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INTRODUCTION

Failure is only a part of the success process. Life is a school, the universe is a university. In life, there are good old paths to be sought.

Pathways to success, greatness, exploits, distinction and rest for your soul and such is the path you are about to tread as you go through this book in Jesus name.

Jer_6:16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk therein.

Those who only learn from their personal experiences can avoid committing the same mistake twice but will not avoid that of those who have gone ahead of them.

If you will learn from the mistakes of those who have gone ahead of you then you can avoid never committing similar mistakes for life.

You learn to teach, and in teaching you learn. Mentoring is God's wisdom for men to maximize their destinies on earth via a teaching/learning process.

Mal_4:6 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.

Php 4:9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: And the God of peace shall be with you.

Whose example are you following? Nobody is an island and no one is self-made. To a greater or lesser extent, you will need the input of others in your life to give your assignment the colour it was designed to have.

Pro_27:17 Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

Imagine for a while: What would Elisha have become without the input of Elijah into his life?

What would Ruth have become without the input of Naomi into her life?

What would Peter, James and John have become without the input of Jesus into their lives?

What would Timothy, Epaphras, Titus and co. have become without the input of Saint Paul into their lives?

You can succeed in your life's assignment without the input of a mentor. But you will succeed much better, easier and faster with the help of a mentor.

Mentoring is one of the greatest building blocks God has designed for everyone to maximize destiny. A spiritual father amplifies, facilitates and speeds-up your results.

2Ki 13:16-17 And he said to the king of Israel, "Put thine hand upon the bow". And he put his hand upon it: And Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. And he said, "Open the window eastward". And he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot". And he shot. And he said, "The arrow of the LORD'S deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: For thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them".

Elisha's hands rested upon the king's hand as a prophetic backing that established the king's victory against his enemies in battle for the same number of times he shot the arrow.

Life is more spiritual than physical.

Child of God, whose hand is upon your hand? Whose hand is upon your shoulders as a prophetic backup? Who lays hands on your head for amplification of grace to make life easier, sweeter and more impactful?

Who is your spiritual backup in times and seasons of confrontation? Whose "God" can you make reference to as the "God" of your father?

2Ki_2:14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?" and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: And Elisha went over.

Anyone who dreams of going far in life wouldn't take mentors and spiritual fathers for granted, they are strategic destiny helpers.

Deu_34:9 And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: And the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.

Who speaks into your life? Who speaks into your projects? Who speaks to your mountains? Who speaks against your enemies? Who cries out to God on your behalf?

There are deposits God has for every man that will not come directly from heaven but through the covenant relationship of spiritual fathering.

I pray for you this day that whatever spiritual deposits God has planned for you to receive through mentors and spiritual fathers not one will pass you by in Jesus' name.

I prophesy you shall reflect the unction of your spiritual father and be called a true son of your father.

Just like Elisha, may a double portion of that which your father carries rest on your life and ministry in Jesus' name.

You shall not end your journey as a local champion. In Jesus' name I declare your generation shall hear your voice.

WHY YOU SHOULD READ THIS BOOK

1. To understand the importance of mentoring and spiritual fathering
2. To appreciate the difference between a mentor and a spiritual father
3. To harness the dangers of ignoring the role of mentors and spiritual fathers in life.
4. To locate covenant keys to maximize a father-son / mentor-mentee relationship for a life of untold exploits.

TABLE OF CONTENT

[Introduction](#)

[Why You Should Read This Book](#)

[Chapter 1. What Is Mentoring?](#)

[Chapter 2. Who Is A Mentor?](#)

[Chapter 3. Who Is A Mentee?](#)

[Chapter 4. Is Spiritual Fathering Biblical?](#)

[Chapter 5. Pointers As To Who Can Father You?](#)

[Chapter 6. Marks Of A True Spiritual Father](#)

[Chapter 7. The Difference Between A Mentor And A
Spiritual Father](#)

[Chapter 8. Are Mentors Spiritual Fathers?](#)

[Chapter 9. Categories Of People In The School Of
Mentoring](#)

[Chapter 10. The Difference Between A Spiritual Father And
Affiliating To An Organization](#)

[Chapter 11. The Life Span Of Fatherhood](#)

[Chapter 12 Limits To A Father's Authority](#)

[Chapter 13. The Birthing Of A Spiritual Son](#)

[Chapter 14. The Responsibilities Of A Mentee](#)

[Chapter 15. How To Identify True Sons](#)

[Chapter 16. A Spiritual Father Is Not A Sponsor](#)

[Chapter 17. The Benefits Of A Spiritual Father](#)

[Chapter 18. Does A Pastor Need A Pastor?](#)

[Chapter 19. Signs Of A Minister Without A Father](#)

[Chapter 20. The Pitfalls Of Son](#)

[Chapter 21. The Pitfalls Of Fathers](#)

[About The Author](#)

Chapter

1

WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is the covenant platform through which knowledge, skills and experience is imparted in a bid to foster a person's progress in life

Mentoring is a structured process, a learning relationship that culminates in the development of the mentees goals and skills.

