothers. Through love, care, encouragement, correction and sending by spiritual fathers and mothers, future leaders are equipped, empowered and sent in the world with a message to share the lessons they have received and lived themselves. It is the message of the Kingdom of God on earth, as it is in Heaven.***

