

**Pastor Dave Patterson**  
**1 CORINTHIANS**  
**Part 4: "Spiritual Fathers"**

**USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE**

We have provided all the Scriptures referenced in the sermon and some discussion questions for you to use to facilitate a discussion.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together.

While the questions are important, remember your small group's goal is not to pound through the questions but to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships, so knock yourself out with the discussion questions but spend more time laughing than answering the questions.

***True spiritual authority is God's idea: in the home, in the church, and in relationships. God set this system up as a source of security, stability, protection, and provision.***

**[1 Corinthians 4.15-16]**

*For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, **yet you do not have many fathers**; For in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I urge you to imitate me.*

**[1 Corinthians 4.1]**

*This, then, is how you ought to regard us: **as servants** of Christ and **as stewards** of the mysteries God has revealed.*

**[1 Corinthians 4.2, AMP]**

*Moreover, (first and foremost) it is [essentially] required of stewards that a man should **be found faithful** [proving himself worthy of trust.]*

***The problem with promotion is not the promotion itself, but how people get there.***

**[1 Corinthians 4.3-4]**

*As for me, it matters very little how I might be evaluated by you or by any human authority. I don't even trust my own judgment on this point. My conscience is clear, but that doesn't prove I'm right. It is The Lord himself who will examine me and decide.*

***Be careful whose opinion you live your life by!***

**[1 Corinthians 4.5, VOICE]**

*So resist the temptation to act as judges before all the evidence is in. When The Lord comes, He will draw our buried motives, thoughts, and deeds (even things we don't know or admit to ourselves) out of the dark shadows of our hearts into His light. When this happens, **the voice of God will speak to each of us the only praise that will ever matter.***

**[1 Corinthians 4.14]**

*I am not telling you all this so that you'll feel guilty or be ashamed of how you have acted. I am only trying to warn you, **just as a father would warn his children.***

**[1 Corinthians 4.15-16]**

*For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, **yet you do not have many fathers**; For in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I urge you to imitate me.*

### **Spiritual Fathers:**

- 1. Are responsible for bringing people to a place of faith in Jesus (*spiritual birth*)**
- 2. Take responsibility for the spiritual growth of sons and daughters**
- 3. Set an example of how to live for God ("*follow me as I follow Christ*" 1 Corinthians 11.1)**
- 4. Confront and correct their sons and daughters for their good not their harm**
- 5. Never give up on their children...they believe for the best even on the worst day!**

### **[Hosea 11]**

*"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and I called my son out of Egypt. But the more I called to him, the farther he moved from me, offering sacrifices to the images of Baal and burning incense to idols. I myself taught Israel how to walk, leading him along by the hand. But he doesn't know or even care that it was I who took care of him. I led Israel along with my ropes of kindness and love. I lifted the yoke from his neck, and I myself stooped down to feed him. "But since my people refuse to return to me, they will return to Egypt and will be forced to serve Assyria. For my people are determined to desert me. They call the Most High, but they don't truly honor me. "Oh, how can I give you up, Israel? How can I let you go? My heart is torn within me, and my compassion overflows. No, I will not unleash my fierce anger. I will not completely destroy Israel, for I am God and not a mere mortal. I am the Holy One living among you, and I will not come to destroy. "My people will return...And I will bring them home again," says The Lord.*

***No matter how much we reject or rebel against our Heavenly Father, His love for us does not diminish.***

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 1. Who are some instructors in your life? Who are some spiritual parents in your life? What are some of the things that both have passed on to you?**
- 2. How are the natural and spiritual upbringing of children connected? How is each unique?**
- 3. When leaders lead, when they take their rightful role (especially fathers), how does it affect families and the people of God? (Consider things such as: church attendance, connection to the people of God, educational opportunities, and stewardship)**
- 4. How significant is the faithfulness in the little to being entrusted with much? (versus just being talented)**
- 5. What opinions affect how you live personally, and how you influence others? (others' opinions, your family's or leaders' words, your own thoughts, and the voice of culture) What is the "only praise that will ever matter?" [1 Corinthians 4.5]**
- 6. What does the Father Heart of God do for His children? Which of the five actions can you most easily relate to?**