Mentoring is a purposeful relationship of trust in which the mentor shares life experiences and resources for the mentee to maximize grace.

Mentoring is a discipleship relationship that focuses on equipping younger believers for the work of ministry.

Mentoring is a form of relationship built between a mentor and protégée for the purpose of duplication, replication and multiplication of the grace.

Mentorship is a personal developmental relationship between someone with vast experience and someone who wants to learn.

Mentoring is the wisdom of God for the transition of the baton of faith, knowledge and skills from one generation to another.

Mentoring is a value added relationship between a more senior colleague and a junior colleague.

The mentor may be older or younger, but must have a certain area of expertise.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the word mentor has the following synonyms:

- 1) Coach: One who instructs or trains.
- 2) Role model: A person whose behavior in a particular role is imitated by others.
- 3) Influencer: One who exerts influence, inspires or guides the actions of others.
- 4) Tutor: A person charged with the instruction and guidance of another in a special subject for a particular purpose.
- 5) Counselor: A person who gives advice or counseling.
- 6) Guide: One that leads or directs another's way.
- 7) Leader: A person who has commanding authority and influence.

Chapter

2

WHO IS A MENTOR?

2Ch 26:4-5 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah did. And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.

The success of king Uzziah was largely due to the strategic mentoring role of Zechariah the priest.

A mentor is an instrument in God's hands for the making and moulding of great destinies.

A mentor is a person who teaches and gives advice to another who admires and believes in him.

A mentor is someone who has become outstanding or successful in an area of interest which others desire to explore or undertake.

A mentor is an experienced adviser and supporter who advises and guides a less experienced person. A mentor is a

trainer who gives guidance and training to a junior colleague.

WHO IS A MENTEE?

2Ki 3:11 But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah.

A mentee is someone in receipt of mentorship. A mentee is one who is being guided and instructed by a more experienced and successful person.

A mentee is someone who voluntarily submits to be trained by another whom he regards as a model in his field of endeavour.

A mentee is an apprentice who may also be referred to as protégé (male), protégée (female).

Samuel was Eli's mentee who helped him to discern the voice of God and Samuel later rose up to become the greatest prophet of his time.

Elisha was Elijah's mentee who raised him to become a notable prophet mightily used by God that kings sought after for help.

Joshua was Moses' mentee who trained him to become one of the greatest leaders and military generals to have ever lived.

Lot was Abraham's mentee whom he trained to become a very successful business man.

Baruch was Jeremiah's mentee who raised him as a scribe.

Esther was Mordecai's protégée who trained her in administration, leadership and diplomacy.

Ruth was Naomi's protégée who trained her to become a very successful house wife.

Bless God, even house wives need mentors for a blissful marriage and there is no doubt wrong marriage mentors and poor training of some young girls back at home have ruined their marital destinies.

Timothy was Paul's protégé who trained him to become a most successful pastor.

Solomon was David's protégé who trained him in leadership and administration.

The twelve apostles were Jesus' protégé who trained them in ministry and their impact till Jesus comes will continue to be felt from generation to generation.

To take mentoring for granted is to take your making for granted. I prophesy your generation shall hear your voice in Jesus' name.

Chapter

4

IS SPIRITUAL FATHERING BIBLICAL?

Jer 6:16 Thus saith the LORD, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls". But they said, "We will not walk therein".

Some of us who believe in mentoring and spiritual fathering have severally been attacked by those who hold a contrary opinion.

I have put up a post on Facebook celebrating the grace of God upon mentors and fathers in the faith and some took offense and called me names.

Their principal argument is that spiritual fathering is man worship. And like Kenneth E. Hagin will say, "It wouldn't be funny if it weren't so pathetic"

The journey of mentoring and spiritual fathering begins with the acknowledgement that some graces are higher than others, some people are better than you and what is today your dream is another's reality.

Heb 7:7 There is no doubt that the one who blesses is greater than the one who is blessed.

So how in the world could the acknowledgment of grace upon a person's life be man worship? How in the world could honour of grace and craving for the same be termed "man worship" ?

Like Kenneth Hagin will say, "God bless their darling hearts and foolish heads".

Elisha honoured the grace on Elijah's life and while the sons of the prophet referred to Elijah as Elisha's master, to Elisha, Elijah was more than a master, he was a spiritual father.

