

A CALL FOR SPIRITUAL FATHERS

“Fatherhood in the Kingdom of God”

I Corinthians 4:6-16



A Call...

Purpose: Identify and describe the role of spiritual fathers in the church

Method: Use Old and New Testament passages that focus on fathering.

Overlay the expression of masculinity and show how it relates to balanced ministry.

1 Corinthians 4:6-16

Three Focus verses: 14-16

“I am not writing these things to shame you, but to warn you as my beloved children. For even if you had ten thousand others to teach you about Christ, you have only one spiritual father. For I became your father in Christ Jesus when I preached the Good News to you. So I urge you to imitate me.”

Spiritual Fatherhood...

In the larger passage, Paul lays the groundwork for his appeal to Corinthian believers as a father.

They were more than Paul's spiritual offspring.

- He had sacrificed for their benefit.
- He had an ongoing relationship.
- Paul wanted to raise them up as sons.
- He had a sense of fatherly responsibility.

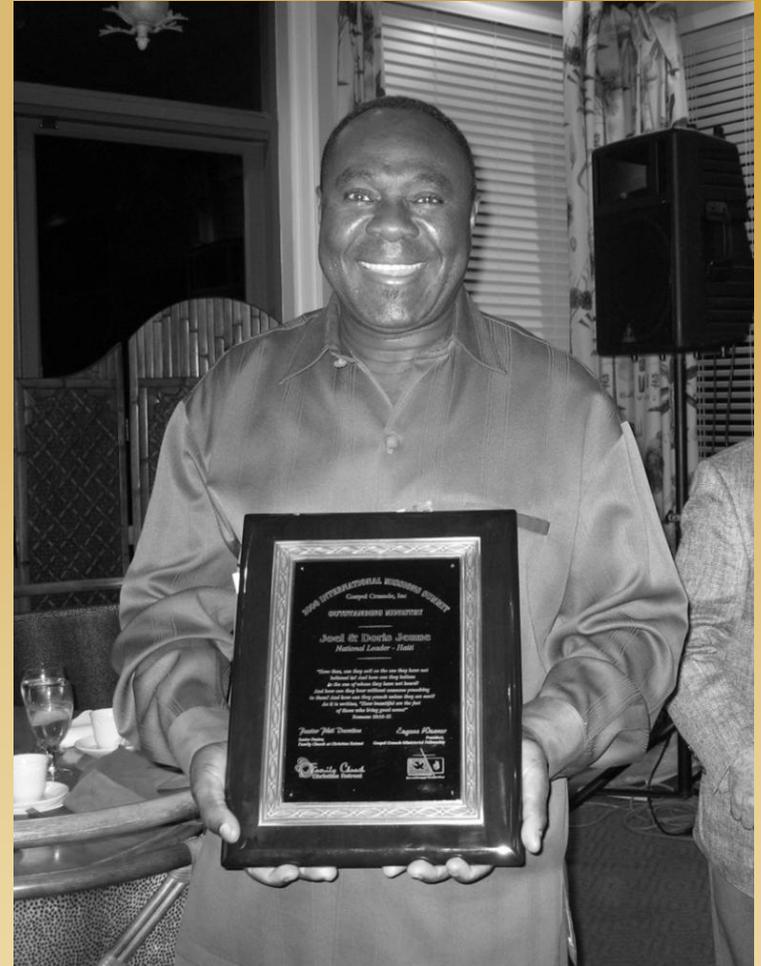
Spiritual Fatherhood...

- Paul reminded everyone that his two spiritual sons, Timothy and Titus, carried his spiritual DNA.
 - Sons speak with their father's voice.
 - Sons bring honor to their father.
 - Fathers trust their sons.

Spiritual Fatherhood...

2 Timothy 2:2

And the things you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these things to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.



Spiritual Fatherhood...

- Are we as ministers raising up spiritual sons?
- Do we brag about spiritual sons the same way we brag on our physical sons and daughters?
- Does our weekly schedule allow time for one-on-one spiritual fathering?

Spiritual Fatherhood...

- Next generation leaders often struggle because their fathers never spent “fathering time” with them.
- Many were never raised to positions where proper training could occur.
 - No clear impartation of the vision.
 - No impartation of the anointing.
 - No transference of authority

Jesus and Fatherhood...

- The North American church needs a stronger “father presence.”
 - Fathering is what Jesus spent the majority of his time doing.
 - He met with His sons after every service.
“He met alone with his disciples.”

Fatherhood -- Biblical Theology

“Fatherhood” and “Sonship” are terms that provide insight into the essence of God’s relationship with his people throughout history.

The task of spiritual fatherhood is modeled within the context of the natural family.

Fatherhood Is Pivotal In Man's Story

- In God's creation of mankind we see distinct revelations of the essence of God.

