

Key passages: 1 Corinthians 4:14-17 & Titus 2:1-5

Fathers & mothers play an amazing and God designed role in the family so children are raised blessed.

Paul, in writing to the church in Corinth with the burden of a father to his children; encourages them that there is more than being a believer; we all need to go on to being all that God has so we may encourage others to do the same. V15 – tho' 10,000 instructors not many *fathers*... in those times children were handed to *instructors* by parents (Greek & Roman custom that slaves raised the children).

Paul had 'begotten' them – brought them to life (birthed them in the gospel); loved them immensely and I care too much to hand you to an instructor. Paul, in speaking to Titus, is training them as leaders and fathers in the church, how to live. See verses – give the qualifications of who will be fathers and mothers in the faith – how to 'be' before they can pass on what they have.

See Paul's heart in discipling Timothy & Titus to go from him and disciple churches. Family so much like the church; father, mother – chaos in the home needs fathers/mothers to bring about peace and change. Church, family of God – we all need to be part of the solution in being the people God has called us to be.

How we are to live in this world; (just as we raise children in natural family, church children are raised by spiritual fathers (statistically see 'fatherhood' diminishing in the world – do not want to see this nor in the house of God). Paul always speaking in to the congregation – passionate to nurture; sometimes tough in order to bring in to line; wanting people to grow.. Colossians 3:1: 'if you are raised with Christ seek those things above'. *Seek* things which come from heaven that support a heavenly life. V12-17 – 'therefore as the elect...' cannot live in the carnal realm and continue with Christ. Father's heart in the family is that children go further. V17 'everything, whatever we do, do in the name of the Lord' – it's hard to gossip and slander in the name of Jesus. Father asking us to live in a Christ-like realm; beyond the carnal.

Every word spoken – we are accountable for. Can't live so lax, that anything comes out of our mouth. Father wants us to live higher and the Word of God is the standard and holds the answers for every situation. To be fathers in the faith we must touch on a few things.

- God is able and wants to speak to us and bring correction – we must be able to receive it. Hebrews 12:5-6... Despise not the chastening – God deals with you as sons *that* we be partakers of His holiness. Not comfortable at the time, but recognise when it is from God, we need to change. Fathers and mothers in the faith recognise the voice of God for themselves and in the lives of others for encouragement to repent and get on with life. Kids fight – how long would it last if father and mother didn't step in, bring order and peace. Fathers of the faith are kingdom minded; can see beyond the now, see the future; see the church progressing, strong, vibrant, pursuing even greater vision – impacting community in greater way – reach more people, plant more churches.. instil

this into congregation – not causing schisms - Fathers want family together and kingdom of God established; generation coming through – careful how we speak and what sort of foundation laid – cannot pour fuel on conflict but speak life and peace. Let me change, that I can be part of the future, not part of strife. Proverbs 26:20-22 – ‘where no wood, fire goes out.. where there is no gossip, strife ceases.’ Tale bearing is like wounding; Person being gossiped about has no right of reply Matthew 18 – proper process for reconciliation. Gossip does three things:

- Kills peoples opinion of the one being spoken of
- Takes from them who they are
- Destroys their character (brings about a changed view of the person)

John 10:10 – the thief comes to steal, kill destroy. Gossip is the devil’s playground. This is why Paul so strong in desiring we beyond being a believer to walking with God... laying down life for the kingdom. Ephesians 4:25-32 ‘therefore putting away lying... grieving not the Holy Spirit... lying must be put away (comes about by the spoken word) let each one speak truth with our neighbour for we are members of one another... be angry but sin not (sin in anger is the spoken words) let no corrupt word come out of your mouth... (for the benefit of the hearer)... do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God... all evil speaking be gone, with all malice... we grieve the Holy Spirit when we do not speak the right things/things that line up with God’s Word. Guard ourselves against these things. Proverbs 25:11 ‘the right at the right time is like precious gold set in silver’ Proverbs 15:23-24 ‘what a joy to find just the right word for the right occasion.. people, be wise and walk the road that leads upward to life’ Proverbs 10:12 ‘hate stirs up trouble but love forgives all offences’ Fathers of the faith love all equally. 1 Peter 4:8 ‘above all things, have intense love for one another.. this covers’

- Fathers of the faith ensure a rock solid family of God for generations to come. If we are doing/saying any of these things, repent. Personalise this; what can I do to change? Father, thank You for speaking to me; for challenging my heart; for bringing to light what needs to change in my life; let me be a father in the faith out of the zone of carnality and mediocrity. 1 Corinthians 3 – live according to the Spirit, submitted to His Word and speaking those things that pertain to life.