



examples to the flock. We should never tire of being challenged to exemplify a blameless example. The question to be asked is, "How easy do you tire when given a reminder like that?" When someone, whether another brother in the church, your fellow minister, your fellow bishop, or possibly even your wife, or maybe your son, taps you on the shoulder and says, "Here is an area of your life that you would do well to be a better example

in." How do you take it? It tells how easily we tire.

Our example as a minister depends on how badly we want to be a good example. Therefore, the real issue is what is our own attitude about ourselves. If we have a right attitude about ourselves, we have a good foundation for a good example. In Matthew 21:44 Jesus tells us what our attitude should be about ourselves, "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken:

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but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” This is a call to complete brokenness continually before the Lord. There is the key to a perfect Christ-like example. Each new morning we must rise and fall on that rock and be completely broken.

We must experience what Paul testified in Galatians 2:20, where he says, “I am,” not only “I was” but, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” It is in that crucifixion then that we find grace to be godly examples. We find grace — that means we find new life, power, wisdom, and the insight. We find the caution and the reserve to live a godly example and to avoid being a wrong example. Every congregation deserves a crucified minister. Do not ever step out of the bedroom fellow brethren, fellow minister, without experiencing the grace of God to have fallen on that Rock, Christ Jesus. It is the only way to live a life that is worth following.

Then, of course, being human, there is always that possibility of falling. When we have failed to appropriate the grace of God and our example has not been what it

should be (in other words our example has been a bad example) what saves us? Our example has been wrong. We feel terrible inside. The confidence of our people is ready or maybe already has begun to fall. What saves us? Is there any salvation for a minister who has left a bad example? Again, the only answer, the only secret is to come back to that Rock and fall on that Rock, Christ Jesus. However, if you refuse to do that your effectiveness, your ministry will be ground to powder, so to speak. It will simply disintegrate. As well, you will be in danger of that in the final judgment.

We must come back to the Rock when we have failed and there fall down pleading the forgiveness and mercy of God in complete brokenness. There we consecrate our hearts anew, and determine anew, with new resolve, to never do that again. It is the only way to find fulfillment again. David was guilty of some serious sins. What saved him? Was it not Psalm 51? That is what saved him. Otherwise, it would have been hopeless. Peter left a terrible example, even a vulgar example because when he was told, “thy speech bewrayeth thee” (Matthew 26:73), Scripture says that he made sure that his speech did not betray him. He

began to “curse and to swear” (verse 74). What saved him? “He went out, and wept bitterly” (verse 75).

Knowing what we do about Peter’s response after his denial of Christ, causes us to believe that after he was shown that he was a bad example there in Galatians 2, I believe he felt quite bad about it. At least, we get the impression that he willingly took the counsel from his brother Paul, and he probably felt very bad about it.

I would like to make this point briefly. Some of you may recall a few years ago when our son left home for approximately two-and-a-half months. We certainly deeply appreciated your prayers over that time. We do believe they were effective. It meant a lot of us. I know that we were a “put together” family. However, there is only one answer, and there is only one conclusion that we could come to in that time. That was that our home was not as strong as we thought it was. I think that even applies to the congregation too because it involved more than our son.

I would like to read the context at this time. 1 Peter 5:1–11. Verse 3 says, “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.” What does that mean “being

lords over God’s heritage?” One writer says that means not being bosses over God’s heritage. That means not being arrogant, dictatorial and overbearing over those of your charge, rather be examples to the flock. Be a pattern and a model of Christ like living to the flock.

The idea of being lords is contrasted with the thought of being examples. “Neither,” he says, “but be examples to the flock.” That suggests that if our example is such that it does not impress and inspire spiritual people, we will need to resort to lording. That is a poor method. It highlights the forcefulness of a right example. That is why in both lists of the qualifications, in 1 Timothy 3 and in Titus 1, there is heavy stress placed on a man’s example in order to be qualified for leadership. The example of his life, his wife, and his family do play a definite bearing on the effectiveness of his administration. Without a good example a man cannot be the most effective leader.

We would like to look first of all at several reasons why a minister’s example is so crucial. 1) *A minister’s example is crucial because we influence people by what we are and what we do.* a) We influence people by our convictions, how we state them and

how we live them. Our convictions tend to become the convictions of the congregation which we are called to lead. The convictions of the congregation tend to form around our convictions in a greater or lesser degree, but there is a definite significance in that. In time, the convictions of a congregation reflect the strengths and weaknesses of the conviction of its leader.

b) Then in our reactions. The way we react to issues affects the way the congregation reacts to issues. The way we react to situations and people has a large bearing on how they react to such things. In Proverbs we have an interesting proverb where it says, "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man" (Proverbs 27:19). Whether I like to admit it or not, to a greater or lesser degree my congregation mirrors my own life and administration. There is a proverb that applies to raising children, especially teenagers. I think it goes something like this: "Before you are too hard on teenagers, remember who is raising them." There is a principle there that a minister must always remember. Now that does not mean that we do not move ahead and deal with carnality and speak to needs, but let us always consider our own example and make sure that it is

never detracting from the ideals that we are trying to promote.

