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Son-Trek, The Next Generation: How To Establish Father/Son Order

Part One

This issue of "The Son's View" covers the introduction and part one of a five part series on establishing father/son order.

PREFACE:

In his book, *YOU HAVE NOT MANY FATHERS*, Mark Hanby put forth what is perhaps the most powerful and important message for the Church in our day. In a systematic and insightful way he uses the Word of God to show what the bible order of fathers and sons is and why the reestablishment of such order is essential for the fulfillment of God's purpose in our lives and in the Church at large. Through biblical patterns and personal revelation the author lays a foundation by which the Church can understand its present anemic position and in which the restoration of godly order can bring the Church to its completed purpose.

As a result of this work and the clear purpose and call of the Spirit, the spiritual necessity of coming into father/son order has become evident to many. We see our own personal need in this area and understand that without this order the Church will never come to maturity. This realization then brings forth a cry in our spirits seeking an answer as to how we as Church leaders and heads of local churches, can take what is so foundational to God's plan for this day and bring it into manifestation in our local settings. How can we as a matter of practicality take what we have come to understand and so heartily believe and minister it to our churches in such a way that it will not only be accepted and believed but more importantly that it will be lived and lived properly. As all in leadership are so keenly aware, there is a vast difference between having people accept a teaching and having them conform their lives to that teaching.

Through a number of avenues the Lord in the last two years has brought various pastors and church heads in contact with me centering on the topic of father/son relationships. The interchanges

with these various leaders can be summed up in one question; How can father/son order be brought into reality in my church? "I believe and understand the necessity of establishing these relationships within my congregation, but how can I bring my church into this order?" It has become apparent to me that church leaders not only need materials to help their local churches understand father/son relationships, (materials which are available through Mark Hanby Ministries), but that they themselves need to understand that there is an order or pattern as to how this revelation can be ministered to and received by the church. To this end the following chapters have been devoted to helping church leadership understand the process of bringing this desired order to their local settings.

What follows is nothing new, or my own, indeed it is born out of son-ship order with Mark and Linda Hanby. It is the result of Mark's revelations as ministered by the Spirit to my wife Karen and me. Those of us in relationship with the Hanby's must be ever cognizant of the favor and grace of the Lord imparted to us through this relationship and also of the fact that the vision given through Mark Hanby can never become completed unless it becomes generational; which is where you and I come in.

Using lessons learned in our local church, questions and problems raised by various pastors and most of all truths forged and established by Mark Hanby, I would like to use the following chapters to at least partially answer how the local church can be brought into father/son order.

INTRODUCTION:

Most of us who reside in America are of ancestral stocks that had their origins in distant lands. These stouthearted people were drawn to this land for various reasons. Some wanted to escape persecution, others were seeking opportunity but most had as a central part of their hope a desire to dwell in a land that would provide security, well being and freedom to succeeding generations. Like these stalwart pioneers so we in Christianity are on a sojourn from a temporary land fraught with turmoil to a permanent land of promise.

On the heart of many of these courageous immigrants was the desire to give to the next generation more than had been given to them; they were willing to endure extreme sacrifice so that their sons and daughters might have a better inheritance. In our present day attitude of self-interest, responsibility for the next generation has largely been abandoned and with it so has the possibility of a progressive future. In many places it is more likely that the next generation will be aborted than that it will be raised to live in its full potential.

Unfortunately the natural environment parrots the spiritual condition of the Church. Generally the church world is not interested in the sacrifice required to raise up a better generation. Not only does it not want to invest the time and commitment required, but to give another generation inheritance would interfere with the material and social pursuits of the church. Many are far more likely to

castrate sons than to give them double portions. It is a spirit that is consumed by the self and now thus devoid of future and purpose. God, however, is overturning these materialistic tables and calling forth a remnant whose hearts again will be set in right order.