2Ki_2:12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof". And he saw him no more: And he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

The principle of spiritual fathering runs the length and breadth of the bible.

It is evident in both the Old and New covenants as seen in the covenant relationships between Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, David and his valiant men, Jesus and of the apostles, Paul and Timothy etc.

The notion of mentoring is equally very obvious in Paul's letters.

Php 2:22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

1Co_4:15 For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

1Co 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

2Th 3:9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

Php 4:9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: And the God of peace shall be with you.

1Th 2:11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children

A close examination of the above verses indicates Paul no doubt saw himself as a mentor to his disciples and encouraged them to follow his footsteps in their spiritual walk.

Mentors are role models. Teaching and modeling are different dimensions of mentoring. It goes without saying therefore that the person whose example you follow is your mentor.

A father is a mentor to his family. A pastor is a mentor to his congregation. A disciple maker is a mentor to his disciple. A

senior pastor is a mentor to his junior pastors. A group leader is a mentor to those in the group he is leading.

If a Christian leader is not mentoring someone then he/she is simply not living up to his or her calling.

Mentoring is God's wisdom for mentors to duplicate and replicate themselves in their mentees.

A good mentee will mirror his mentor. Great mentors will produce successful mentees and vice versa.

POINTERS AS TO WHO CAN FATHER YOU?

Gen 14:18-20 King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine, since he was serving as the priest of God Most High. Melchizedek blessed Abram and said, "Abram is blessed by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your control." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

Not everybody has the capacity to bless you.

Not everybody has the grace to speak blessing into your life.
Not everybody has the standing with God to lay hands on your head.

God's army has ranks and only those ahead of you in rank can command the blessing upon your life.

Abraham was a prophet but recognized Melchizedek the priest of God as a higher grace who could speak blessing into his life and keyed into this prophetic release upon his life with his tithes.

Grace is a function of assignment. Submission is not to age but to grace. Submission is not to title but to mantle.

1Co_15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: And his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

Eph_3:7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me...

Mentoring is a spiritual law and you won't be much different from the one you closely follow after as spiritual father or mentor.

Who you follow determines what follows you. Who you are connected to determines what connects to you and who associates with you determines what is associated with your life.

If God called you as a pastor it is not wisdom to have an evangelist over your life as a spiritual father because it may be counterproductive, given that these two ministries are not "compatible" so to say.

As a mentee, you should understand that not everybody can mentor you.

If you are looking for a mentor or spiritual father look for those ahead of you with a similar calling or assignment as yours.

The only exception to this rule will be those called into the apostolic ministry who by the special grace of God cut across every other ministry office in a certain measure.

Therefore, one genuinely called as an apostle can mentor or father any other ministry office.

But as a general rule, follow those with similar assignments as yours.

In your quest for a spiritual father or mentor, consider the following pointers:

- i. The person must be revealed by God.
- ii. The person should show evidence of the kind of grace you crave for.
- iii. The person must be someone who has the testimony that is today your dream and prayer point.
- iv. The person must be someone with an assignment that is similar to yours.
- v. The person must be someone you have some knowledge about his life and ministry either by revelation, research or eyewitness testimony.
- vi. The person must be someone whom you recognize as an established spiritual authority from whose voice you will readily take instructions.

Note: If there is no characteristic grace you crave for in your spiritual father or mentor then you are pursuing the wrong person. Aimless follower-ship produces aimless results.

Chapter

6

MARKS OF A TRUE SPIRITUAL FATHER

1Co 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

2Th 3:9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

In a general sense, everyone to some extent will invariably act as mentor to somebody. Nonetheless, not every minister or leader has the merits of a true spiritual father.

The marks of a true spiritual father are:

1. Passionate For The Kingdom.

Joh 2:17 ...The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

Rom_9:3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren...

1Co_9:16 ...woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

Exo 32:32 Please forgive their sin; but if you won't, then remove my name from the book in which you have written the names of your people." GNB

A true spiritual father is always one that is a diehard for the kingdom.

True spiritual fathers are men and women who are sold out for the kingdom of God.

They are men and women with unquenchable zeal and enthusiasm for God and his kingdom.

They are those who are willing to pay any price and go any length with God to see his plans and purposes come to pass. They are men with whom God does serious business.

2. Experienced.

1Jn_2:13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning...

1Jn_2:14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning...

Spiritual fathers are custodians of experiential knowledge. They don't just talk from an intellectual's perspective but from the perspective of a connoisseur.

A true spiritual father is a man that has walked with God over a considerable period of time and has the capacity to guide those looking up to him in order to avoid costly mistakes in life and destiny.

A true spiritual father is a man who has plenty of stories to tell. He is a man or a woman with a rich legacy of the vital aspects of redemption.