Sometimes it is very easy to become quite disturbed about some infraction of the standard in the life of one of our people (one of our members) when we ourselves are also infringing on the standard. Somehow it is not as important. That is a bad and a wrong tendency, and is a wrong approach.

2) *Our example is crucial because a man's example validates and complements what he preaches.* When a man gets up behind the pulpit, he needs all the confidence that he can possibly get. He needs all the confidence in his people that he can possibly get. Let us always remember that. Do not look at that carelessly. A good example makes his words go further. It is said of Samuel that he "did let none of his words fall to the ground" (1 Samuel 3:19). One way we do that is by a good example. When a man's example is poor, then his words do not go very far. When he calls his people to do what is right in an area where he himself is amiss, he runs the high risk of being ignored.

An example of that is Eli in relation to his own sons. The Scriptures picture to us that Eli did say some things that were right as far as they went, but why

did his sons not heed him? In 1 Samuel 2:22–25 we read, “Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD’S people to transgress. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.” He identified the sin. He told them that they were wrong, and he told him they should not do it. Why was he not effective? Why would they not listen?

I think the key is in verse 29. Let me read verse 28. The man of God came to Eli and said this, “And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and hon-

ourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?” I believe there was a reason why Eli was a heavy man. The Scripture does say that there was a selfishness coming forth in their administration of the sacrifice at that time. The Lord told him “You are making yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings.” Eli was part of the problem. The problem was equally the father’s. He honoured his sons above the Lord and made himself fat.

3) *A good example is crucial is because bad examples cause the enemies of God to blaspheme.* David, after his sin with Bathsheba was assured that, “The LORD also hath put away thy sin . . . Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme” (2 Samuel 12:13). I do not believe there is any minister that wants a terrible testimony. Do we? Certainly not! It does not make us very effective. David had to live with that terrible testimony. It is not for naught that 1 Timothy 3, in the list for qualifications for a leader says, “Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil” (1 Timothy 3:7).

4) *It is crucial the leader have a good example because a good example adds a dimension to a man's ministry that cannot be said in words.* This is why the Lord became incarnate in Jesus Christ, when He introduced the new covenant to us. The new covenant was first introduced by example in the New Testament so that He might show us the living character and the works of God.

For the remainder of this message, *we would like to look at the world's greatest example, the example of Jesus Christ.* As the world's greatest example, He is also the minister's greatest example in his work and calling. We would like to notice how Christ conducted Himself, in His attitude, word, conduct and administration.

1) *Christ, first of all is our example in personal victory.* We can have victory over temptation. It is very important if we follow the example of Jesus. Remember, in Matthew 4, the devil came with three angles to seek to overthrow Christ. The first one was an attempt to overthrow Him in His physical appetites. The devil said, "command that these stones be made bread" (Matthew 4:3). Jesus refused. He would not. We are as human as Christ. Our example in morality and in temperance

must be as sterling as Christ's or our effectiveness will be hindered.

The devil then tried to get Jesus to "show off." He took Him up to the pinnacle of the Temple and told Him "cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee" (Matthew 4:6). That is a temptation that ministers face. That is putting it very bluntly, but that is what it is. It is the temptation for the ministry to flaunt themselves before people to get the praise of men. Let us be an example of humility.

Last of all, there was the temptation of ego, where the Devil offered Christ all the kingdoms of the world if He would but fall down and worship him. Jesus made it clear that his offers were of no value to Him and He would not consider taking instructions from the devil no matter how legitimate they sounded. We simply do not do that.

2) *Christ is also our example in loyalty.* In John 8:29 Jesus says, "I do always those things that please him [the Father]." The Scripture also says in Romans 15:3, "For even Christ pleased not himself." Rather He was constant, seeking to please the Father. Last of all, in that pivotal decision there in the Garden, He finally, or He

resigned His will into the will of God when He said, “not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42). Christ is our example in loyalty.

3) *Christ is our example in dedication to the work.* Every minister must be dedicated and must also give an example of deep dedication to the work. Jesus said, “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4). Before engaging in the serious task of selecting His twelve disciples, which later became the first administrators of the Church, giving the Church its foundation. That was so crucial that He “continued all night in prayer” (Luke 6:12). Ephesians 2:20 would tell us that the Church is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.”

He was an example of dedication in feeding the flock as the context told us in 1 Peter 5:2. Jesus was an example of this, “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint,” (the feeling of “must I”) “but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.” Jesus spent many an hour talking to souls about their needs. He spent long days in preaching and teaching in homes, by the sea side, on the

mountains and in numerous places. He dedicated His life to feeding the flock. It was because He had the conviction that men must know. Before anybody can do anything, he must first know. Men must know.

We also see a remarkable evidence of His dedication in lifting men from their sorrows and woes. In Acts 10:38, we have this testimony of Jesus, “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed,” (that means reigned down) “of the devil; for God was with him.” Jesus is known for His generous giving and good works. That was a characteristic of the life of Christ. His was a life of continual outpouring, giving of Himself for the spiritual needs of others, and last of all pouring out even His soul unto death for us.