As Abraham we seek a city built and made by the hand of God. Like Joshua, true leadership desires to lead the people of God to the inheritance in the land the Lord swore to give Israel. As the psalmist, the mature sons of God ask, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Father/son order is the process by which we make the sojourn from the strange land of religious bondage to Zion, the land of fulfilled promise.

The Need To Carry This Order To Future Generations:

(Acts 8:33 KJV) In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

In the above scripture the Ethiopian eunuch is trying to understand who it was that Isaiah was speaking about. Phillip began at this scripture and preached unto him Jesus. This led to the pronouncement from the eunuch, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*. All that Phillip told him about Jesus, of His ministry, of His power, of His miracles, of His death and resurrection was summed up in one brief statement of belief that spoke of Jesus' relationship with a father; *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*. It is impossible to understand Jesus' ministry and it is unfeasible to think we will be able to understand our own ministries without comprehending biblical son-ship.

Isaiah asks, *who shall declare his generation?* It is a question left for us to answer. Who is the generation of Jesus? From where do His descendents come? Who will bring forth the knowledge of the generation of Christ in the earth? Only those who understand and follow biblical father/son relationship can be in the generation of Christ that will bring the appearing of Jesus to the world. Only those who understand the absolute necessity of replicating their ministries in future generations will be able to pass on inheritance. We in ministry should not be marking the effectiveness of our ministries by what we have been able to accomplish but by whether or not we have been able to successfully pass down the inheritance given by God to the next generation.

Those of us who are reaching for father/son order in our ministries have come to understand the absolute importance of such relationships to the furtherance of our particular callings. We need, however, to see the broader context of how this order might be carried throughout all the generations. It was not merely entrusted to us for our personal benefit but more importantly because each of us is a link in this order to bring forth the completion of the Church and the manifestation of the Kingdom.

What God is doing cannot be completed in any one generation. We are all parts in the process of God's plan to bring forth restoration. Many have been taught to look for their success in Jesus in all the wrong places. Success in ministry should not be measured by amount of gifting, building projects, size of congregations or by the measure of influence we have over others. If we are going

to gauge success at all let it be as Jesus who measured His accomplishment in fulfilling His purpose, (*it is finished*) and in preparing the next generation, (*Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none*). Jesus did many mighty miracles, preached to thousands, walked perfectly in the gifts yet the witness of all these would have died at Calvary except for the fact that He prepared another generation in the Apostles to carry on the vision.

(Gen 17:5 KJV) Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

(Gen 18:19 KJV) For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

(Gen 48:16 KJV) The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

Mark Hanby has clearly shared the need for establishing the generations using the fathers of Israel, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as a pattern to describe what the Lord desires to do in father/son relationships. He has shown the need to carry ministry to the third and fourth generation and has plainly shown the necessity of establishing order to the fourth generation if the plan of God is ever going to be fulfilled in the Church. To that foundation I would like to add some insights that hopefully will help us understand the absolute necessity of establishing biblical father/son order.

The Lord made great promises to Abraham. He would be the father of many nations and the progenitor of innumerable descendants. So great were the promises and the faith of this man that God through our faith in Christ makes Abraham our ancestor. *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Abraham was the inheritor of great promises but he was totally dependent upon his offspring to bring them to pass. God could promise him a great name and a great lineage but only sons in order would have the ability to make those promises a reality. This is why part of what constituted the faith of Abraham was his willingness to put his sons and house in order. *For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD... that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.* God knew that Abraham would be able to pass on to his children the things the Lord had given him. This is one reason He could make such great promises to Abraham. God must know this about us if we are ever going to establish father/son order throughout the generations.

For the Lord to bring upon us the things He has spoken we are required to command sons who will carry on in the ministry and vision the Lord has given us. Being able to command children carries with it the same directive given Timothy, *to commit to faithful men* the things he had heard from

Paul. There must be a passing on of the father's ministry. Each generation has a distinct mission but it must expand on the foundation and purpose of the preceding generation.

