

## CHARACTERISTIC ONE: FAITH

### Lesson 4: Our Faith at Home

What is your life like at home? Do you portray one thing at church or in front of others, but you don't follow through with that at home in front of the ones that matter most? This doesn't mean that we are perfect or that we don't make mistakes, but do we make excuses for our behaviors that we would never do in front of others. The reality is God sees us all the time and in your home is where it matters most.

As husbands, we are called to lovingly lead our wives in the things of God and be a voice of reason when emotions are running high or as my wife and I like to call them, "moments of intense fellowship." Unfortunately, I didn't always get this right, especially in our early years of marriage. The Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 5:25-29:

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. <sup>28</sup> So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord *does* the church. <sup>1</sup>

Think about that, Jesus was God in the flesh, He held all authority, but He loved us so much that He gave Himself for us. Are we doing that with our wives? Are we laying down what we want or our preferences for her. Now of course I'm talking about personal preferences, not Biblical issues, which we need to stand strong on. One thing I found out about myself was that I was so concerned about being right and proving to her that I was, that I didn't take time to really listen to her point of view. That wasn't real love. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 says, "**4** Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, **5** does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, **6** does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; **7** bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>2</sup>

As true men of God, we need to be able to differentiate, by the Holy Spirit, the things that are vitally important and stand on those things without compromise, while also laying down some of our preferences to those of our wives. Of course this goes both ways, a godly wife should not always be trying to get her way either. It's a godly balancing act of compromise on both parts. However, I believe it's the man's responsibility to initiate by sowing these acts of love and compromise to his wife's wants

and needs. For a woman, one of her biggest needs is for her husband to be a godly example for their children.

As fathers, we are called to teach our children the Word of God and lead them by living out a Godly life in front of them. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 says:

“<sup>6</sup> And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. <sup>7</sup> You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. <sup>8</sup> You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. <sup>9</sup> You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”<sup>3</sup>

Further, Ephesians 6:4 states, “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”<sup>4</sup> My responsibility to my children as they were growing up was to love and care for them, but even more importantly to teach them the things of God, not just by my words, but by my example. Was I living at home what I preached? I can honestly say that for the most part, I did. Was I perfect? By no means, there were definitely times that I blew it with Mary and the kids. Whether it was with my attitude, my anger or my words. However, when I did blow it, I always did my best to make it right with them.

I have found that the failing of many men is their pride. We feel we are right, and we very well may be, however our words and attitude may be completely wrong. This is what we need to repent of, especially with our family. The key is that when we do we make a mistake, we need to own up to it and ask our wife and children to forgive us and then endeavor by the power of the Holy Spirit to not continue in that pattern of behavior. To me the key to being a real man of God is owning up to our failures by repenting first to the Lord and then to those we've hurt, then making the necessary changes not to continue in that behavior.

### **Lesson 4 Questions**

1. Why is it so important to not just “preach” the Word to your wife and children, but to live it front of them?