4) *Christ is also our example in attitude.* In Luke 9:51–56, we have Jesus with His disciples en route to Jerusalem. Since Jesus was first of all a Jew and because He was en route to the “home base” of the Jews, the Samaritans, who were at enmity against the Jews, had reservations. The Scripture says that Jesus sent two of His disciples ahead to make reservations of

their lodging. “And it came to pass, when the time had come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John” (sons of thunder remember) “saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.” Christ is our example in attitude. Jesus was simply looking ahead to the reception of the Samaritans. He saw that attitude would never work, much less does it work in the administration of the Church.

5) *We see Christ meekly accepting and enduring the reproach of the Gospel.* We have had several allusions to that in the context of 1 Peter 5. Peter says in verse 1 that he was a “witness of the sufferings of Christ.” He saw Christ’s sufferings. Then in verse 10, “But the God of all

grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” Christ was our example and we are called to also suffer with Him.

6) *Christ was an example in preparing His followers for His departure.* I am sure if you have ever been a passenger on an airplane, you recall hearing, immediately before the plane began to move, this voice, “Attendants, cross check for departure.” That is the word of Christ to us as His ministers today. We hear that call daily. “Make ready for departure.” Christ’s own example, His life, His character, His teachings, His words, His counsel, His warnings all made preparation for the moment when He would leave. I would like to read Acts 1:9 which tells us about His ascension. “And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.”

Christ’s work and His example was so complete that when it was time for Him to leave, He simply left. He did not even as much as say, “Now, in about five minutes I will leave you.” He was there. He gave His last statement — the Great Commission, and then He began to rise. There was some-

thing very authoritative about His ascension that was consistent with His life. His work had given Him the confidence that He could go.

Fellow ministers how has your example been? Is your flock ready for your departure? Can you say with Paul in 2 Timothy 4:6–8, “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have fin-

ished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” If that is your testimony, then “when the chief Shepherd shall appear,” (and He will appear) may you and I “. . . receive [that] crown of glory that fadeth not away” (1 Peter 5:4).

**The Ministry —  
“Being Ensamples to the Flock” — 1 Peter 5:3**

From a message by Marvin Rohrer  
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**The Influence of the Minister’s Family**

Each of us has been influenced, and is influencing other individuals. Each of our families has been influenced, and our families are also influencing other people and other individuals. This matter of influence is something that we not only receive but we give. I believe that is especially in focus in our assignment here. I thought of the verse in Romans 14:7 where it says, “none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to him-

self.” That includes the thought that we really cannot isolate ourselves, or our families from being influenced, or from influencing others. It is possible that when our families are less than they ought to be, and are not doing as they ought to be doing, we like to console ourselves with the thought that maybe influence is not so great.

However, let us keep in mind that not only are our families being influenced, but they are

also being an influence on others. God had this to say of Abraham, “For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him.” He knew what Abraham would do. (Genesis 18:19) He knew the influence that he would endeavour to affect his family with. God also went on to say this, referring to his children and his household, “they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment.” Now, talk about the influence that Abraham’s family would be and what they were. It was through Abraham’s posterity that the families of the earth were blessed. They were a tremendous influence upon many other peoples.

As the minister’s of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, do we not have a similar desire for our families? We desire that our offspring would have a good effect in the lives of others through their example, their persuasion and various other means. The psalmist said in Psalm 127:4, “As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.” We cannot do everything, and we cannot wield all the influence we would like to, but possibly, we can extend some of that righteous and godly influence through the lives of our children “as arrows are in the hands

of a mighty man.”

In Psalm 128:3, “Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.” That is speaking there of the fruitfulness that can be experienced as that influence is what it ought to be. With the passing of time, the importance of exerting a godly influence through our families, I think increasingly weighs upon us. I must admit that at the age of sixteen I probably did not sense the influence that went forth from a minister’s family, as I understand that today. Probably even today, I do not understand all the involvements of that. However, we do need to be conscious of the role that an ordained man’s family does fill, even though there is a side of that which we would like to shrink from. We do need to be conscious of that role.

I would like to, 1) *Look at a few Scriptural examples.* I have picked out three that I would like us to consider very briefly before we look at some more practical applications and thoughts related to this subject. We are familiar with Joshua’s declaration in Joshua 24:15. He was presenting to the people their options. He said, “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve;

whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." It is our choice. I would like to think that Joshua's declaration and his intent on this occasion is something that helped him to influence his own family and then in turn they were an influence for righteous living for others.

Notice what verse 31 says, "And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel." I personally would like to think that Joshua's family helped to influence the congregation to that end. Joshua's mind was set — whatever the choice of the people, that was up to them, but as for him, he would serve God. His intent for his family was the same. His desire was that they would serve God too.

The people on this occasion were moved by the force of his arguments. They were moved, by his example of choosing what was right. Very likely, his family helped them to make the right choice as well. Today the challenge for us is not to do as the

most do (as someone said) but to do as the best do. We want to do what God wants us to do. Someone said it this way, "Those who are heaven bound must swim against the stream." It will take determination on our part, first of all, and a declaration on our part, that we personally will serve the Lord and then our intent is that our family would do the same.