A genuine spiritual father is a man who has gone a certain length with God.

Young men preach and teach theoretical knowledge. Fathers preach and teach experiential knowledge and experience is a good teacher.

3. Trustworthy

2Ti 2:2 Take the teachings that you heard me proclaim in the presence of many witnesses and entrust them to reliable people, who will be able to teach others also. GNB

A true spiritual father is someone with credibility and is capable of commanding confidence in those looking up to him.

A true spiritual father is not a vagabond. He is one that is dependable, reliable and responsible

4. Disciplined.

2Ti_2:3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

A true spiritual father is a much disciplined person. Not only is he self-disciplined but he knows how to instill discipline in the lives of followers.

I'm yet to come across a true spiritual father who is a joker. I am yet to find a spiritual father who is not a person of high value and standards.

I am yet to find a spiritual father who doesn't value life, people, time, opportunities etc.

If you hate to be disciplined and hate to live a disciplined life then you may find it challenging relating with a true spiritual father.

5. Wise.

Deu_34:9 And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: And the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.

A true spiritual father is a custodian of divine wisdom.

It is the possession of wisdom that gives him the ability to provide wise counsel to those looking up to him. Nothing is as valuable as the counsel of a trusted spiritual father in seasons of confrontations.

6. Integrity.

Dan_6:4 Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; for as much as he was faithful, neither was there any error nor fault found in him.

A true spiritual father is a person of proven integrity.

They are men and women with a solid reputation who with the help of God have mortified their flesh and its passions and live only by the dictates of the Spirit. A true spiritual

father is a man of character. Young men celebrate charisma
fathers celebrate character.

7. Leadership.

*Isa_55:4 Behold, I have given him for a witness to the
people, a leader and commander to the people.*

A true spiritual father is a proven leader who exhibits all the characteristics of a good leader; character, charisma, commitment, communication, competence, discernment, focus, generosity, initiative, responsibility, self-discipline, servanthood, humility, teachability, security, integrity, self-awareness, courage, respect, compassion, resilience, purpose, conviction, passion, inspiration and influence.

8. Knowledgeable.

*2Ch_1:10 Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may
go out and come in before this people: for who can judge
this thy people, that is so great?*

True spiritual fathers are men with a deep knowledge in their area of assignment.

Spiritual fathers have relevant information needed for the moulding of spiritual sons into becoming the best of themselves and stars in their field of endeavour.

9. Authority.

Tit_2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

A true spiritual father is a figure of authority.

A true spiritual father is a spiritual authority.

A true spiritual father is a recognized authority in his area of expertise and a voice to reckon within his jurisdiction.

10. **Affectionate.**

2Ti_4:11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

A true spiritual father loves his spiritual children.

The hallmark of spiritual fathers is love. The ability to walk in love is what gives the father capacity to deal with sons who prove to be headstrong.

Simon Peter publicly denounced Jesus thrice yet the Lord forgave him and Simon Peter grew to become one of the most outstanding figures of the New Testament.

John Mark forsook Paul and Barnabas at one point in ministry which greatly irritated Paul. But towards the later part of his ministry Paul still requested for the services of the same John Mark suggesting he'd forgiven him for his earlier mistake.

If you can't forgive then you can't be a father because whether you like it or not your sons will do things that will hurt your feelings.

To every father reading this book, receive grace to forgive and let go of offenses in Jesus' name.

By experience I can tell you that some of the sons causing you pains today may be used by God to bring you the greatest gains in your life and ministry tomorrow. Shape zeal, don't kill it.

11. **Consistent.**

Act_26:22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great...

A true spiritual father is steady fire not wild fire because wild fire doesn't last. It appears only for a while and then disappears.

But a true spiritual father is one who with the help of God has reached a certain level in ministry and is able to maintain the fervency and results over the years.

No matter how flamboyant the results a young minister, I always say a minimum of ten years will make us know if the fire is steady fire or wild fire.

My prayer for you servant of God is that your path in ministry shall be as the shining light that shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

Your current level will be the least you ever occupy. Yesterday will never be better than today in Jesus name.

12. **Approachable.**

Mat_19:14 But Jesus said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: For of such is the kingdom of heaven."

True spiritual fathers are approachable.

The first time I was opportuned to meet my father, God's servant, Dr. Ps Paul Enenche one-on-one with my wife, he explained to us that he needed rest because he had been preaching the whole week but inspite of that he could still create time to attend to my wife and I and I marveled at the simplicity of a man God is using to shake the nations of the world and before whom hell trembles.

Chapter

7

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MENTOR AND A SPIRITUAL FATHER

1Co 4:15 You may have 10,000 mentors who work for the Messiah, but not many fathers. For in the Messiah Jesus I became your father through the gospel. (ISV)

Usually, these terms are used interchangeably. Yet, according to the scriptures, mentor and spiritual father are different.