Abraham could only be the father of a multitude if he had a son who would carry on his vision and seed. If Isaac refused then the promise would have died with Abraham and God would have had to choose another to fulfill His purpose. If Abraham failed to produce understanding and desire in his son then the promise of God could not have gone beyond Abraham's generation. In His foreknowledge God knew that Abraham would *command his children after him*. It was not just Isaac upon which Abraham had to trust but upon Isaac's children. Isaac not only had to give birth to another generation but he had to instill in that generation the vision of his father.

This Isaac was able to do. Are we as ministers of this dispensation able to do likewise? When God looks at us in ministry He is not only looking at us for how we will answer the call given us but also for how we will pass on those things given us to others. It is one thing for a father to teach a son how to be a father, it is quite another to teach a son how to teach a third generation to be fathers.

There have been many great men throughout the ages of Christendom anointed and chosen by God, yet their vision rather than geometrically multiplying into future generations died upon their death. Instead of being starting points from which spiritual revelation and order might reproduce and flourish in successive generations, their ministries usually ended with followers building religious organizations giving testimony of what God had done through these men. The reason for this is although they may have had a great call in God, they never learned to raise up sons. They had many followers but no legitimate sons who could not only receive inheritance but also knew how to pass on inheritance.

We must learn to think generationally. In the Bible a person's identity and purpose could not be separated from his ancestry and offspring. Who your forefathers were and what your descendants would become were of utmost importance. In the church world neither the establishing of identity and purpose in sons nor the passing on of inheritance seem to be of any great consequence. It is not too strong of a statement to say that a ministry that fails to pass on inheritance to sons is a ministry that has failed to complete its purpose in Christ. We have a great opportunity in this day to break the generational curses that have for so long plagued the church. We have the opportunity to restore the foundations of many generations.

The curse on the church world is a curse of immaturity due to a loss of excellence. Most of us have learned from the biblical admonition about following boy leaders instead of fathers. (1 Cor 4:15 KJV) *For though ye have ten thousand instructors, (boy teachers), in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.* This immaturity has caused the Church to live in single portions of God's blessing and purpose rather than in the double portions of inheritance. We in ministry must learn that for all our accomplishments, unless we are able to pass on inheritance to sons, most of our work dies with us leaving it to following generations to lay again foundations which have been built and destroyed

many times.

The great blessing of inheritance is that the one who receives inheritance acquires without cost or effort that which others have fought and labored to gain. The doctrines of justification by faith and supremacy of the Word that caused many reformers great opposition and in some cases cost them their lives, have cost us who have inherited the fruits of their great struggles nothing but our willingness to believe. They passed on foundations upon which others could build. Those of us who have learned to become true fathers have the ability to pass on the same type of inheritance to our sons. What cost us much can be freely added to them. What we have received out of the depth of our struggle and commitment to follow the voice of God over the shouts of men becomes theirs because of relationship; the Lord gives them a double blessing by adding what He has given us to what He is giving them. Our hearts must be turned toward our sons. *(1 Th 2:9-12 KJV) For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe: As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.*

PART ONE:

Preparation of the Set Ministry

The heart of ministry must be turned to raising sons and passing on inheritance. There is a preparation, however, that is necessary for this process to be effective and for it to become continuous in our spiritual descendents. We are not born fully functioning fathers full of wisdom with developed paternal instincts, nor were we perfect in our walk as sons, but we required correction, direction and growth to become vessels fit for service to a father. In Christ we are always in a state of becoming. This speaks of change, this speaks of process, this speaks of a need for preparation.

(Luke 1:17b KJV) to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children... to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (2 Chr 29:35b,36b KJV) So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order... God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly.

Fathers and sons need to be prepared. The quick or sudden work the Lord is doing on our watch is the result of coming into His divine order. To believe or understand a doctrine is one thing, to implement it in our churches is quite another. As we mature in ministry we realize that for the most

part our churches are really a reflection of our ministries. Our weaknesses as ministers, our fears that follow us like a fiend prowling in the shadows, our immaturity in certain areas that we shield from our eyes, even our lack of understanding, usually show up as symptoms in our congregations. Praise be to God for understanding to free us from the curse of immaturity!