Turn with me also to 1 Kings 22:42, 43, Jehoshaphat was the son of Asa, "Jehoshaphat was thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless the high places were not taken away; for the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places." The thought that stood out to me as I read this commentary of Jehoshaphat's life, was that he walked in all the ways of his father. It seems to me that king Asa, was endeavouring to exert a godly influence upon his son Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat responded to that influence, and walked in the ways of his father. It says, "he turned not aside."

The influences that were brought to bear upon him were great and it helped him to walk in the right way. Let us not forget, fathers and ministers that many times our children are walking in our steps. We want to make sure that we are walking right so that their path will be right as they follow our footsteps.

*On the other side, there is a negative influence that can go forth.* I invite you to turn to 1 Samuel 2. We notice readily the influence that was permeating from Eli's family. In verses 23, 24 we have Eli speaking to his sons, "And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD'S people to transgress." In verse 29, a man of God came to Eli. He raised this question and challenge, "Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?"

Notice also what God had to say to the child Samuel in regard to Eli's house in 3:13, "For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his

sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." It is very obvious that Eli's family was having a negative and evil influence upon the congregation and upon the children of Israel. The congregation was feeling the effects of that. Possibly, that was one of the factors that helped Hannah dedicate her son to God, that perhaps, here was one who could help to stem that drift in spiritual life. It also become apparent from these Scriptures that, at least a degree of responsibility for the influence that was going out to the congregation rested on Eli's shoulders. God said that in 1 Samuel 3:13. Eli knew about it, "his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." Because of that he bore a responsibility in the judgment that would come.

2) We have looked at a few Scriptural examples. There would be many others we could consider. *I have chosen now to consider the demands that this opportunity brings upon us.* I would like for us to consider the privilege we have to influence others through our family as an opportunity that we have to serve God and to be of service to Him in the work of the Kingdom. However, as an opportunity that does bring demands upon us. We have the opportunity to influence

through our families, but because of that there are some demands that are placed upon us. I would like to read Titus 1:6. In the qualifications that are given for the ordination of elders we have this statement. “If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.” I would understand this is speaking of children who are believing children and children who obey quickly and quietly. We have a similar verse in 1 Timothy 3:4, where it suggests that this is the type of children that ought to be part of a leader’s family.

One of the thoughts that we receive from a qualification like this is that for a leader to be effective he must show qualities of being an effective parent. If he will not be an effective parent, likely his effectiveness as a leader in the church, will not be very great. I would readily admit that the challenge which faces us today where we are, of being an effective parent and also an effective leader is a rather daunting one. It is a challenge to be both. I suppose it is that way because both are demanding. They are both soul searching and they are both time consuming. To be an effective parent, requires searchings of heart. It requires much time, and the same is true with

being an effective leader in the church of God. It requires soul searching. It requires much time. It requires many things of us. However, it is essential that a godly leader in the church sets an example in his home.

A leader’s influence is greatly hindered when his children are, as this passage describes some children — those engaging in riot or unruly. If we have unruly and rebellious children, it will hinder the good influence that we desire to exert upon our congregations and upon the Church. When we have children that do not embrace the way of life that I am preaching, it will hinder my effectiveness in preaching the Gospel. We are influencing others. Our families are influencing others and either we will influence them in a negative way, or else we will influence them in a positive way — in godliness, in righteousness, or the opposite of that. Influence is not neutral. It is either positive or negative.

We know that in our parental responsibilities, when we give in to indulgences in our children we do not see the desired results in their lives. When we give in to indulgences as parents with our children, it will have a negative effect upon congregational and church life too. We think of David as a godly man and one

who exerted a godly influence upon the congregation of Israel and he did that. The Scriptures tell us that David, with regard to his son Adonijah, he never told him “No.” “His father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so” (1 Kings 1:6)? Somehow, he could not bring himself to withstand Adonijah’s wishes. As a result of that, the influence that went out to the congregation, was a negative one. It did not help them in their allegiance to the cause of God, in the congregation. Rather, it caused many to be swayed in their allegiance to the king and to God.

I had to think of Samson’s parents. On one occasion Samson told them about a woman he had seen and he said, “Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well” (Judges 14:3). They gave into that. Now they were not necessarily leaders in the congregation of Israel, but their capitulation to his request did have its repercussions among the congregation. As fathers, parents in the home and also leaders in the church, it is imperative that we do not give into the parental indulgences that we would be tempted to.

We dare not as fathers in the home, and leaders in the church, embrace a Hezekiah mentality that as long as it is good now, it

will be all right. We need to see beyond today and see what we can be doing for our children, and for our families that will advance the cause of God in the days and the years to come as the Lord tarries.

I am not here to say that as leaders we place our families on a pedestal and say to the congregation, “I have achieved. You do what I do, and then everything will be right,” because we know that our families are far from perfect. Our children embarrass us at times. We discover rather abruptly at times that they do not always think the way that we do. They do not always think the way that we would like them to think as it relates to various issues. Other times we might even be disappointed in some of the choices or decisions that they make. They are far from perfect. However, by the grace of God and through His help, we want to do all that we can for them to lend a good influence through them, through these families that God has graciously entrusted into our care.