In terms of responsibility, the difference between a spiritual father and a mentor is very conspicuous.

A spiritual father in a nut shell is a spiritual covering, whereas a mentor is simply an instructor.

One of the best analogies to differentiate between a spiritual father and a mentor is comparing a classroom teacher and a parent. Both the classroom teacher and the parent have the responsibility of educating children under their care.

However, the greater responsibility is shouldered by the parent who beyond just educating the child equally

shoulders other responsibilities like feeding, clothing, sheltering, payment of fees, keeping the child healthy, training the child in the ways of the Lord etc.

Spiritual fathering carries greater responsibility than mentoring. Besides, you can only have one father per time whereas you can have several mentors or instructors per time.

Mentors are teachers. Fathers are imparters. The role of a spiritual father encompasses that of a mentor but not otherwise.

Relationship is the essence of spiritual fathering. There must be a functional relationship between a spiritual father and his son. Sonship is not claimed, it is birth legitimately.

Covenant steps to becoming a spiritual son:

1. Contact With The One God Has Sent You To

It is for sons to look for fathers.

When God reveals someone to you as a father, don't sit and be expecting God to reveal you to him because that seldom happens.

It is your responsibility to create time, book appointment and present yourself to the one God sent you.

Word Of Caution: If anyone comes to you with the message that God asked you to submit to him as a son please escape for your dear life. I have been a victim and I paid heavily for my ignorance.

It is sons to look for fathers to submit to not fathers looking for sons to adopt. Samuel was taken to Eli, The valiant men of David looked for him and joined him for mentoring as vain men, Ruth willfully surrendered her destiny into the hands of Naomi and God sent Paul to meet Peter.

It wasn't Peter who requested to see Paul to tell him I want to see what you are preaching.

The case of Jesus telling Simon Peter and others to follow him just like Elijah casting his mantle upon Elisha is about God calling these men into ministry.

Please don't be fooled! There's more witchcraft in Pentecostal circles today than in orthodox churches. The spirit of witchcraft is all about intimidation, manipulation and seduction.

I prophesy you will not fall into any of these wicked schemes of the enemy that may ruin your ministry in Jesus' name.

2. Presentation Of Your Vision

Hab 2:2 And the LORD answered me, and said, "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that reads it".

Before you approach a spiritual father for fathering ensure you have written down your vision in plain terms such that it can be read and understood.

Then present it neatly in a file or envelope.

If you scratch a few lines with a very bad handwriting on a dirty sheet of paper you picked from the kitchen with oil stains and submit to a father that alone tells him volumes about the type of son you are; a rascal and an adventurer. In everything, presentation matters.

It is certain that after reading the vision he will ask you questions which you must be prepared to answer in the most mature and accurate manner.

If your vision is not clear to you the vision bearer how do you expect it to be clear to those who read it. If it is not clear to you then you are probably not called or didn't hear God well.

3. Agreement With The Father's Terms Of Fathering.

Amo 3:3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

Don't approach a father for submission and you want to be the person deciding the terms of the relationship.

Understand how the father may want you to relate with him and if it is not ok with you then quit right then.

4. Willful Submission To His Authority

1Pe_5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: For God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

The grace of a father only speaks for his son if there is willful submission. Any father whose authority you disregard cannot bless you.

Any father too small to instruct and correct you is not qualified to be your spiritual father. Anyone whose authority you contend with is not good enough to father you.

5. Acceptance From The Father

Psa 2:7 I will declare the decree: The LORD hath said unto me, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee".

Meeting a father to submit is only one side of the coin. Until there is acceptance by the father the relationship is yet to be concretized.

A true spiritual father will check his spirit to be sure the move is of God because fathering is great responsibility.

This could take hours, days, weeks, months or even years for the affirmation to come. Here too is another ground where the patience of sons is tested.

A young man met me some time ago in the office with a huge envelope that God sent him to come and submit to me but I wasn't led to receive his gift just then.

I asked him to go and return after a week so I have ample time to pray over it but he left and never returned till this day.

8. Presentation Of Love Gift By The Son To Seal The Encounter

*Pro 18:16 A Man's Gift Maketh Room For Him, And
Bringeth Him Before Great Men.*

The kind of gift and manner of presenting it speaks volume of the honour you have in your heart for the grace you're coming after.

The gift you bring to a spiritual father is not an attempt to bribe your way. It is a matter of honouring grace and finding favour.