We sometimes fight and struggle with our congregations, weep and plead before the Lord, even at times complain and give vent to our frustrations in an effort to change our churches into what we understand they should become. Yet in one way, they are really just a mirror that gives reflection to the character and the maturity of our ministries. As they reflect inconsistencies and weakness in our ministries we can lash out at the symptoms or we can allow the Spirit to bring change to us which will allow growth in them. If we truly want to bring maturity and perfection to our churches, we are going to have to prepare ourselves to be fathers mature enough to pass on inheritance. We must see our need and be willing to allow the Lord to prepare us as skillful fathers adept at bringing forth mature sons. Growth cannot come without change. Order cannot come without preparation.

- Defining the set ministers responsibility:

God has set in each local church that is in proper order, a minister to establish and oversee the work. This minister, usually called the Pastor, is not the owner of the church. He is not necessarily the wisest or most spiritual of all the members in the congregation. His spiritual gifting in certain areas may not even approach that of many in the faithful sainthood. The set minister cannot be all things to all people; he must not view himself or be viewed as the repository of all knowledge or the one who has the answer to every need in every situation. He is however the only one, because of the position entrusted to his care, who can minister an order which will complete God's vision for a particular local body.

The set minister, in his position to establish and oversee the work of the local church, must institute proper order. More than any other single task, it is bringing the church into proper father/son order that must define his ministry. A ministry without this order, which defines itself by its size, influence or gifting, will remain an inadequate and half-grown ministry at best.

Ministerial *responsibility* is the ability to provide proper response to those issues related to our ministries. The difference between reacting to a situation or responding to one can be vast. When someone reacts, they allow circumstances to dictate their actions and attitudes; when someone responds, they allow their attitudes and actions to be controlled by an ordered and developed character. Many in ministry find themselves constantly reacting to "problems". Sometimes a minister may find himself in the position of continually putting out fires within the church. No sooner does he deal with one situation than another arises. This creates a position of stress that can annul the peace of God. The ministry oftentimes finds itself continually reacting, (having to act again), because it defaults in its responsibility to set proper father/son order throughout the generations of the church. Learning to respond and establishing an order within the church that

allows response to the Spirit rather than reaction to opposition is one of the primary responsibilities of the set ministry.

The set ministry is a ministry of leadership. That means that it must know where the Lord wants it to go and how to get there. This requires a clear godly vision that can be ministered to the church. The set minister is responsible for the effective operation of the church. This means that he must establish the church upon the government of God and not upon that of man. The set ministry is responsible for how and what the church is taught. This requires sound doctrine and grounding in the truth. The set ministry is responsible for the training of ministry and the completion of church order. This requires the establishment of biblical father/son order.

- The need to desire sons:

It is impossible to establish the order of God for the church without first desiring sons. Immature ministry does not crave sons but followers. A mark of youth is that it seeks material reward and friendship over that of responsibility. The fullest measure of maturity in ministry is to take on the responsibility of maturing sons.

Undeveloped ministries desire an entourage of youthful followers in place of sons. It is more edifying to the flesh and less work. To raise sons requires a labor of love. It requires a confidence in one's own ministry and a lack of fear from competition as others in the church grow in the revelation and power of the Lord.

The attitude of a true father is that I want my son to have all the Lord desires for him and that all I have from God may be given to him as well. It requires the passing on of inheritance; a willingness to take those things of value that belong to me and give them to another. There must be an understanding that all things given to me by God are temporary and the majority of my work in the Lord will not last unless it becomes generational. Immaturity can only see the now, maturity sees the eternity. In order to minister father/son order a minister must be able to see and think generationally and be willing to bestow all his inheritance in God on sons.

