

Worship Planning Chart

Speaker: Ralph Findling (冯飞鹏)

Speaking Date: February 26, 2012

Passage (Scripture passage(s) from which sermon is drawn)	1 Cor 4:15
Theme (Subject of the message)	Spiritual Fathering
Message (The main idea of the sermon)	
Response (Expressed response people will make as a result of the worship service)	Allow someone to take the role of spiritual father, so that they can help you mature in Christ.

Key Biblical Truth ¹ (Simple clear statement communicating the theme of the service to the congregation)	God calls us to be a spiritual father one or two others in the body of Christ, so that they might grow in character.
God's Attribute ¹ (Character of God relating to the theme)	Father

Scripture Reading ¹ (Scripture that is read aloud relating to the passage)	1 Cor 4:14-21
Music ³ (In singing praises and in meditation)	
Visual metaphor ³ (video, drama, and decoration)	
Verbal metaphor ³ (poem, readings from a text, testimony)	
Message Upload ^{1, 2}	[YES] or [NO] No (by request only for security reasons)

One Bible Text	1 Cor 4:14-21
One Theme Statement	Spiritual Fathering
One Doctrine	Sanctification
One Need in the Congregation	Allow someone to help build depth of character in your life
One Image	The training of a knight
One Mission/Challenge	Growing deep in

14 I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. 15 **For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers.** For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. 16 I urge you, then, be imitators of me. 17 That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church. 18 Some are arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. 19 But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their

power.²⁰ For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power.²¹ What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?

1 Cor 4:14-21

Introduction

- The imagination of a boy is easily captured by stories of knights, swords, enemies, and battles
- In the past heroes were men of valor, men who had character that matched their skill with the sword. In the end evil was defeated and justice prevailed.
- The hero in the story often needed to go through some kind of training before triumphing over evil. A good hero, besides being a good swordsman, also had things like: discipline, honor, integrity, loyalty, and honesty
- This is the longing of many children, and not a few adults, to be properly trained so that they would prove to be faithful in the quests (tasks, assignments) given to them
- often this tasking of training rested on the father. When the father was not able to fulfill this role, a mentor of some kind would step in to fill the void

Page 1: Brokenness in the Bible

There was a man in Israel chosen by God to be king over Israel, this is what we know about him from the Bible:

- he was handsome, young, and taller than any other man in Israel

And he had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people (1 Samuel 9:2 ESV)

Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince over my people Israel. He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have seen my people, because their cry has come to me.” When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord told him, “Here is the man of whom I spoke to you! He it is who shall restrain my people (1 Samuel 9:16-17 ESV)

- chosen and anointed as prince over Israel
Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, “Has not the Lord anointed you to be prince over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the Lord and you will save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. And this shall be the sign to you that the Lord has anointed you to be prince over his heritage (1 Samuel 10:1 ESV)
- God filled him with the HS, and changed his heart!
Then the Spirit of the Lord will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man (1 Samuel 10:6 ESV)
When he turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. And all these signs came to pass that day (1 Samuel 10:9 ESV)
When they came to Gibeah, behold, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he prophesied among them (1 Samuel 10:10 ESV)
- gave him authority and blessed all that he did!
Now when these signs meet you, do what your hand finds to do, for God is with you (1 Samuel 10:7 ESV)

When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the Ammonites, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned he routed them (1 Samuel 14:47 ESV) (even after his sin!)

- he had wisdom, and humility
But some worthless fellows said, “How can this man save us?” And they despised him and brought him no present. But he held his peace (1 Samuel 10:27 ESV)
And Samuel said, “Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king over Israel (1 Samuel 15:17 ESV)

Who was this man? King Saul! With such a powerful anointing and calling on his life, you would think he could not fail! He became king at age 30, but within 3 years of God choosing him, God had already rejected him! He held his position as king, however, for 42 years.