7. Prayers And Blessings By The Father

*Gen 14:18-20 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth
bread and wine: And he was the priest of the Most High God. And
he blessed him, and said, "blessed be Abram of the Most High
God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the Most
High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand".
And he gave him tithes of all.*

Once a spiritual father accepts you, the next thing that follows is prayers and blessings.

The prayers and blessings of a father is the best thing that can ever happen to anyone in this life.

Grace is the raw material for the making of kingdom principalities.

In Jesus name you shall be made by grace into a spiritual giant.

ARE MENTORS SPIRITUAL FATHERS?

Mentors are not spiritual fathers, but spiritual fathers are mentors.

The inability to distinguish between spiritual fathers and mentors has caused some ministers not to maximize the blessings of spiritual fathering.

A spiritual son can have several mentors besides his spiritual father. Someone can mentor you without personal contact.

You can be mentored through books, tapes, TV channels etc. As a matter of fact you can live and die without ever having any personal contact with your mentor.

One of my most notable mentors is Kenneth E. Hagin. I never met him while he was still alive but I have so much read after this man that anyone watching me minister will see a measure of the same anointing that was upon his life.

I have books of his I have read over seven times and in one of such occasions, something literally leaped out of that book

and entered me and I was drunk with the anointing and went on laughing in the spirit for at least half an hour.

With spiritual fathering it is different. It is a matter of having a functional relationship and following very closely.

It is a relationship wherein you, your wife and children are well known by your spiritual father.

Even when you're opportune to interact with your mentors you still owe your spiritual father more allegiance. His instructions must carry more weight than the instruction of mentors.

Father-son relationship is more demanding and carries greater responsibility than mentor-mentee relationship.

A good example to differentiate between spiritual fathering and mentoring is the ministry of God's general, Bishop David Olani Oyedepo who is the presiding bishop of the Living Faith Church International aka Winners Chapel.

Bishop Oyedepo's spiritual father is Pastor E.A Adeboye, the G.O of the Redeemed Christian Church. However, Bishop Oyedepo across the years has had several mentors such as Kenneth E. Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Dr. T.L. Osborn, Arch bishop Benson Idahosa etc. from whom he's drawn different graces over time.

It is wrong for a spiritual father to be over possessive, to the point of negating the place of mentors in the life of spiritual sons especially sons with independent ministries.

In the context of junior pastors serving in ministry under a senior pastor, it is obvious that the mentors of your spiritual father will automatically become your mentors since they will be mentoring you indirectly through your spiritual father.

Spiritual sons serving in the capacity of junior pastors under a senior pastor are to become clones of their spiritual father so that they can reproduce after his kind by partaking of the same spiritual DNA for the perpetuity of his assignment.

The key to partaking of the anointing on someone is service.

***Psa 89:20 I have found David my servant; with my holy oil
have I anointed him***

The key to partaking of someone else's spirit is burden bearing.

***Num_11:17 ...and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee,
and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of
the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.***

It is abnormal for true sons who serve as junior pastors under their spiritual father not to partake of the prophetic DNA of their spiritual father.

Most often than not, it is a sign of spiritual disconnection and such sons will tend to become future rebels.

Ignoring the mentors of your spiritual father is a sign of spiritual rebellion and loyalty forbids such an attitude.

Ruth's commitment to stay loyal to Naomi should be the attitude every junior pastor should demonstrate towards his senior pastor. Ruth 1:16-17

When a junior pastor honours the grace and wisdom of his spiritual father, then the last thing to do in this world will be to shun the graces his spiritual father is looking up to.

How does it sound for a child to say, "I believe in my father but I think he made a mistake asking me to accept his own father as my grandfather because I just don't like the man."

Spiritual fathering is a matter of succession, passing the mantle from one generation to the next in a given spiritual family tree.

According to the law of impartation, it takes a greater mantle to unlock a lesser mantle. The lesser is blessed by the greater.

Father-son relationships are covenant relationships. Covenant relationships are relationships established by God Himself. He reveals somebody to you and opens the door for the connection to be made for destiny to be maximized.

Wisdom demands that before you set out to submit to any man as your spiritual father, be sure you heard God well because it is a move that could bring the greatest blessings to your life and ministry and on the other hand it can ruin your life and ministry as well.

I personally know young ministers who've lost their ministries and marriages because they were abused by spiritual fathers.

When a son is spiritually abused by his spiritual father, care must be taken, because God never brings someone into your life to destroy you, only Satan does that.

As we shall see in subsequent chapters, there are conditions under which God may lead you to change spiritual fathers, but this must be done with plenty of wisdom.

Leaving a spiritual father if God commands you to do so is not the problem, it is how you leave that makes all the difference.

CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE IN THE SCHOOL OF MENTORING

Luke 9:18 -20 And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: And he asked them, saying, "Whom say the people that I am?" They answering said, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again". He said unto them, "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter answering said, "The Christ of God".

