

Are You a Word-Based Disciple?

Fatherhood determines identity and identity releases security. Security produces a culture where it is safe to be unique, an environment where dreaming is the norm, and an expectation that dreams really do come true!

Well, that is my perspective from the chair I sit in today. I did not always know or experience these principles, as I grew up in a rather unsafe home with verbal abuse occurring almost every day. We each have a personal pilgrimage—and for a moment, I would like to invite you into a window of mine. Jesus I loved without reservation, but the premise that God the Father was a “good God” unfortunately was a foreign concept to me.

Unlike some, I have not had just one major, primary “spiritual father.” But I have had the distinct honor of walking with and being impacted by several different fathers in the faith throughout my walk with the Lord, which has included over 40 years of full-time ministry. [Click here to view a “Personal Look into the Life and Ministry Over 40 Years.”](#)

As I grew up in the things of the Spirit, there were many teachers but few fathers and mothers. In this generation, I believe we have actually have fewer teachers, but a plethora of authentic fathers and mothers and even grandfathers and grandmothers in the faith. One of my great joys over the years has been to nestle up to one of these spiritual veterans, speak honor to them and ask questions. Yes, ask questions!

Perhaps questions like, “Do you have a life scripture verse that has guided you?” “What was one of the most difficult challenges you ever faced?” “What moves of the Holy Spirit marked your life?” “If you were to do it all over again, what

would you do differently?” “Tell me about your family?” “What legacy do you want to leave for the next generation?”

I have always asked questions. Maybe it has been one of the keys to help me keep going in my roller coaster life and ministry. My mom always said I was the most curious child—asking questions like, “Mommy, where do babies come from?” Ha! I remember those days of wonder and awe. And I still live in those days of wonder and awe. You can too!

Word-Based Discipleship

I always want to be a Word-based disciple. If I had no relational mentors, I would still have my Bible. I would still have the heroes of the faith inscribed in this holy book. They are the fathers and mothers I look to the most. They always have been, and frankly, always will be.

I have also been an avid reader. I keep feeding this insatiable desire for knowledge, lessons from history, and a desire to know and experience more of God by reading. Thus today, I have a vast library that is filled with both old books and new ones (Matt. 13:52). These books have acted as some of the primary spiritual mentors that the Holy Spirit has used as tools in my life. The shadows of these great men and women of God still exist today.

Perhaps that is one of the reasons I am so committed to writing. Books have been my primary source of teaching and mentoring. In one of my many journals I have written that when I am 70 years old I will compose a book called *Lessons From the Woodshed*. I can't wait to write it. But I can't yet—I guess I still might have a few more “behind the scenes” encounters! Ouch!

Key Scripture Verses

So, here are some basic scriptures to use as stakes in the ground in the process of establishing your own relational

culture of honor as it pertains to fathers and mothers of the faith. These scriptures are immovable markers in my life.

Ephesians 6:2-3: "HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER, which is the first commandment with a promise, SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU AND YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH."

Psalms 68:5-6: "A father of the fatherless and a protector of the widows, is God in His holy habitation. God sets the deserted in families; He brings out the prisoners into prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a dry land."

2 Kings 2:9-14: "And as they were crossing, Elijah said to Elisha, 'Ask for something, and I will do it for you before I am taken away from you.' And Elisha said, 'Let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.' He said, 'You have asked for a difficult thing, but if you see me when I am taken from you, it will happen to you. If not, it will not.' As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha was watching and crying, 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!' And he did not see him again. Then he grabbed his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. He picked up the robe of Elijah that fell from him, and he returned and stood on the bank of the Jordan. And he took the robe of Elijah that fell from him, and struck the water, and said, 'Where is the Lord, God of Elijah?' When he had struck the water, it parted from one side to the other, and Elisha crossed over."

Four Key Fathers That Imprinted My Life

By the Lord's grace I continue to cultivate relationships with forerunners. In recent years this list has included C. Peter Wagner, Don Finto, John Sanford and others. (I am not attempting to name drop, but am speaking in truth of the authentic relational impact of these men!) I would also add to the list many of my "peers" who are some of the dread

champions of the faith in our generation. And I have not even mentioned the women leaders who have impacted my life (I will hold that one for another time—but it is extensive for sure)!

So, you ask, who have been some of the most significant relational mentors in your life? Who helped shape your spiritual DNA while your cement was still wet? Glad you asked. With great joy I share them with you!

Derek Prince—The Late International Bible Teacher

I observed and learned more from this brilliant British Bible teacher and scholar than anyone. These lessons included themes like: Prayer and Fasting Shapes History, God's Heart for Israel, Church Government, Deliverance, Breaking of Curses, and so much more. The thing that probably impacted me the most was his reverence towards and relationship with the Word of God.

Mahesh Chavda—Man of Prayer, Fasting and Miracles

My dear friend and mentor Mahesh Chavda. Where do I begin? I carried his briefcase, coffee mug and even had the honor of bringing more comfortable shoes for him to wear when he stood in healing lines for hours. He has been one of my primary mentors in the anointing, fasting as a lifestyle and obeying the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Bob Jones—The Late Seer of Seers

Mercy! Where do I begin to describe the impact Papa Bob Jones had on my life? I got joined at the hip with this unusual man in 1983; he rocked my world and I am still left shaking from that quake. Dreams, visions, angelic encounters were Bob's daily bread. I absorbed, watched and learned a lot from this man who was so "heavenly minded he was of earthly good."

Dick Simmons—Intercessor Behind the Scenes

This elderly man today might be lesser known before men than

some, but he is a greatly known before the throne of God. I learned and entered into greater authority in intercession, the power of “reminding God of His Word,” and the value of church history through the hours of personal intercession I spent with this forerunner. His shadow has deeply impacted my life, ministry and global reach.

I have said for years that the Holy Spirit did not give me one mentor but different ones for different purposes. These are but four of the godly men that the Lord has brought into my life. Oh my, none of them are the same—not even close. But what they have carried in common is a love for God, His people, His purposes and the integrity of His Word.

Thank You, Lord, for the impact of these fathers in the faith in my life, and the opportunity to share with others what has been imparted to me. May the ceiling of my generation truly become the next generation’s floor!

I also pray that each of you will glean from the lessons of the mentors that God has placed within your path—through His Word, books, and personal relationships. May God continue to raise up fathers and mothers of faith who will mentor others—including you!

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