What happened? What went wrong? His life was filled with:

- disobedience (1 Samuel 13:13 ESV) (1 Samuel 15:9 ESV)
- foolish vows (1 Samuel 14:24 ESV)
- pride, made a monument to himself (1 Samuel 15:12 ESV)
- compromise
- blaming others
- jealousy
- there was innocent blood on his hands
- etc.

His failures were not a result of God's choice or equipping. He the foundation of his character was not strong enough to handle the responsible God called him too.

But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you (1 Samuel 13:14 ESV)

I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments. ” And Samuel was angry, and he cried to the Lord all night (1 Samuel 15:11 ESV)

And Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And the Lord regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel (1 Samuel 15:35 ESV)

Page 2: Brokenness in the Word

As a teen, Zachery Tims life was a mess. He had served time for attempted murder and was a drug addict. At the age of 19 he was miraculously saved from drug addiction. He studied and received two degrees He went on to get married and cofound a church in Florida that grew to be a mega church of 8000 people. God used him in the live of many people!

Somewhere, however, he again got off track which resulted in several moral failures. On August 12, 2011 Zachery Tims was found dead in his hotel room with a white powdery substance in his pocket. How did this gifted, anointed man go wrong?

The pastor that spoke at Rev. Tim's funeral said, "Jakes said Tims' life, and death, were a wake-up call for many young preachers who are in a hurry to get somewhere fast. The greater the light, Jakes said, the greater the heat."

Character is not developed overnight. We cannot take a course and become men and women of integrity. It is learned and developed from the experiences we go through and the choices we make. Someone has said "more things are caught, then they are taught". Both are needed, but the affect of being near someone who lives a godly life is much more powerful.

I often ask myself, what about me? How am I doing? Often when I see something I don't like in my sons I ask myself, "Did they learn that from me?" There are areas of my life I know need change. If we are honest with one another, you probably feel the same way. We shouldn't be too quick to point the finger at "great leaders" that failed. But we also can't accept their behaviour as normal for a Christian. God calls us up to His standard. He never lowers His standard. 1 Peter 1:15-16 says:

but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,
since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

I'm glad God didn't lower the standards. The standards are good. I, however, like Paul and many others, struggle to live up to them. Often I know the good I ought to do, but don't. Sometimes, however, I don't even know what I should be doing. I wish someone would teach me, show me the way.

Many of us suffer from not having a strong example of a dad in our lives. Satan seems to work hard to remove godly influences in our lives. In the past two world wars took many fathers away from sons. In China the communist system divided families physically or by breaking trust. Divorce is now the number one reason there is no father at home. This disruption of father-son relationships greatly affects children. Studies have shown just how important the role the father plays in the family.

Father-deprived children are:

1. **72% of all teenage murderers.**
2. **60% of rapists.**
3. **70% of kids incarcerated.**
4. **twice as likely to quit school.**
5. **11 times more likely to be violent.**
6. **3 of 4 teen suicides.**
7. **80% of the adolescents in psychiatric hospitals.**
8. **90% of runaways**

Sources: National Fatherhood Initiative (U.S.A.), US Bureau of Census (U.S.A.), FBI (U.S.A.)

This is also true in the spiritual realm. Jesus shared his life with His disciples. Before returning to heaven, He commissioned us to also go and make disciples. Unfortunately, there are many in the church who live as spiritual orphans because they don't know how to relate to God as a true son.

Page 3: God's Grace in the Bible

As a father, I have looked for good roles model in the Bible. It's surprise to see that most fathers have failed in their role. Take for example men like Samuel, David, Jacob, etc. Their sons did not follow in their footsteps. Others we don't know much about. As I searched the scriptures, I came to realize that the role of father is not very clearly defined. Our best example of the father-son relationship is the relationship that Jesus Christ had with God the Father. As I searched the scriptures from this new perspective I discovered a wealth of information about this very special relationship. This is especially true for the Gospel of John. I encourage you to read through the Gospel of John noting the relationship and interaction between God and Jesus when He was on earth.

