

Lesson

Leading, Loving, and Leaving a Legacy

EPHESIANS 5: 21-33

The intense spiritual impact of leading your family makes it far more challenging than leading your business endeavors or ministry efforts. Though business and ministry may be more complex the family is still more challenging. I believe a major reason this is true is due to the weight of the spiritual realities. If the enemy can weaken the family, he has weakened the church and your marketplace impact. He always attacks the most vulnerable and least accountable place. The family. The family is also, when led well, the environment with the highest and greatest potential. Your greatest legacy will be your leadership of those closest to you.

I. Spiritual Leadership in the Home

²¹*Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

Jesus sets the example.

²²*Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.*

²⁴*Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Ephesians 5:22–23*

1. _____ Leadership (v. 25)

²⁵*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.*

The five primary roadblocks to loving leadership:

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What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. James 4:1–2

2. _____ Leadership (v. 25)

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

3. _____ Leadership (v. 26-27)

²⁶to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

4. _____ Leadership (v. 28-29)

²⁸In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church

5. _____ Leadership (v. 30-33)

³⁰for we are members of his body. ³¹"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." ³²This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

II. Your Relationship Roadmap

We know that one of the best gifts we can give our kids is a great relationship with our spouse. Take a moment to review these two road maps, where you are, and how these maps fit your relationship with your kids and family as a whole.

Degeneration

Regeneration

Courtship

Courtship

Comfort

Comfort

Careless**Caring**

Conflict

Conflict

Competition

Communication

Chasm

Commitment (Christ and each other)

Combat

Change (Growth)

Courtroom

Courtship

III. Leading Your Children

1. A genuine and deeply personal _____ heritage.

Now this is the commandment, the statutes and judgments which the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in your land where you are going over to possess it, so that you and your sons and your grandsons might fear the Lord your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and 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. Deuteronomy 6:1-7

2. Be their spiritual role model so they will love God as you do.

Jesus answered: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. Matthew 22:37

3. Let them see your love for God.

- Tell them you love God.
- Let them see that you run your life by God's word.
- Dr. – Family Bible Time
- Let them see your service to God. (ministry – tell them why)
- Talk about God, e.g., blessings – “isn't God good?” (vacation/IAP)
- Pray with them.

4. A healthy _____ - _____

...Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Romans 12:3

Teach your kids to see themselves as God sees them; nothing more, nothing less.

1. Give your kids a positive attitude by having a positive attitude
 - a. It's Contagious!
 - b. Give your kids a passion for life by living life with passion

2. Be purposeful with your words.

Are you drawing your kids to you or driving them away?

...just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. 1 Thessalonians 2:11–12

- The picture of a healthy and happy marriage
 - Love your wife. (Covered in first major section)

5. _____ discipline

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

He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently. Proverbs 13:24

6. Precious _____

IV. Pulling It Together – Leading with the Big Picture in Mind

- Determine your _____
- Establish a Biblical _____
- Live it _____

- 4.** Now, *after* you have answered the above question, *ask your wife to answer this one.* (Have her write — or type — the answer.)
Describe how your husband is the spiritual leader in your home. Begin by saying what you appreciate about him...then describe his spiritual leadership honestly but be encouraging.

- 5.** Tell a little about your prayer life with your wife. (This is not a guilt or performance-based question, just describe your current practice of prayer.)

- 6.** Gary Smalley says in his book *If Only He Knew*: If a couple has been married for more than five years, any persistent disharmony in their marriage relationship is usually attributable to the husband's lack of understanding and applying genuine love. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

7. Do you think it's possible for you to have an affair (emotionally or physically)? Think carefully before you answer. What are you doing to affair-proof your marriage?

8. List several reasons why you appreciate and respect your wife.

9. What is your wife's love language?

- Words of affirmation
- Quality Time
- Receiving Gifts
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch

(If this is unfamiliar to you, borrow a copy of Gary Chapman's *The Five Love Languages*. A quick scan will get you what you need. However, when you have the time, it is worth reading the whole thing. Read it with your wife so she knows your love language too.)

- 10.** It's a well-known truth that one of the best gifts we can give our kids is a great relationship between mom and dad. Is there anything about your relationship with your wife that needs improvement? If so, what is it, and what is your plan to be the spiritual leader by taking the initiative to improve this issue?
- 11.** What positive things did you learn from *your* dad about being a husband, being a dad, and leading the family? How is your relationship with your dad today? If he's not alive, how was it?
- 12.** In Steve Farrar's book *Point Man* (Chapter eight: "How to Raise Masculine Sons and Feminine Daughters,") Steve delivers four good insights from Ephesians 6:4. Review them and jot some brief notes describing how well you are doing in each.
- Fathers should raise their children in fairness.
 - Fathers should raise their children with tenderness.
 - Fathers should raise their children with firmness.
 - Fathers should raise their children in Christ.

William Hendrickson offers six ways a father can embitter his children. Read and reflect.

- Over-protection
- Favoritism
- Discouragement
- Forgetting the child is growing up, has a right to have ideas of their own, and need not be an exact copy of their father.
- Neglect
- Bitter words or outright physical cruelty

13. How well do you know your kids? (Answer as you can according to their age.)

- What are their favorite things? List a few for each child.

(Favorite: color, food, TV show, game, pastime, candy bar, etc.)

- What are your kid's fears?
- What do your kids excel at? (Gifts, talents, etc.)
- What do your kids struggle with? (School, relationships, listening, focus, sharing, etc.)
- Do your kids enjoy church? What are they learning?
- What are your kids' dreams or life goals? (If in High School or older.)

14. What are your hopes and dreams for your kids? What kind of people do you hope they grow up to become? (Specifically) Do you have an intentional plan to see this happen? Describe briefly.

15. Thinking big picture...what are the overall values you want your family to live out? What are you doing to lead your family to experience these values?