Men and Women reflect unique facets of God's nature within the context of the family:

Woman... creativity and sensitivity

Man... courage, discipline, a sense of destiny

Fatherhood and the Church

- Many weaknesses and struggles within the North American church suggest a need for fatherly influence.
 - » We lack discipline.
 - » We lack motivation.
 - » We lack a sense of destiny.

The Church's strength is *Creativity* and *Sensitivity*.

Fatherhood and the Church

The church should reflect a balanced gender expression.

- Masculine expression has a role.
- Feminine expression has a role.

The ministry expression of the church has changed over the decades and centuries

Example of Feminine influence in music today:

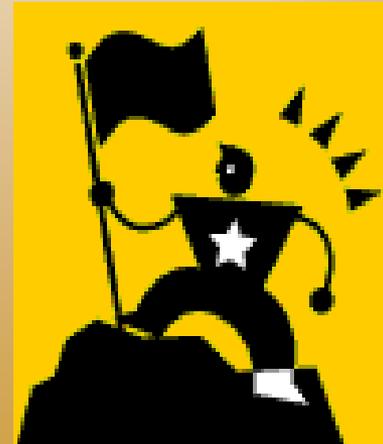
“You will notice we say brother and sister ‘round here, it’s because we’re a family and these are so near; when one has a heartache we all share the tears, and rejoice in each victory in this family so dear.”

Gloria Gaither

Masculine Hymns –Early 20th Century

- We Plough the fields
- Faith Is the Victory
- Who is On the Lord's Side
- Loyalty to Christ
- Marching With the Heroes
- Onward Christian Soldiers
- The Call of Brotherhood

- To the Work
- God Send Us Men
- Stand Up For Jesus
- This is My Father's World



Fatherhood in the Old Testament

Genesis 38: 1-10

Fatherhood is a God ordained
responsibility.

Fatherhood in the Old Testament

Focus verses 14- 18

Then Judah said to Er's brother Onan, "Go and marry Tamar, as our law requires of the brother of a man who has died. You must produce an heir for your brother."

But Onan was not willing to have a child who would not be his own heir. So whenever he had intercourse with his brother's wife, he spilled the semen on the ground.

Fatherhood in the Old Testament

This prevented her from having a child who would belong to his brother. But the Lord considered it evil for Onan to deny a child to his dead brother. So the Lord took Onan's life, too.

Genesis 38:1-10

Fatherhood Is Important To God

- Like Onan, ministers have been given a bride.
- Onan enjoyed the pleasure of his bride while neglecting the purpose of the union.
- Onan was unwilling to raise up sons in his brother's name.
- Onan was judged for shirking his responsibilities and call to fatherhood.

Spiritual Fathering Is Primary...

- Fatherhood is the hinge upon which the natural and spiritual family swing.
 - The home must have functional fathers to be healthy.
 - The church must have functional fathers to be healthy.
- Many leaders have neglected fathering.
 - It has hamstrung their efforts in ministry.

Spiritual Fathering Is Divine Order

Will God's blessing and power flow through broken or man-made organizational systems?

- Autocratic church leadership...
or
- Fatherless churches...
or
- Dysfunctional church families...

Fathers In The Church

What should fatherhood look like in the local church?

- It will be motivating.
- It will bring authority and order.
- It will bring balance in ministry.
- It will bring a sense of destiny.
- It will make people uncomfortable.

Masculine Expression of God

Masculinity is:

- breaking or building something.
- punching, tackling & jousting - it's the same as a hug.
- speaking few words.
- competition and conquest.
- intolerant of facades.
- comfortable in high-risk environments.

Fatherhood in the Church

Fatherhood is:

- raising up sons in our image.
- serving God through manly expressions.
- being real.
- taking risks to be successful.
- sacrifice, loyalty, and duty.
- love in action.

1 Corinthians 4:16b

Fatherhood brings order...

Malachi 4:5,6

“Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

And He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

Restoration Begins With Fatherhood

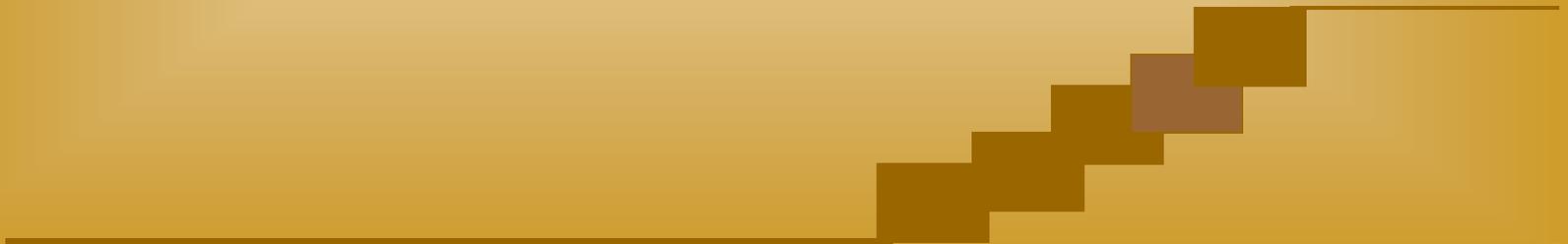
“Coming of one like Elijah...”

