

Charis International 2015

Bible Message 2 : CILE, Bangkok, November 3, 2015

Text : 1 Timothy 3 :4-5 « *He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive,* ⁵ *for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?* » (ESV)

Theme : Knowing how to manage your family – A priority for pastoral ministry

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INTRODUCTION

L'Apôtre Paul a pris le soin d'exposer au jeune pasteur Timothée l'éthique pastorale qui devait gouverner le comportement, l'attitude et le caractère de tout responsable d'Eglise.

- In addition to the moral, behavioral and managerial skills, the spiritual leader must be a good example in the management and direction of his own family, which is a test for his authority in the local church;
- Paul's tone, as he speaks to the church leaders in this chapter, is in the form of a commandment: "they must".
- The pastor's family is an area which must be given priority in Christian ministry. Unfortunately, it is often overlooked by "Church professionals".
- A clear vision of excellence in pastoral ministry that is not motivated by a spirit of sordid gain (1 Tim. 6: 9-10) or passing honor is a motivating factor and a source of blessing for the pastor's family.

Paul presents two aspects of family leadership that we need to understand: 1) family direction or management, 2) authority and respect in raising his children.

I. MANAGING HIS OWN FAMILY WELL "*He must manage his own household well*"

Family direction is a must for any church leader.

- The word "household" used here refers to the family, which includes the father, mother, their children and their belongings;
- The family is the place where a child's character is forged and serves as a springboard for his social, professional, church and public life;
- The parents have the main responsibility for their children's education, not their church or their school;

- The Bible places great importance on the art of child raising and shows parents the philosophy of a godly education;
- A child's education must take into account all the dimensions of the child: physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual, in order to make good citizens of heaven here on Earth.

When a parent is asked "to manage" his household, this means to "have direction" or "have authority over" his own family, his own household according to the rules and principles established by God.

-The pastor has authority over his family and is responsible for the management of his family

-The pastor knows that his children must follow the Lord's path, which is found in the Bible (Eph. 6:4)

-Therefore, a child's education should be inspired by the Word of God which serves as a moral compass from childhood until old age (Proverbs 22:6).

II. KEEPING CHILDREN IN SUBMISSION "with all dignity keeping his children submissive"

In order for a child to be in submission to, or under the authority of, his or her parents, the education they receive must focus on godliness. To better understand what it means to give a godly education, we can use the metaphor of soldiers lining up behind their commander, under his authority, as a sign of loyalty.

- Paul advises the Ephesian parents not to bring their children up in an attitude of irritation, but rather to correct them and instruct them according to the Lord (Eph. 6:4);
- Children are irritated and discouraged when their parents act wrongly toward them (Col. 3:21);
- A disobedient child is vulnerable to the enemy's attacks;
- A pastor seeks to bring lost souls to Christ, to see their sin and to give themselves to Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. He must do the same thing with his children.
- Seeing a pastor or elder's children as faithful and honest believers, who show forth their love for the Lord by their good behavior is a beautiful thing (cf. Titus 1:6);
- The elder, or pastor's, ability to lead his family to salvation and then to sanctification is an essential skill which will be a blessing to the local church;
- Children are a blessing from the Lord and we must know how to take care of them in order to receive our blessing (cf. Ps. 127:3-5).

If a parent brings up his children in a way that they succeed in their spiritual life and in their education and become responsible citizens, they will not be a burden or a worry to their parents. They will be able to take care of themselves and even of their own parents as they enter old age.

Jay Adams said: *"Many people criticize pastors' families, and this brings about much suffering. Nothing can more weaken a pastor's ministry than a lack of understanding about his family"*.

- Pastors often receive much more training as to the direction of the church than of their family. (There is a large gap between the time invested in pastoral ministry and the time invested in ministering to his own family);

- This reminds of the Shulamite's complaint in Song of Solomon (1:6): *"they made me keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept!"*
- The pastor's family should be protected against outside influences and deviations. This is important for his own stability and for the example his family should provide in society;
- A regular time of family worship is important, since success in his ministry depends on the success of his family life (Joshua 24:15);
- When Satan cannot reach the pastor, he will try to go through his wife and his children:

III. IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO MANAGE THE CHURCH WITHOUT KNOWING HOW TO MANAGE YOUR FAMILY

- Successful family leadership lends to successful church leadership;
- Other families in the church will follow the pastor's example;
- A pastor's failure to lead his family well will have repercussions in his pastoral ministry;
- Many families will be influenced by a bad parenting example. That is why the pastoral role is not as easy as it looks;
- The demands of his function require constant self- examination to see if his family life is an encouragement to other families, or a handicap.

Today, Satan does everything he can to ensure that children will not walk in godliness. The secular school system, music, leisure activities, religions and other cultural activities are all tools for turning children's hearts away from faith in God, just as Pharaoh tried to keep the children of Egypt from leaving with Moses (cf. Ex. 10:?) Just look at what the Freemasons and other religions are doing in large universities all over the world in order to draw young people away and make them into their new elite.

And what about websites and pornographic movies which are now accessible to so many of our young people? Even trusted adults who twist good morals and lead our youth towards anti-Christian values?

CONCLUSION

We, as leaders in Charis International, are leaders in various fields of the Church, the Body of Christ. Each of us is flooded with many responsibilities that sometimes overwhelm us and keep us from spending time with our families.

During the first 10 years as Director of the Bible Institute, I lived an experience that could have ruined my ministry. Guided by a false idea of Christian ministry, I focused so much on my responsibilities with the teachers and students that I neglected spending time with my family. My wife would often say to me, "Your office is like a second wife", and sometimes she reproached me of having transferred my office to our bed, as I would often read books on ministry as we were in bed together. One day, God convicted me and made me realize that I had things backwards in my ministry. I was reading 1 Timothy 3:4-5, and God brought it home to my heart in a very special way. That very day, I decided to place a plaque on my desk, to remind me that I must put my family at the top of my list of daily priorities. This change saved my family and my children now tell me of their appreciation because of my care for them.

Let's let God's Word renew our intelligence, so that we can understand the message He has for us today, for our families and for our ministry.

PRAYER FOR CHURCH LEADERS' CHILDREN

Before we take some time to pray for God's intervention in church leaders' families, Christian's families, but especially in our own families, let's take a moment to read the two passages mentioned below. Individually, take the time to seek God's face as to the people, time, place, events and main idea that He would want to communicate to us. Then, take some time to pray one for another with faith that God will act to help us better manage our own households before we try to do so in the Church.

Passages to read:

- 1) 1 Samuel 2:12-17 – Eli's example as a father
- 2) Job 1:1-5 – Job's example as a father