3) *Some practical areas where our families ought to be giving a conservative influence, a positive influence in the cause of the Lord.* Following that, I want to consider some things that we as leaders ought to be doing to help

accomplish this end. The list I have here is by no means exhaustive. It is some that came to my mind as I prepared for this message. These are areas where our families ought to be exemplary and fine in the cause of Christ and the Church.

A) *They ought to be a role model, if we want to call it that, for others in the congregation.* Proverbs 29:15 tells us “a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.” A child who is allowed to do as he pleases and have whatever he wants, will become an unruly person. Should not our families be an influence to the congregation in the matter of discipline? As leaders in our discipline of our families, we ought to be showing to the congregation that this is something that needs to be done. It is an imperative. God has called us to train and to instruct our children and to discipline them. They need to see that happening in our homes. Home training is imperative if our children will be useful in the Church and in society.

What is it saying to the congregation, brethren, if my children are always unruly in the after service? Or, what is it saying to the congregation if my children are always causing the problems in school. It is suggest-

ing that maybe I am not doing the discipline work that I ought to be doing. The influence from my family then, is not doing what it ought to do in the lives of the families in the congregation.

In our discipline booklet on page 20, we say, “ordained brethren shall teach these standards diligently.” One of the ways we do that is by showing how it is done. Brethren, let us be faithful in meting out, and exercising discipline, especially as we think of our young children that they might grow up to be those young people and then adults that God can use in His program. They learn to then submit to that discipline and discipline their own lives to the extent where God can work through them.

B) *Another area where our families need to be giving a positive influence is in their attire, in their dress, in their clothing that they wear.* It seems to me that the members in our congregation should not be able to justify their appearance by the appearance of the minister’s children, or perhaps his wife. How do we clothe our little ones? Do we do that in modesty and simplicity, and not the ornamental extras? Or, on our little daughters, inserting those contrasting colours or using contrasting materials? Do

we make sure that they are a model of simplicity and modesty? What shirts do our sons wear for worship services? We promote the traditional white and blue shirts. Are our sons wearing those shirts? It says a lot to the congregation.

Can we expect the sisters in our congregation to get rid of their low-cut shoes if our daughters wear shoes that we have a little difficulty deciding if they are low cut or not? What influence will that exert upon the congregation? Or, if our young men, our sons have their hair cut very short, then how can we encourage a little bit longer hair on some of our young people? Or, if the minister's children come around in casual clothing. How can we expect the other young people to dress differently, if our sons are wearing jeans to go travelling, or our daughters that are wearing jackets of bright colours? What do we expect from the youth and young people in our congregations? Our families need to be giving a conservative influence in the area of dress and attire.

C) *Our families need to be giving a conservative influence in lifestyle as well.* I am thinking primarily of our living standards. I read a few verses from Jeremiah recently regarding Jonadab and

his descendants. He gave a number of practical directives to his family. He told them "Ye shall drink no wine" (Jeremiah 35:6). "Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard" (verse 7). They were to dwell in tents. We could say he was a bit radical in what he was imposing on them. Maybe it seemed that way to the family, but it did a number of things for them. One thing it did for his family was that it helped them remember who they were. It helped them remember that they were strangers in a land. They would not be here forever. It guarded against the luxury and the sensuality of their day. It fortified them against the day of trouble and calamity that would come upon them. It was a family that learned to live by rule and by discipline. It did all those things and perhaps even more for the family.

Is it not right that, as a ministry, we would impose some rules and guidelines on our family too? What does it say to the congregation if our family, my family is on the cutting edge, whether it is in technology or home furnishings or in the automobiles that I might purchase for my sons? If we fail in areas like this, it will hinder our people remembering that they too are

strangers and pilgrims here. It will stifle that awareness, and keep that influence from going out that reminds them that they are merely continuing here for a time.

D) *Our families ought to be giving a positive influence in the area of social life and activities.* You with me, know that in our schedules and home life there is usually a lot of activity. Maybe the challenge for some of our children is to learn to be content at home. Because of our schedules, they may have a more active schedule as well. It can become a part of them. Some of them do enjoy that. They learn to enjoy the broader contacts across the church and that can be good. However, we need to be conscious that they do learn a contentment of being at home. If my children are always on the move, attending this gathering or another reunion, is it not setting the pace for others to do the same? We ought to be helping our sons and our daughters experience a contentment and a rest of being at home and enjoying family life.

Should it be the minister's son or the minister's daughter that charges the atmosphere when they go to Bible school? Or, that is the life of the party when a group of them is together? If we allow our sons or our daughters

to be involved in occasional play activity, how can we expect the other youth of our congregation to understand our church's position on activities like that? I believe it is in our homes, where our wives and daughters ought to be giving the examples of being keepers at home and not those visiting from house to house and being "a busybody in other men's matters" (1 Peter 4:15). Let us be an example and lend a conservative influence in social life and activity.

