

## HOW DO I TAKE THE SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

Many fathers assume that the duty of being the spiritual leader in the home is (1) taking the family to church (2) praying at meal times (3) and perhaps even sometimes talking about God. However if that is the extent of your spiritual care for your family, you need to examine the Word of God a bit more closely. To illustrate the need for this, first of all, we must realize the practical necessity of Biblical roles in the family. Just imagine the chaos that would/does exist if no one would take charge! If there were no manager for a business to plan, lead, organize, control or set any standards, there would be no goals, which means no progress! The Bible clearly indicates that God is a God of order, not confusion and He requires that there be organization and structure. (I Cor. 14:33,40) God's Word also places the specific responsibility on the husband to be the Spiritual Leader in the home. Look up the following verses:

Eph. 5:22-6:4 (This is the key passage for revealing the role of each family member)

Wives -

Husbands - "Leader"  
- "Lover" (initiator)

Marriage (5:31) -  
Children -

Parents -

I Cor. 11:3 -  
Gal. 4:2 -  
I Pe. 3:7 - "Learner"  
Deut. 6:5-7 -

I Cor. 7:3-5-

Mt. 19:6 - (Lifetime commitment)  
Prov. 6:20 -  
Gen. 3:16 -  
I Tim. 3:4 -  
3:5 -  
3:8 -  
Col. 3:19 -  
Prov. 5:15-19 -

From your observations of the above verses, combine the insights and write out a working definition of a Spiritual Leader (who, when, what, how, responsibility, where, why)

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Let's look for a moment at the essentials in getting started; first of all, we need a basis or a foundation.

- Ps. 127:1 -
- Acts 20:32 -
- I Cor. 3:11 -
- I Cor. 3:12-15 -

In cooperating with God to fulfill your responsibility, the Word of God is to be the authoritative source of your individual life and then that of your marriage and then into the family. Husbands/fathers, you are to be the model example to your family, teaching, illustrating and applying God's truth to the everyday needs of those in your home. To discover the needs (physical, social, mental, spiritual, financial, emotional) of those in your family, it's obvious that you must communicate and spend time with them individually and together. Write some of those needs or problems down that you observe and go to Scripture for the solutions to them (II Tim. 3:15-17). This will be part of the motivation God will use to get you involved. If you don't, you're being disobedient to God who holds you accountable and responsible plus you'll suffer many hard conflicts and consequences that may destroy the lives of those in your family! The spiritual prosperity and maturity of those whom God has entrusted to you depends upon how seriously you take this matter. YOUR ROLE IS VITAL!

The Bible gives many beautiful illustrations and examples of men who have taken the Spiritual Leadership. Look at the following verses: (1) Record several insights that you've observed. (2) Write down specific ways in which you can apply these to your family situation.

Matt. 20:20-28 -  
(1)

(2)

John 13:1-15  
(1)

(2)

I Thess. 2:8-12

(1)

(2)

Nehemiah 1:1-7:6 (actually the whole book reveals many leadership characteristics and qualities)

- . He inquired (1:2)
- . He listened (1:3)
- . He responded (1:4)

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Now because we are told in I Cor. 16:14 to do all things, governed by love, a definition of Love is also "key" in this whole matter of interpersonal relationships. Remember, this is not dictatorship! Love is "unconditional, self-sacrificial commitment to meet the needs of and benefit those around me". (Jn.3:16; Rom.5:8; I Jn.4:19)

- I Cor. 13:4 -
- 13:5 -
- 13:6 -
- 13:7 -
- 13:8 -
- I Jn.3:16-18 -

(Note the all inclusive scope that love takes in!)

To begin your Spiritual Leadership, you need to work out a plan or method to meet with your family and apply Biblical principles to the things they face. Be committed, consistent and creative in your teaching: (projects, games, rewards, vacations, fun, laughter, stories) to illustrate character qualities and biblical truths God wants to build into your lives. Remember you too are a learner and a sinner. Be open and honest about your failures and what God teaches you. You must be willing to do what you expect them to do!

In closing, Husbands, you are to love your wives, protect and provide for the family, rule (manage) the home, discipline the children, teach, counsel, exhort, guide, make decisions, serve and exemplify God's truth to them all. It's a fulltime job. It takes discipline and work. It may seem awkward at first but obedience to God always yields blessing (Ps. 1; Josh. 1:8).

For an indepth study and practical explanation of the husbands role as well as the entire marriage relationship, I suggest the following:

- "Christian Living in the Home", Jay Adams
- \*"How to Develop Deep Unity in the Marriage Relationship", Wayne Mack
- "Discovering the Intimate Marriage", R. C. Sproul
- Also a careful study in the Gospel of Mark, noting the responses of Jesus Christ with people, (1) Observing - "What does it say?" (2) Interpreting - "What does it mean?" (3) Applying - "How does this apply to me?"