(Mat 20:25-28 KJV) But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

A spiritual father must lead by example. There are many fatherless sons calling for relationship with a true father. The heart of the father must be turned toward the son, it is of his choosing and his responsibility. The fathers purpose must not be the promotion of self but the furtherance of the vision in his sons. He must be willing to teach them how to walk in the kingdom by putting the work of God ahead of their personal feelings and ambitions. He should desire ministry toward sons over the ministry from sons; *Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.*

- Ulterior Motives in Fathering:

In establishing father/son order in a local church the set minister must allow the Spirit to reveal hidden motives for desiring such order. Some who teach this truth do it from self-seeking and self-serving agendas and not out of a desire to give inheritance or to raise sons.

Unscrupulous ministers have found that teaching this order is a good way to increase income and to demand tithe from those they call sons. Others suffer from being God substitutes for their congregations. The teaching of father/son order by unprincipled pastors in immature congregations is an effective way to demand allegiance and to wrongfully elevate the clergy over the saints. Still other leaders who are out of order use portions of this teaching to support their disorder.

It is not enough just to be willing to raise sons. A minister's heart must be given over to that purpose or the trials and adversities will precipitately abort the process. Those longing to instill proper father/son order in their churches must check for ulterior motives. Proper order is dependent on a right heart.

In the course of our ministries we have all come to experience the hand of God channeling our work into more productive areas. Every true minister of the Lord has received chastisement to bring him into fuller alignment with the will of God. All of us know the voice of God revealing things about ourselves that were hidden from our eyes. His grace and mercy has many times made up for our weaknesses and will continue to perfect us as we are willing to remain on the potters wheel as he reveals our true nature to us; (Isa 58:7b KJV) *that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?* Although it is sometimes painful, understanding ulterior motives helps free us from our flesh.

- The need to be following a father:

The following of man is so prevalent within modern Christianity that we need to be clear in understanding what is meant by following a spiritual father. God is our Father. It is He we need to serve. A father in ministry is not a substitute or a mediator for our heavenly father. This is a mark of immature relationships and not of those who are in proper father/son order. Father/son relationship is not the order of our personal relationship with the Lord. Father/son order pertains to the order within ministry. There is no intermediary in our personal relationship with the Lord. It needs to be a personal relationship between God and ourselves. I can hear God, grow in love with Him, heal the sick and "go to heaven" all without being in proper father/son order. The reason is that these things are born out of my personal relationship with God.

Father/son relationship is the order that relates to ministry. To understand and receive proper vision, to find true identity, to complete our full purpose and to receive biblical inheritance is going to require this order. It is not the following of a man but the establishment of a God ordained order. It is His plan for the bringing forth of His Kingdom. We can live as Christians without this order

but we can never fulfill His purpose unless we learn to become connected to it.

(Rom 15:3 KJV) For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

In following a father in ministry we gain many valuable and necessary benefits and blessings. Identity, purpose, vision, inheritance and blessing all spring forth from this scriptural well. We always rejoice at the reception of these wonderful possessions but there is another side. Immature ministers suffer opposition due to their own transgressions and lack of order. True men of God however, always endure great opposition for the Word they carry and the dispensation of the gospel they have been called to complete. In being in relationship with a true man of God, the reproaches that fall on him will also fall on us. In pleasing a father in ministry, we will at times be required to carry his burden. True sons are not those willing to walk in fields of blessings but those who are willing to walk the seldom-trodden path of association with those who reap the opposition of the world and religion for the Word of God. *(John 6:66,67 KJV) From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? (2 Tim 4:16a KJV) At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me:*

There is no possibility of being a proper ministerial father to others unless you have first learned to be a son. Due to the present condition and need of the Church at large, learning to be a son and rearing sons sometimes must occur concurrently. Religious systems have sometimes been so much out of order that in coming into this truth we may find we already have a number of ministers dependent upon us and under our authority. We can't just cut them loose to survive on their own until we obtain full stature as a father. We must however learn the lessons that only submission to a true father in ministry can teach.