E) *The music interests that our families would have.* I would simply raise the challenge that as ministers we are aware of what music our families listen to. What tapes do my sons have? What tapes do your sons have. What music are they listening to? I have heard various discussions about some objectionable music that some of our young people have and listen to. Many times the idea is presented that the ordained men's sons are part of this group that has that kind of music. Brethren that ought not to be. The influence that goes forth from our families in this area should be helping our congregations come to rest with our church position regarding music and musical instruments. We need to be alert and it is true that many of the things that we hear

are not necessarily factual, maybe not quite the way it is perceived, and I simply share that for what it is worth.

4) *In the last part of the message, I would like to consider the minister's responsibility.* How can we as fathers in the home, as ministers in the church, help our families to come to the place where they wield godly influence on the lives of others? Can we simply speak the word and it happens? We know that it is absurd to even think of that. It is not something that happens in a day, or even in a year. Rather, it is something that we work with. The entire time that these children are entrusted into our care. It is an ongoing work. I have a few things that I would like to suggest that I think will help us to this end. Again, it is by no means exhaustive. As we look at some of these things, it helps us in our relationships with our families.

A) One responsibility we have is that we must enjoy our work. Is that saying too much? The demands that are placed upon us as a father in the home and as a minister of the Gospel are heavy. The demands are great. I believe it is imperative, even though it is great, that we enjoy the work. I am not saying that we make fun, or that it is fun to us in the respect

that the world thinks of fun, but if we complain about the demands of the responsibilities that God has placed on us, we are speaking volumes to our family are we not? They can catch that little word of complaint that we might utter. Our families ought to see that we enjoy being at home and that we enjoy fulfilling the work that God has given us to do in the church. They ought to be able to see that we enjoy fulfilling these pastoral duties. When that is merely an obligation on our part, it will become a resentment to our families. They will resent that intrusion that it brings not only in our life but in theirs.

When we enjoy the work, it will make it a lot easier for them to accept the role that this work brings upon them. When they can see us enjoying the work that God has given us to do, they can then better accept the role that places them in as the minister's child.

B) *Another responsibility that the minister has is that he must live what he preaches.* Our family observes our life more closely than anyone else. They know us better than anyone else knows us. They see any tint of hypocrisy that might be there. When they see that (if they see that) that pucker becomes enlarged in their minds and limits the influence

that we can wield upon them. If they see that we are not upholding or living according to what we are preaching and saying is the right thing and the right way to go, we will not be as effective with them as we would like to be and as we need to be. It will be more difficult for us to influence them for the right. The statement that more is caught than taught, is true in parent-child relationships too. Let us remember that. They see more, learn more, and “pick up” more from what they observe than what we actually say and tell them. When they see us practicing Monday through Saturday, what we preach on Sunday it will affect them for good, will it not? It will influence them in the paths of righteousness and truth. Then, in turn, they can be that same influence upon the lives of others.

C) *We must share with our families.* We need to be sensitive to their needs, not thinking only of the physical needs but the spiritual as well. In Judges 13:8, Manoah prayed for the instruction regarding his coming family. Job 1:5 tells us how Job sanctified his children. He was sharing for their spiritual needs. He had their spiritual interests at heart. He was concerned that they would serve God and not do anything that would hinder their

relationship with Him. As fathers, we need to be available to discuss matters with our children when they need it, and not when it is convenient for us. We need to be there to share with them, and to be able to help meet their spiritual needs. I was impressed in looking over the advice that David had for Solomon near the conclusion of David’s life, as Solomon was commencing the work of leading the people. David had time to share with him and to give some practical help and teaching to him that would guide him in his ministry in the congregation. We need to be ready to advise our children to help them face the weighty matters and issues of life.

As fathers, we need to be willing at times to say, “No,” to them. Even when we know they do not want to hear it. Even when we know it means they will need to do a little differently than some of the rest in the congregation. We must be willing to share with them in that way.

D) *Right along with that another responsibility we have is to budget our time.* As I said earlier, we have the welfare of the church on our hearts, but we also have the welfare of our families, and of our homes. There are times we do need to say “No,” to

some broader involvements in church life for the family's sake. I know it is a bit difficult to find the proper balance in all of this and at times perhaps the family can help us to find that balance and to share their advice in other activities that we might become involved in. If we fail, or if we become involved in church activities to the extent that we do not nurture and direct our families as we ought, we will not be really effective in influencing others for right.

I am not saying by this that time is the only factor that enters in. We can spend a lot of time with our families and still not be exerting the influence upon them that we ought. The time that we do spend with them needs to be quality time that helps them understand the principles of truth, and the direction we give helps them in the right way.

E) *Another responsibility that we have as ministers is to protect our families.* I am not suggesting we do as Eli apparently did. I am not suggesting that we coddle them, or that we keep anyone from touching them when they need some correction or discipline. I am not suggesting that at all. In fact, we must not do that. When they need correction, when they have transgressed, we must support any action that needs to

be taken to help them back to the right path again. As I think of the minister needing to protect his family, what I am thinking of is that we need to protect them in the sense that we do not unduly burden them with exposure to church problems, or even to family difficulties that we might be facing, or some of the family pressures that we might face. We want to protect them from some of those pressures.

