

Text: Various  
Target audience: Christians  
Topic: Revival  
Theme: Revival at home  
My purpose for this message: To motivate Christian men to spiritually lead their families.  
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## **The Home of a Shepherd**

Spiritual leadership is today's subject. If you're married, what's your marriage like? If you have children, how are they turning out? Men, I'm especially interested in how we would answer those questions. In the 1-2 Kings, Israel's history as a kingdom does not make pleasant reading. Of the 38 kings and 1 ruling queen that led Judah or Israel, most were evil. Some, who even sacrificed their own children to pagan gods.

The good were remembered this way, "*...he walked in the ways of his father Asa and did not stray from them. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.*" (1 Kings 22:43).

But too many are remembered this way: "*...he committed all the sins his father had done before him; his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord His God...*" (1 Kings 15:3).

Often, like father, like son. Sons and daughters often reproduce dad's failures, or successes. Even the wife is often a reflection of what her husband's like. PRAY.

### **1. Who's is Responsible?**

Who is responsible to light the spiritual fire in your home? Or keep it lit? When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, they discovered they were naked and hid. God came looking for them, actually, for Adam (Gen.3:9: *...LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"*). And although Adam shifted the blame to his wife, God held Adam accountable (READ Rom.5:12). God sought out not the woman but the man; he blamed not the woman but the man. Why? READ 1 Cor.11:3.

In creation, God established an order about how men and women are to relate to each other: men lead women (at least in the church and in the home; no superiority or inferiority implied here, unless you conclude that the Son is inferior to the Father). If this passage is handled like a club, it becomes ugly and foolish. If handled with an artist's knife, it becomes a stunning and exquisite sculpture of what God intends husbands and wives to enjoy. And, it tells us who's responsible to light that spiritual fire in the home: the man. He is the family's shepherd.

READ Eph.5:22-28. When I preach this at weddings, I sometimes have a guy tell me with a smirk, "Good message, I especially liked the part about submission." Obviously, *not* a shepherd candidate yet. He sees these verses, and sees a means to control, not the means to create something beautiful. He's using a club, not a sculptor's knife.

Paul says how Jesus treats his bride—the Church—is how a husband should treat his wife. Look at how Jesus treated her:

- Gave himself up for her (25)
- Intent on making her holy... (26)
- Method: cleansing her (washing with water through the word) (26)
- Ultimate Purpose: to present her to himself [as a prize] (27)

So a *husband* sacrifices himself for his wife. So a *husband* bathes her through the cleansing waters of God's Word. Listen men, how many of us are—by reading it to her, speaking it to her, and living it out before her—pouring the Word all over our wives? In

many cases she is far ahead of us spiritually. Let's catch up and pass her. Why? So we can present her *BACK TO OURSELVES AS A SPOTLESS PRIZE*.

We usually get the wife we create. If she's godly, full of joy, a woman whose children rise and call her blessed, husband, you are probably responsible. If she's a bitter, self-absorbed, ungodly, cranky woman whom few people want to be around—including you—you are probably *also* responsible. We usually get the wives we create. I'm not talking about a stepford wife, I'm talking about a wife affected, infected, and shaped by her shepherd's consistent, tender influence. Men, *we're* responsible to keep the spiritual fire burning for our wives and children. God will hold us accountable.

## 2. What's it Look Like in a Shepherd's Home?

What's a good shepherd's home look like? There is peace instead of constant turmoil; there is joy instead of brooding; there is respect instead of resentment.

His wife's secure and content. Because her husband's fixing his eyes on Jesus, she's not so worried that he's fixing his eyes on Marie, or Vanessa, or Kim. Because he's fixing his eyes on Jesus, she's not so worried that he'll abuse his position of leadership as she submits. He's shouldering *his* responsibility to train and disciple the kids too. She's seen that if the children *do* get out of hand, he'll put them back when he comes home. He honors her position and does not contradict her or criticize her in front of the children. And when it seems like life's wheels are coming off, his quickness to pray reassures her that God is in control.

His children are secure and content too. Not *always* obedient. But because his discipline is consistent, they're never wondering how he'll act *this* time. Though they think some of his rules are dumb, they know what he's basing them on and know his expectations won't change from one day to the next. He disciplines in love, not fury. They hate it when he spansks them or takes away privileges, but they love the courage it shows. And by his obvious attention to their mother, their shepherd reassures them that he's not gazing at greener pastures.

## 3. How's a Shepherd's Home Created?

How's a shepherd light the spiritual fire in his home? Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf once said that "You learn far more from negative leadership than from positive leadership. Because you learn how not to do it. And therefore you learn how to do it." Let's look at a few.

READ Acts 5:1-10. Ananias' sinful desire to be applauded led his wife astray. Both paid for his sin with their lives.

READ 1 Sam.2:12-17, 22-24; 3:11-14. A mild rebuke. Didn't make them step down from the tabernacle, or in any other way enforce discipline. So God put them to death, and Eli himself died on hearing the news. Disciplining children is a spiritual obligation.

READ 1 Sam.11:1-4a. You know the rest of the story: she became pregnant, and to cover up his sin, David had him killed in battle. The consequences of his failure to be a godly shepherd in his home were adultery, the murder of an innocent man, a baby's death, and a son who publicly slept with some of David's wives.

How *does* a shepherd create a godly home? 4 instructions:

- **Lead by Example.**
  - Be instructed by God (Bible)

- Prayer
- Confession of sin
- Worship
- **Create an Environment**
  - Make spiritual conversation common.
  - Training children (Eph.6:4: *bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord*). And not just devotions (Dt.11:19-20).
- **Pray**
  - For yourself to be a godly man; for your wife, for your family.
  - Pray with your wife
  - Pray with your children

Wellington Boone (Beacon, Feb.1995) *If revival is to come, there must be a change in the prayer lives of the men of America. It is time for us to return to our knees and remain there until something happens. God is looking for a company of men who are willing to do what ever it takes to bring another great spiritual awakening.*

- **Be Humble**
  - I'm sorry
  - I was wrong
  - Please forgive me

I believe a shepherd needs to be strong; have a backbone. And despite what you may think, humility is not weakness, it is the essence of strength. Not, I'm always wrong and I'm a horrible person. That's a neurotic complex, not humility. In humility I assess myself accurately, and risk looking weak, in order to be strong before God. 2 Cor.12...

Men, let's be honest; by nature, most of us are spiritually lazy. We don't feel like praying, or listening to God by reading the Bible. But those are exactly the kinds of things that impact us, and then impact our families.

### Concl:

Some of you single moms or wives of unsaved husbands may be wondering, what about me? READ 2 Tim.1:5. Timothy's dad apparently wasn't a believer. But grandma was; and mom was. And by their faith, their lives, their teaching, they left a mark on a young man who by his ministry with Paul, marked the world. If necessary, *you* can serve as the shepherd in your home and keep the fire lit.

Ladies, let me enlist your help in this. Your husband's the key to the spiritual climate and spiritual success of your home, but you may well be the key to *his* success in that. Since men are naturally better at subduing objects than nurturing hearts, assuming the spiritual leadership role is frightening. He's afraid he'll do it wrong, or fail altogether, maybe afraid that he's so spiritually immature that you or the children will make fun of him or worse.

Encourage him. Never laugh at his efforts to read the Bible or pray. When he's trying to talk about something about the Lord at the dinner table and you know he's all wet, don't say something like "Are you nuts?" is not going to encourage him.

What will, is when you notice and commend the most meager effort. Help him answer a child's question about God that makes him look good instead of ridicules his limitations. Let God use you, to help make your husband God's shepherd in your home.