Submission is a key word in understanding father/son order. God is not so much interested in the position we command in society or the great abilities of our gifting or even our deep understanding of the scriptures. Much more than these He is interested in what kind of vessels we are for His use. Like willing clay in the hands of the potter it is our submission more than any other characteristic, which determines the character of our vessel.

True sons are those submitted to the father's voice; those who heed correction and follow direction. It is illegitimate sons, (sons with no right to receive inheritance), who reject the counsel and rebuke of the father. Submission is not just obedience to a father but a willingness not only to heed the father's voice but also to be about his business. Jesus said, *I must be about my Father's business.* Unless the fathers vision is in the forefront of our ministries, unless helping him achieve his purpose becomes the most important part of our own purpose, we are not truly submitted to a father.

- Qualification for son-ship:

Checking four areas of relationship with your spiritual father can test the qualification of your son-

ship. The four areas that qualify us as to son-ship are: being immersed in a father's vision and teaching; the ability to make the fathers work your own; the willingness to submit to a father and; a desire to give honor. Maturity in these four areas brings maturity in relationship. By assessing these four areas of relationship we can gain an understanding of our level of relationship.

length – vision and teaching
width – work of father
depth – submission
height – honor

= Qualification as Sons

Length: Do I understand and advance the vision and teaching given my father from God? Do I understand that if it is given from God it is not really his but the one who gave it? Do I understand that if it is from God then I am following God but if it is only a man's vision then I am following a man and not God? (2 Tim 3:10 KJV) *But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience. (2 Tim 3:15bKJV) thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation....*

Width: Do I understand the necessity of being about the work of my father? Do I understand it must be my primary goal? Do I know how to do the work of my father?
(Luke 2:49b KJV) *wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?*

Depth: Do I understand what biblical submission is? Do I understand how submitting to proper order is a submission to God? Do I know how to submit? (1 Cor. 15:15a,16 KJV) *I beseech you, brethren... That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.*

Height: Do I understand how honor shows the height of a son's relationship with his father: Do I know how to give honor to a father? Do I understand the difference between giving proper honor to a father and a counterfeit father who demands tribute? (Rom 13:7 KJV) *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. (Mat 17:25b KJV) Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?*

- Assessing our own maturity:

(James 4:10 KJV) *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

(1 Pet 5:6 KJV) *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:*

It is a somewhat paradoxical reality that only sons with maturity ever question their immaturity. True humility is a quality in precious supply within the Church. Yet if the ministry is to rise up into its rightful place at the proper time, God must be given opportunity to sift every thought and

intent of the heart. The ministry must allow the sometimes painful process whereby every hope, plan, and desire within ministry is tested to see whether it is of God or man. True humility is the key to this process. Humility allows us to be strong in the Lord. Humility allows God to raise us to our rightful place in Him. *(Mat 23:12 KJV) And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.*

To become a proper father requires maturity: A willingness to endure adolescent behavior on the part of sons in the process of maturing; a maturity to see afar off and sacrifice the promotion of self; and the comfort of position for a posterity that will continue in the vision and purpose of God.

In ministry we must be willing to ask ourselves the hard questions. Do I have the maturity of a father? Is it possible I am only a boy leader? Am I willing to become what my sons need me to be? Am I a son in right order with his father? Am I motivated by those things that center on my ministry, gifting or position or am I motivated out of a desire to fulfill purpose and give glory to the Father. God already knows us. It is impossible to hide from Him. If we are to minister father/son order we need to let the master designer fashion His greatness out of our weaknesses, insecurities and fears.

- The need to have a father's heart:

(Luke 15:20 KJV) And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

To be a proper father the Lord must give us a heart toward sons. One of the sad and disturbing sights of our day is the number of children being reared in households where fathers are unwilling to perform their dutiful role. If in the Spirit we assume the responsibility of becoming fathers then it is incumbent upon us to put them before any personal desires in our ministerial life and provide for them according to our spiritual possessions. Like the prodigal's father our longing must be for the bringing of sons into right order. This man would not condone the actions of a wayward son but his heart was always searching and waiting for both his sons to enter right relationship.