As it relates to church problems or church issues there are many things that could provide choice conversation items in family life (maybe around the table). But, for the sake of the confidences that are placed in us, we do well to leave many of those things unsaid. If our families, our children, or even our wives become what I might call the town criers (those who went through the cities announcing and telling the news) it will foster alienation and resentment on the part of the congregation. Maybe at times we receive some criticism of our families or of our children. At times like that, we do want to benefit from that criticism — that constructive help that might come our way, but probably, at times like that, we should absorb most of that criticism ourselves. If we receive criticism maybe for what one of

our children have done, the temptation for us is to vent our frustration then on that child. Perhaps we should absorb that criticism ourselves. Maybe it was even my own fault that the child acted the way it did, and maybe we should shoulder some of that responsibility ourselves. That does not mean we do not try to help our child, but we should not vent the frustration that might come along with receiving that criticism.

F) *The minister himself, must respect authority.* The minister's responsibility is to help produce, or to produce a family that wields a godly influence. Korah, Dathan and Abiram failed. It affected their families. It affected almost the entire congregation of Israel. Brethren, we cannot teach submission if we fail to submit ourselves. If we are not submitting one to another, or are resisting the advice of our ministry brethren, or make light of the advice that they would share with us, what will it do to our children? Will it not do the same in them? They will esteem the advice we have very lightly, and will not accept it. They will simply laugh that off too. Our family's frame of reference comes by their observation of those whom they are close to. As fathers in the home, let us stay close to our

children. Let us, in our lives, exemplify those ideals that we want them to pattern and to imitate. May we be able to say to our children like the apostle Paul said to the Church, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1).

In summary and conclusion I would read Hebrews 11:7, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." That verse stood out to me perhaps in a way it did not before. Noah, because of his faith in God, prepared this ark for the purpose of saving his family, for the purpose of saving his house. His goal, his objective in responding to God was that his posterity would be saved. Not he alone, but that his family would be saved. Therefore, he prepared this ark. He used the means he could to provide for their salvation. As he did that, not only did he save his house, but he condemned the world.

An influence went forth, not only from his life, and the building of the ark. The work that he was doing for his family spoke to those about him, and to the community. As a result of that he became the "heir of the right-

eousness.” That was the personal reward that he received. “Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable” (verse 12). This verse focusses

primarily on Abraham, but it does show the extent of a godly person’s influence. May we do all within our means and power that not only a godly influence would go forth from our lives, but from the lives of our family. May God help us to that end.

## **The Influence of the Minister’s Family**

From a message by Dennis Martin

Thursday, December 02, 2004

Thirty-Eighth Annual

Ministers’ Bible Study Fellowship

Numidia Mennonite Bible School

### **Scripture References**

<b>Genesis</b>	<b>Proverbs</b>	<b>1 Corinthians</b>
18:19	27:19	11:1
	29:15	
<b>Joshua</b>		<b>Galatians</b>
24:15	<b>Jeremiah</b>	2:20
24:31	35:6, 7	
		<b>Ephesians</b>
<b>Judges</b>	<b>Matthew</b>	2:20
13:8	4:3	
14:3	4:6	<b>1 Timothy</b>
	21:44	3:4
<b>1 Samuel</b>	26:73	3:7
2:22–25	26:74	
2:23, 24	26:75	<b>2 Timothy</b>
2:29		4:6–8
3:13		
3:19	<b>Luke</b>	<b>Titus</b>
3:28, 29	6:12	1:6
12:13	9:51–56	
	22:42	<b>Hebrews</b>
<b>1 Kings</b>		11:7
1:6	<b>John</b>	11:12
22:42, 43	8:29	
		<b>1 Peter</b>
<b>Job</b>	<b>Acts</b>	4:15
1:5	1:9	5:3
	10:38	33, 36
		36
<b>Psalms</b>	<b>Romans</b>	5:4
127:4	14:7	5:10
128:3	15:3	
		41

## Sermon Outlines

### 4. Subject: *Youth*

#### Title: **Parental Responsibility in Developing Youth With A Vision**

- I. Six marks of youth with vision.
  1. Youth who have an understanding and respect for the law of sowing and reaping, or cause and effect.
  2. Young people who appreciate the need for, and the safety of, separation from the world.
  3. Youth who clearly identify with the people of God.
  4. There is a wholesome respect of delegated authority.
  5. Youth who are diligent in their personal devotion and obedience to God.
  6. There is a mark of courage to stand for God at all costs.
- II. Parental responsibility in developing youth with a vision.
  - Responsibility clearly laid upon fathers and upon parents.
  - It is an ongoing challenge for fathers to keep the teachings of the Scripture, the commandments of the Lord, foremost in our own minds and hearts, and to be talking about these things to our sons and daughters as they are growing up in our homes and around us.
    1. We want to avoid the Hezekiah mentality.
    2. Parents cannot wait to start until they are teenagers.
    3. We understand that all of us as parents need some help.
    4. We need to understand as someone has said it, “there is a time in the life of every problem, when it is big enough to be identified and small enough to do something about it.”
    5. Where there is a forthrightness and an appreciation for the church, and a respect for church leadership, including a respect that comes out around dinner conversations and all the involvements of church life, it has a way of blessing the hearts of growing young people.
- III. Examples of Parents in the Scriptures.
  1. Joseph’s parents.
    - A. One of the things that we as fathers need to teach our children is when to give up and when not to give up.
  2. David’s parents.
  3. Daniel’s parents.
  4. Noah.
  5. The Rechabites.
    - A. We teach them youth to respond to restrictions respectfully and to be happy in it.

