

## “The Father Who Leads Best”

I was just about to begin a physical therapy (torture) session with this young twenty something dad when he asked me, “Have you read any good books on parenting lately?” I didn’t know what to say. I thought to myself, “Does he know how old I am?” It was fun to hear this young man tell how engaged he was with his pre-school children. What does one say to a young father who is facing a crisis in America? I just read this article by the National Fatherhood Initiative that said, *“According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 19.7 million children, more than 1 in 4, live without a father in the home. Consequently, there is a “father factor” in nearly all of the societal ills facing America today.”* I looked at my therapist straight in the eye and said, “Trent, the family in America is under attack and it must be preserved. As a husband, you hold the keys.”

From one father to another, I am convinced that effective male leadership in the homes of America is going the way of the dinosaur. It is without a doubt, on the endangered species list. Dads, there are a couple of things on my mind that I would like to share with you. First of all, I want you to know that war has been declared upon your family, but you already know that. God is asking us to lead our families through the incredible chaos of the American culture. Just look around and you’ll see real casualties in this war. They are fathers who are totally ineffective in providing Biblical leadership for their children. It is with God’s help that we can become the kind of fathers that will greatly reduce the risk of our families becoming collateral damage. *“But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:57*

Secondly, not only is the enemy waging war against our families, there are casualties. The father is the head of the family and together with his wife, they raise the children in a home where Christ is the center. In Ephesians 5:20-23, Paul clearly said, *“. . . giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.”*



So, how does all this begin to disintegrate? *“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8* I believe the enemy has a two-fold strategy in “devouring” the Biblical family. One, his strategy is to alienate and sever a husband’s relationship with his wife. In order for Satan to divide and conquer a home, he must divide the love and commitment that is to take place between a husband and wife. Fathers, our leadership is fulfilled when we sacrificially love our wives (Ephesians 5:25). This is our first priority! Two, his strategy is to alienate and sever a father’s relationship with his children. Dads, the best way to keep your relationship strong with your kids is by letting them see the love you have for their mother. It is to give them both the quality and quantity time they need. I have heard it said to me many times, “I believe that quality time with my kids is more important than quantity time.” Yea, I don’t buy that. Dads, we don’t know when quality time is going to show up, especially in the ministry. We need to have fathers who will have a greater passion to love their kids.

I love what James tells us to do in chapter 4:7a, *“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”* Dads, “resist” means “to take a stand” against the person of Satan and his entire system, which includes everything he does and represents. If we understand James’s promise, we will know we have abundant spiritual resources to handle Satan’s empty threats against our home. As fathers, being humble before God doesn’t mean being weak before Satan. He enables us to stand firm and resist.

Dads, let’s not let the enemy rob us of the joy of leading our home in the way that’s pleasing to Him. Jesus is looking for men who will live for their families. Don’t forget, in the war against the family, it is the father who leads best. HAPPY FATHER’S DAY!!

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