People hold diverse views and opinions about spiritual fathering.

Mentality affects reality, the way you see the matter of mentoring is the way it delivers to you.

Therefore, to get the right results in mentoring you must have the right understanding.

The understanding of the different categories of persons in line with mentoring is paramount for three important reasons:

- i. For you to locate yourself where you stand in the school of spiritual fathering.

- ii. For you to identify others where they stand.
- iii. For you to know how to relate with others.

In line with spiritual fathering, we can identify the following categories of persons:

1. Those who don't believe in mentoring and spiritual fathering.
2. Those that believe in spiritual fathering but lack the discipline to make it a reality.
3. Those that believe in spiritual fathering but have a perverted understanding.

For example there are those who think spiritual fathers are sponsors.

4. Those who believe in spiritual fathering but associate with those who don't believe as a result, they malfunction.
5. Those that believe in spiritual fathering but allow the devil to distract them because of a mistake (humanity) of a father.

You are not following a perfect vessel but a perfect virtue.

6. Those who believe in spiritual fathering but only have association without impartation.

That is, they follow but don't reflect the unction of their father.

7. Those that are true sons and reflect the unction of their father.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SPIRITUAL FATHER AND AFFILIATING TO AN ORGANIZATION

Belonging to an affiliating organization is for the purpose of ministerial covering whereas a spiritual father provides you with spiritual covering. Ministerial covering is not spiritual covering.

Affiliating to a ministerial organization is for the purpose of documentation. Submitting to a spiritual father is for the purpose of impartation. Documentation is not impartation.

Impartation from a spiritual father comes through a functional relationship between father and son, not merely affiliation to ministerial organization.

Equally, there are limits to which an affiliating organization can influence your life and enhance your ministry as a minister.

For example, an affiliating organization might not give you the practical on hands training you will receive from a spiritual father by association and observation.

An affiliating organization may withdraw your papers for misconduct but a spiritual father will rather call you to order, stand with you and provide you guidance for restoration.

It takes a spiritual father to unlock the prophetic destiny of a spiritual son, not an affiliating organization.

Both are important because a spiritual father might not provide you with the documentation you need to legalize your ministerial activities.

However, don't expect a licensing organization to play the role of a spiritual father.

Spiritual fathering is God's wisdom for the perpetuity of a trans-generational mantle.

The covenant relationship between a spiritual father and a son like in the case of Elijah and Elisha ensured the prophetic mantle of Elijah was passed on to another generation.

In contemporary times, we can see the same pattern in the life and ministry of Kenneth E. Hagin and Kenneth Copland, Kenneth E. Hagin and Bishop Oyedepo, Kathryn Kulhman and Benny Hinns, Reinhard Bonke and Daniel Kolenda, Bishop Oyedepo and Dr. Paul Enenche, etc.

Ministerial organizations are good in their rightful place but should not be mistaken for the covenant relationship between a spiritual father and son.

A spiritual father may provide you with licensing and even ordain you.

Yet, keep in mind that the benefits of having a spiritual father outweigh the benefits of merely affiliating to a licensing organization.

My counsel is that you have a spiritual father and affiliate to any ministerial organization that can provide you with the necessary documentation to legalize your ministry work.

THE LIFE SPAN OF FATHERHOOD

Joh 1:35-40 The next day John was standing there again with two of his disciples, when he saw Jesus walking by. "There is the Lamb of God!" he said. The two disciples heard him say this and went with Jesus. Jesus turned, saw them following him, and asked, "What are you looking for?" They answered, "Where do you live, Rabbi?" (This word means "Teacher.") "Come and see," he answered. (It was then about four o'clock in the afternoon.) So they went with him and saw where he lived, and spent the rest of that day with him. One of them was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

A son is born to his father to remain a son for life. God intends every covenant relationship between a spiritual father and son to last for a lifetime.

However, as in the scenario of Jesus and John the Baptist, such might not always be the case. And this is more of an exception than a rule.

One of the disciples who left John the Baptist and followed Jesus was Andrew. Many bible scholars believe that the other was John the beloved.

In all, two of John's disciples became Jesus' disciples while John was still alive and doing ministry.

There are some father-son relationships that may be seasonal for some very obvious reasons as seen in the following points:

1. God's Will For A Son To Switch Allegiance To Another Father According To Divine Plan And Purpose.

I believe it was God's will for Andrew and John to become Jesus' disciples.

To think otherwise will mean Jesus made a wrong choice in selecting them to become apostles of the lamb. Could God be wrong? Never!!!