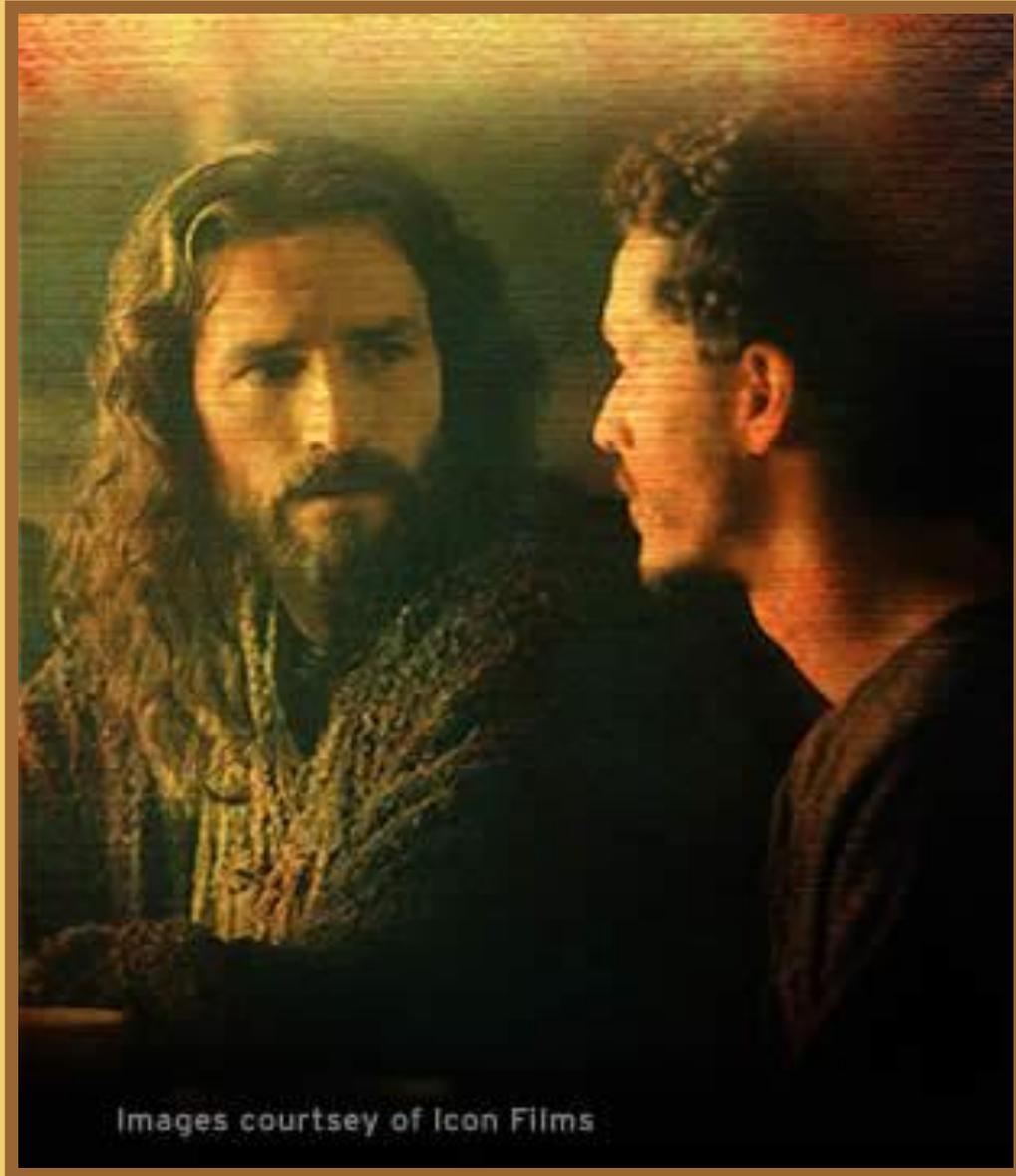
- God’s plan is to restore all things.
- Malachi’s figurative language of Fatherhood points to the most elemental relationship.
- When Fatherhood relationships are in order all other relationships will come into alignment.

Steps To Increase

the “Fatherhood Factor” In Your ministry:

- Assess what and how you do things.
- Commit to releasing a masculine expression.
- Seek guidance for identifying perspective sons.
- Gain wisdom for what steps you need to take.
- Write a job description for Spiritual Fathers.
- Just do it!





Images courtesy of Icon Films

**Divine Order
Requires Functional
Father-Son
Relationships.**

Do You Have Sons?