

Overcoming the Curse of the Independent Spirit

It is not a new revelation that we have a fatherless generation in our world. The attending consequences of dysfunction, independence, anger and hopelessness abound. God called it a curse in Malachi 4:5-6 (KJV): "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

Some years ago, God began to change the hearts of spiritual leaders into spiritual fathers. These are the ones who say to their disciple, "Come, follow me" (Luke 18:22b). They were seeking a genuine relationship of love where sons and daughters are blessed with the generational inheritance of a double portion (Deut. 21:17).

After this change occurred and fathers were in a place to receive sons into relationship, God began to "turn the hearts of the children" with men and women seeking out their spiritual fathers and mothers. These followers whose hearts have been delivered from the orphan spirit also have a cry within them which says, like Elisha, "I will not leave thee" (2 Kings 2:2b).

When Elisha asked Elijah for a double portion of his spirit, the elder prophet responded, "You have asked a hard thing" (2 Kings 2:10a, TLB). To what difficulty was he referring? It certainly would not be hard for God to give Elisha the blessing, and it wouldn't be hard for Elijah to lay hands upon him either. So what was the problem? It was going to be hard for Elisha to become the son he wanted to be.

When Elisha asked for the double portion, he was referring to

the generational inheritance that belongs to a firstborn son (Deut. 21:17). In effect, he was asking Elijah to become his spiritual father.

The Need for an Elijah

Many would-be sons and daughters have identified the need for an Elijah in their life. They have asked for relationship as well but have not fully realized the process that would qualify them for the inheritance and right to be called a son or a daughter.

Those who have grown up without a natural father in their life have many of the results mentioned above. I am well acquainted with the struggle of growing up with a breadwinner and not a dad. After getting saved and called to ministry, I sought for a father through every spiritual leader in my life and only found those who had not been fathered themselves. Individuals such as these were incapable of being a father to me. I often encountered the abuse of a "Saul" type of religious leader or the rejection of an insecure one trying to minister from their own dysfunction.

These experiences caused me to press into God for a fathering spirit myself. This is when God gave me my first revelation of the Elijah anointing.

It is possible to be raised by God in the absence of a real spiritual father in your life, but that is not the pattern God intended. God planned for spiritual fathers to raise their families and leave a legacy of sons and daughters for generations who would continue the process with their own offspring in the spirit.

Becoming Sons

When we grow up without a spiritual father, we develop an independent spirit. An independent spirit is a characteristic of an orphan heart. A person with an independent spirit has

had no one to approve, appoint, protect or promote them. They end up having to do these things themselves. These are normally the functions of a father in our lives. The independent spirit is easy to identify because it is self-appointing, self-protecting and self-promoting. The problem then becomes one of being able to function within a family.

Relationships are difficult, many often ending in offense and discouragement. This is why we see people with an independent spirit are not able to stay in one place very long. They wander and roam, not knowing they are looking for a "family." But families have fathers.

When this happens, recognizing and accepting a father into our lives becomes a "hard thing." Remember the words of Elijah to Elisha, "You have asked a hard thing" (2 Kings 2:10a).

An independent spirit will not let an individual be the "representative of another" –they can only represent themselves. But in the process of becoming a son or daughter, we learn to represent another. Jesus said, "If you have seen Me, you have seen My Father" (see John 14.9).

In relationship to our earthly spiritual fathers, others should be able to see the spirit of the fathers in the sons and daughters. The apostle Paul said Timothy was a "true son" because he was able to represent Paul accordingly (Phil. 2:19-22). If we have not served with another as a son does with a father, God will connect us with a father whom we can serve until we become a son.

We will have to enter another's vision and become representative of it in order to be delivered from the independent spirit of self that has grown from our orphan heart. Our spiritual fathers will know when true sonship has occurred, just like Elijah knew when Elisha was ready to receive his inheritance. Elijah said, "If you see me when I go up," which in the original language means, "If we see eye to

eye" (see 2 Kings 2:10b). Elisha had learned to see eye to eye with his spiritual father's vision.

Can you see your spiritual father's vision and represent it? This is the pathway to deliverance from an independent spirit, and the road to recovery from an orphan heart.

When we become true sons, curses resulting from an orphan heart are broken in our lives (Mal. 4:6). We enter into freedom from a self-directed life. We have a deeper revelation of our Father's love for us because the independent spirit keeps us blinded to a degree. We can receive and give love without the hindrances of insecurity, inferiority and poor self-perception.

Without seeing a father's vision and serving it, we have been left to serve our own vision. Of course we have individual visions, but sonship occurs through the process of relating to a spiritual father as we serve the vision of another man. This is what Elisha did. This is what the disciples of Jesus did. This is what Joshua did, and it is what we must all do.

Process of Restoration

Many believers have an independent spirit because they have encountered abuse from parents or other authority figures. Because of this they have decided that no one else is worthy of trust when it comes to their life and destiny. With the availability of Christian TV, radio, seminars, conferences and ministry partnerships with nationally known ministers, other believers have grown spiritually without relating to a local church family where there was a spiritual father in the house. They approach the church with the self-approved, -appointed, -promoted and -protective attitude and are difficult to deal with.

This is the "hard thing" brought about by fatherlessness. If their established agenda is not appealed to by the leadership, they simply move on, looking for the "right place" (meaning a

place where they can represent themselves without confrontation).

Pastors can usually see the calling on a believer's life and will believe in their personal vision, but still will not be able to release that person within the church because of their inability to see beyond their own thing. Such dear people can cause unintentional damage if they do not understand and relate properly to the vision of the house. This can cause offense and confusion, which gives place to accusation and betrayal, ruining many good churches.

The same is true with ministry sons and daughters who are being connected to today's apostolic movements. If they have developed their ministry vision through an independent spirit, the apostle to whom they connect may have the same problems as the local pastor we just described. These anointed vessels may have the same traits of the independent spirit and will need to understand that they must be in submission to the father whom God has placed in their life.

This simply means they must submit, or come under the mission of another. The independent-spirited one may fight for recognition for a while, wanting the father to recognize their call and vision, providing opportunity before any loyalty to the father's vision is established. They have not yet realized the move of the Spirit today to "restore the hearts of fathers and children," and that this is the prophetic mandate upon the church at this time.

This process will produce the "mature sons and daughters" who really represent the heavenly Father as Jesus did and will release the greatest blessing of God the earth has ever seen. Malachi said, "lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:6b), meaning that when the restoration occurs, the earth will be mightily blessed. The mature sons and daughters who have been blessed with their double portion will do the works of the Father and usher in the return of the King of

kings!

Let's ask God for understanding of the work He is doing at this time and find our place within it. {eoa}

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