

THE FAMILY SHEPHERD

Elements of Family 4:

THE FAMILY SHEPHERD

Sept. 23, 2012

Sermon in a sentence: Godly husbands and fathers need to fulfill the roles of loving leader, provider and protector, teacher, mentor and intercessor for their families.

Scriptures: Psalm 23 KJV

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (Psalm 23 KJV)

No doubt, this is the most famous and most quoted psalm in the Bible. It speaks of the Lord's care for His people and continues to be a great source of comfort to all believers. It is also a great lead-in to our topic today – the place of husbands and fathers as shepherds of their families.

.....

In his desire to build and establish a new family, a man enters into a very private, mysterious quest for a life-long marriage relationship with a woman. This quest is filled with danger, intrigue and cloak-and-dagger secrecy, totally outside of the realm of human reasoning!

As a wise man said:

There are three things which are too wonderful for me,
Four which I do not understand: **19**The way of an eagle
in the sky, The way of a serpent on a rock, The way of a
ship in the middle of the sea, And **the way of a man with a
maid.** (Prov. 30:18-19 NASB)

Once the marriage has taken place, let us see how we need
to live as husbands and fathers:

Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of
your fleeting life which He has given to you under the
sun; for **this is your reward in life** and in your toil in
which you have labored under the sun. (Ecc. 9:9 NASB)

**Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the
church and gave Himself up for her ... 28** So husbands
ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies.
He who loves his own wife loves himself; **29**for no one
ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it,
just as Christ also *does* the church, **30**because we are
members of His body. **31**FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL
LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED
TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.
33 ... each individual among you also **is to love his own
wife even as himself** (Eph. 5:25,28-31,33a NASB)

Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered
against them. (Col. 3:19 NASB)

... **you husbands must give honor to your wives.** Treat
your wife with understanding as you live together. She
may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal
partner in God's gift of new life. **Treat her as you should
so your prayers will not be hindered.** (1 Pet. 3:7 NLT)

An elder must live a blameless life. He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who don't have a reputation for being wild or rebellious. **7** ... He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered; he must not be a heavy drinker, violent, or dishonest with money. **8** Rather, he must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must love what is good. He must live wisely and be just. He must live a devout and disciplined life. **9** He must have a strong belief in the trustworthy message he was taught; then he will be able to encourage others with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong. (Titus 1:5-9 NLT)

As for you, Titus, promote the kind of living that reflects wholesome teaching. **2** Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have sound faith and be filled with love and patience. (Titus 2:1-2 NLT)

If God blesses us with children, our privilege and responsibility as fathers is again demonstrated in, and regulated by the Word of God.

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, the first words of the prayer were "Our Father". God describes Himself as our Father and demonstrates His love for us by giving us full and complete access to Himself, promising never to leave us or forsake us (Heb. 13:5).

In Psalm 23, He describes Himself as our shepherd who leads, feeds, guides, disciplines and comforts us along with providing for our future. What an example for us to follow as earthly fathers – hence our title: "The Family Shepherd".)

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4 NASB)

Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart. (Col. 3:21 NASB)

It is hard to overstate the importance of our role as “father” in the lives of our children. Whether we know it or not, believe it or not, or act upon it, we are actually molding the lives of our children in profound ways. The things we teach them stick with them and our example forms the basis of their living. Therefore, our children need us to be true fathers, **present and active in their lives! (*“Wherever you are, be present!”*)**

“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6“These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. 7“You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. (Deut. 6:5-7 NASB)

A father is a teacher, a provider and very importantly - an intercessor for his children! Here is a wonderful example of how we should conduct ourselves in these roles:

There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. 2Seven sons and three daughters were born to him. 4His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. 5When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all; for Job said, “Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus Job

did continually. (Job 1:1-2,4-5 NASB)

Again, the apostle Paul adds his words of instruction:

... I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension. (1 Tim. 2:8 NASB)

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Tim. 5:8 NASB)

And a word from the writer to the Hebrews:

Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never abandon you." ⁶So we can say with confidence, "The LORD is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?" (Heb. 13:5-6 NASB)

Thus, every husband and father has the God given responsibility to fulfill these roles he has chosen, in the fear of God. Any start (or continuation) of relationship building with your wife and/or children is commendable. The old statement says: 'Rome wasn't built in a day' and neither will your relationship with your family be built instantaneously. But you have to start somewhere - trusting God for His help and guidance and also understanding that our family will gladly "cut us some slack" if they see we are really trying.

May God will help us as men to become models of Christ in our homes!