Although there is a lot we don't know about Jesus' upbringing, here are some observations:

- ✧ God put Jesus into a good home
- ✧ God protected Jesus
- ✧ He provided financial for Joseph and Mary
- ✧ Jesus learned a skill from Joseph
- ✧ He was taught be responsible for the family in Joseph's absence
- ✧ He was taught the Word of God at a young age, and had a deep understanding of it
- ✧ Having prepared Jesus, the HS lead Him into the desert to be tested
- ✧ God affirmed His love for His Son. For example when He was baptized
- ✧ They shared a rich and regular relation through prayer
- ✧ Jesus did only what He saw His Father doing,
- ✧ God released Him into ministry when the time was right
- ✧ Jesus learned obedience through the things He suffered

Timothy-Paul Relationship

- ✧ travelled together, learned by modeling
- ✧ taught/trained -
- ✧ gave advice – church related problems
- ✧ encouraged -
- ✧ recognized Timothy's gifts and “called them forth” (made sure they were developed, not wasted)
- ✧ shared a close relationship, worked together, but not always in the same place
- ✧ protected Timothy (when some didn't respect Timothy because of his age)

Page 4: God's Grace in the World

An expert swordsmen's skills are improved through constant training. The same is true for us. We need people in our lives to help us train and grow. A good coach will know when to “push” an athlete to get better results and when to encourage in order for the athlete not to lose hope.

Most of my life I have not had someone who has consistently been a spiritual father to me. I can see how that would have been a great help to me. God, however, has brought people into my life for a time. This has helped me a great deal. They include:

- ⤴ Gord Reusing – Focus
- ⤴ Gord Martin – Vision Ministries
- ⤴ Ian Roberts - OMF
- ⤴ Pastor Kurt/Mike – CFC
- ⤴ Pastor Bill Kelly -

What is a Spiritual Father?

- ⤴ Nothing should replace God as our true father! (see Matt 23:9-11)
- ⤴ as believers we are all equal before God
- ⤴ things on earth shadow or mirror the reality in heaven
 - ⤴ natural/earthly fathers take on that role for a time, ideally showing us how to relate to our Heavenly Father
 - ⤴ a bad example in your natural father will tarnish your relation with God, your heavenly father
 - ⤴ We see this in the relationship between Paul and Timothy. Timothy's natural father was not a believer, so Paul took on the role of a spiritual father... modeling

The Role a Spiritual Father Plays in Someone's Life

- ⤴ usually long term (many years)
- ⤴ share a deeper relationship
- ⤴ therefore, can focus on character, which is not always easy to see or change in a casual relationship
- ⤴ one learns more from modeling than teaching. A spiritual father should be a mature people that “lives” what he preaches
- ⤴ has the right to speak into your life (point out things you need to see, so that they can be dealt with)
 - Protects
 - Guides
 - Instructs
 - Corrects
 - Exhorts
 - Encourages
 - Inspires

- Calls forth/Helps Develop Spiritual Gifts in a person
- Enables
- Releases
- ♣ MAWL: Model, Assist, Watch, Leave

What Makes a Good Son?

Often we expect that a good father will produce a good son. However, some responsibility does fall on the son as well. What are some of the characteristics of a good son? Let me suggest a few things:

- ♣ obedience
- ♣ submission to authority
- ♣ someone eager to learn
- ♣ willing to try... fail, but then learn from the mistakes
- ♣ honest/transparent – willing to share what they really think
- ♣ must respect and trust his spiritual father

Challenge

During the last 3.5 years in China I realized that there were areas I was weak in. I feel like this year is a chance for me to learn from others. My desire is that I will be able to keep in touch with some of these mentors. Perhaps one of these men will take the place of a spiritual father. Each one has many things to offer. The length and depth of the relationship will determine who fills that need.

What about you? Are you growing? Do you have someone who can speak into your life? Someone whom you respect and are willing to be vulnerable with? Ask the Lord to show you who may play that role in your life. Give them the right to help you in areas that you need to grow in.