Fathers with wrong hearts are always more interested in themselves than in their sons. They are willing to sacrifice the good of the son for personal benefit. Like Manasseh they begin their rule as boys never maturing into true fathers; *(2 Ki 21:6 KJV) And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.* It is of utmost importance for set ministry to establish father/son order in the church, to be a minister with a father's heart.

Failure to do this will bring much pain to our ministries. David was a man of great spiritual insight and great prophetic gifting. He was chosen by God and elevated to the highest positions of authority. Years of struggle and suffering had tempered his spirit and molded his character. He was a man of God. In the family order of the bible even Jesus would be called the Son of David. Yet

David as a parent failed his children in significant ways. For all his spiritual success his failure to raise sons in order caused his greatest torment and the greatest threat to his kingdom. Incest, murder and rebellion testify to his failure with his sons.

(2 Sam 18:5a,32,33 KJV) And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom... And the king said unto Cushai, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cushai answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is. And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! (2 Sam 18:18) Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance:

A wise ministry can learn from the example of David that ministerial accomplishment, great gifting and even a strong relationship with the Lord are no substitute for the establishment of right order in sons. We can have spiritually endowed churches with tremendous outreach to our communities, churches that demonstrate great moves of God and still be out of proper order and in danger of not being able to pass on inheritance.

David's failure to put his sons in order led directly to the rebellion of Absalom. His daughter was raped, his eldest son murdered and now his son Absalom, who acted because his father was unwilling to act was dead and much of Israel ravished. We can see in the story of Absalom, a father who harbors regrets for failure to raise sons properly. We can see his great personal pain and longing for his son being pitted against his responsibilities to God and the nation. As he says "my son, my son" repeatedly, it is almost like he is trying to evoke a double annunciation of deity to erase his failure and undo the colossal events of the day.

David's son who tries to steal the inheritance winds up dead. David will never be able to pass on inheritance to him and like all who do not follow proper order, Absalom resigns himself to having no son, no future, no generation; (*Absalom...reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance:*) His purpose ceases upon his death. Unless the hearts of our ministry turns toward sons we in our settings will witness, like David, the passing of sons with promise but no order. How much better in ministry to have one wife and bring forth one son of promise than to give birth to the disorder of a multitude of spiritual families with an abundance of confused descendents.

Even Solomon "the wisest man who ever lived", who inherits the kingdom from David, is incapable in all his wisdom of establishing proper order in his descendents. The kingdom will be divided in the days of his son; it will become a denomination. He like his father will have too many wives. Like ministers involved in too many intimate relationships that are able to give birth to conflicting aspects of ministry, so is David with his wives. One wife will give him a firstborn son of inheritance who is also a son of perversion. Another wife will give him a son of great beauty and charisma who is also a son of rebellion. Still another wife will give him a son of wisdom who is

also a son who will build an altar to Chemosh on which to sacrifice the sons of Israel.

Though David is three millennium removed from us in time, yet his family disorder still speaks to us as ministers of God. This disorder warns and admonishes us that the power of our personal walks provide no guarantee of future generations in order or a ministry that will carry on past our death. Even if like David, we have the promise of a messiah through our lineage, we and our descendents will have to pay a great price for not bringing our generations into order. We must not allow the importance of our positions and the opportunities of ministry to interfere with the proper rearing of sons.

Checklist On Preparation of the Set Ministry:

- 1 Do I have proper maturity?
- 2 Do I have ulterior motives?
- 3 Am I in right relationship with a spiritual father?
- 4 Is my heart to be a father?
- 5 What is my fathers vision?
- 6 What is my vision?
- 7 What is the order of establishing son-ship?
- 8 Am I willing to be changed and seek the preparation required for fatherhood?

Next Issue: Part Two, "How to prepare the people to receive"

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