6. Timothy's grandmother and mother.
7. Moses' parents.

5. Subject: *Nonconformity to the World in our Entertainment*

Title: **The Influence of the Radio**

I. The Bible speaks of the ungodly's counsel — there are a lot of suggestions on the radio.

II. The Bible talks about the sinner's way.

1. The Scriptures also talk about the scornful.

2. A man will never sit with the scorners if he first does not stand in the way of sinners. A man will never stand in the way of sinners if he does not first walk in that way as well — in the counsel of the ungodly.

3. The Scripture describes a principle concerning the ungodly — we are to avoid it. We are not to try to control it.

4. History proves the validity of this.

5. The media are trying to please the crowd.

III. God calls us to unwavering purpose and performance to serve Him.

IV. As we are blessed with right thought patterns throughout the day, it leads to fruitful living.

V. The media system is very effective in manipulating people's thoughts. We see evidence of that in those around us.

1. The media system is very effective in diverting one's thoughts.

2. The media system is very effective in controlling one's thoughts.

3. The media is very effective in gradually shaping the pattern of thinking of people.

VI. Throughout Bible times, God called His people to make a difference.

VII. Some specific objections.

1. The speakers.

- A. Bible Preachers

2. The majority of the communication on the radio .

- A. The majority of songs are evil, sensual and man centred.

- B. The advertisements.

- C. The news.

D. The media system is very effective in developing a dependence upon itself.

3. The structure of the broadcast.

6. Subject: *Anabaptist Distinctives*

Title: **Distinctive Anabaptist Beliefs**

1. The authority of the Scriptures
2. The liberty of conscience
3. Voluntary church membership
4. Believer's Baptism
5. Discipleship
6. Separation of Church and State
7. Nonresistance
8. Non-swearing of oaths
9. Nonconformity
10. A high view of the Church
11. The innocence of children
12. Evangelistic Zeal

7. Subject: *Inspirational*

Title: **The Sin Not Unto Death — 1 John 5:16**

Introduction: — There is a special blessing in studying some of the portions of Scripture that God has given to us that are not immediately clear.

— The writer, through this chapter emphasizes the importance of faith.

— What is the writer speaking of when he says, “There is a sin unto death?”

— Our verse says, “there is a sin not unto death.” How do we understand this?

— Another question that faces us immediately as we study these verses is, “Is it possible for us to pray for the sin of someone else?”

— Another question we could ask is, “Why should we pray for a sin that does not have consequences anyway?”

— All prayer must be according to God's will.

I. What is a “sin not unto death” in verse 16?

— We should pray for everyone that has life.

A. A sin that is not unto death is not to be confused with a

sin that is unto death.

B. We would say that this sin not unto death is a sin we can pray for.

— A suggestion of a sin we cannot pray for.

1. A sin that is not unto death is a sin of innocence.

2. There are the sins of ignorance. Romans 5:13; Acts 17:30.

— We must understand that God is never happy with us living in sin, even in ignorance.

3. There is a sin in development.

4. A sin that is not unto death, is unrighteousness that we will not be held accountable for.

— Another description we could have for this sin is that it is a sin that hinders our life but does not cause death.

Conclusion.

## The Ministry

I. **The Minister as a Man.** — J. S. Shoemaker.

Regenerated — Spirit-filled — Studious — Sober-minded — Industrious and honest — Courteous and hospitable — Clean habits — Conservative — Aggressive.

II. **The Minister as a Preacher.** — J. W. Weaver.

His sermon preparation — Selection of texts — Sticking to the text — Expository preaching — Adapting sermons to people's needs — Making sermons concise and pointed — Making use of incidents and illustrations — Where, when, and to whom to preach — Preaching the whole Gospel.

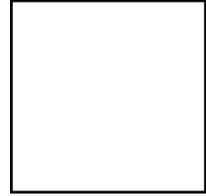
III. **The Minister as a Pastor.** — J. S. Shoemaker.

Feeding the Flock with spiritual food — Looking after the needs of each individual member — Watching against: destructive agencies — The evangelist of his own Congregation — Keeping in touch with the young people — Encouraging the workers — Making pastoral visits — Comforting the weak and warning the unruly — Approving things that are excellent.

IV. **The Minister as an Example.** — J. S. Shoemaker.

In character — In conversation — In his daily conduct — In his domestic life — In his social relations — In business matters — In giving — In his attire — As a personal worker — As a dispenser of good cheer.

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