2. The Disowning Of A Spiritual Son By A Spiritual Father Because Of One Or More Offences He Is Not Willing To Forgive.

There are fathers who disown sons and refuse to ever take them back no matter what. I believe in such cases a son may be led by the Spirit of God to seek spiritual coverage elsewhere.

3. Calamitous Character Failure On The Part Of A Father.

As a general rule the weaknesses of a father should be overlooked by sons because none is perfect and every father has armpits.

However, there is a level to which a father's character could be compromised and it will be dangerous for sons to continue in such a relationship.

When wickedness sets in instead of weakness then care needs to be taken.

Take for example a spiritual father who impregnates a son's wife and tells the son he should count himself fortunate that he slept with his wife and got her pregnant.

What of the spiritual father who travels overseas with his spiritual son and late at night knocks at the door of the hotel room of his son and walks in naked with the intention to sodomize him saying, it is what he must do before every meeting to enhance his seeing as a prophet.

If that is not insanity then I don't know what name to call it. Yet, these are true life stories.

If you follow only charisma and ignore character you won't escape disaster.

4. A Father's Deviation From The Truth To Heresies.

There are fathers who start off well in their walk with God but tend to deviate along the way.

I'm not talking about the minor doctrines of Christianity but the major doctrines upon which the church was established.

For example, a spiritual father who endorses syncretism and starts teaching that Jesus is not the only way to the father should not be followed.

There is no doubt that in the falling away of the last days there will be some well-known and respected fathers of the faith who will come under deception to embrace doctrines of demons and lead many to hell.

Beloved, let us not cease to pray for the fathers of the faith to stay on track with God till they finish their earthly assignment. Satan knows the power of influence.

He knows that if he can succeed to cause only one of them to crash then he would have succeeded to take many with him to hell.

Heavenly father, help your generals to remain on course with the truth till the very end in Jesus' name.

5. A Father's Deviation From The Power Of God To The Occult.

When a spiritual father mounts pressure on a son to introduce him to the occult for him to become successful in ministry, then there is a need for urgent separation.

To continue with such a father is not humility but “*mumulty*”.

Sons should always stand with God and for the truth when they encounter abusive fathers Satan wants to use to ruin their lives, ministries and destinies.

If a spiritual son for any of the afore mentioned reasons has the Lord's leading to submit elsewhere then he should ensure his separation with his former spiritual father is cordial.

Why you leave is not as important as how you leave. Ensure you leave in peace and have his blessings.

Spiritual fathers too must have the willingness to release sons who no longer want to be under their covering.

It is foolish keeping a son who no longer believes in you and despises you openly.

Dr. Kenneth E. Hagin said, “Even if a man is to fail, I do not want to be amongst those who contributed to his failure”.

What a guiding principle in ministry for all to adopt.

KNOW WHO TO FOLLOW BEFORE YOU FOLLOW

Dr. Kenneth E. Hagin said that in his life time as a minister for over seventy years, he realized an interesting pattern between spiritual fathers and sons.

He said he realized that sons always committed the same fundamental doctrinal errors their fathers committed.

Such that when a father missed it .i.e. fell into error just a little bit; the followers too did exactly the same.

It is important to know who you follow before you follow.

In the quest for auction and impartation, many sons have been victimized.

I prophesy to every son reading this book that God will only guide you to the right father that will bring out the best in you in Jesus' name.

LIMITS TO A FATHER'S AUTHORITY

Luke 12:13-14 Luk 12:13 And one of the company said unto him, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me".

Luk 12:14 And he said unto him, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?"

Sons should make it a standard that a father's instructions are not to be negotiated.

Negotiating a father's instructions is negotiating your destiny.

Colleagues, mates and mentors make suggestions. Fathers give you instructions.

However, wisdoms demands that ambiguous instructions from a Father can be treated otherwise. These will include:

1) Instructions That Violate The Word Of God.

Act 5:29 Peter and the other apostles answered, "We must obey God, not men".

2) Instructions That Violate God's Instruction

1Ki 13:18 Then the old prophet from Bethel said to him, "I, too, am a prophet just like you, and at the LORD's command an angel told me to take you home with me and offer you my hospitality." But the old prophet was lying.

3) Instructions That Test Commitment

2Ki 2:2 And on the way Elijah said to Elisha, "Now stay here; the LORD has ordered me to go to Bethel." But Elisha answered, "I swear by my loyalty to the living LORD and to you that I will not leave you." So they went on to Bethel.

4) Instructions That Nullify Personal Covenants

Jer 35:5-6 Then I placed cups and bowls full of wine before the Rechabites, and I said to them, "Have some wine." But they answered, "We do not drink wine. Our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab told us that neither we nor our descendants were ever to drink any wine.

Jer 35:18-19 Then I told the Rechabite clan that the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, had said, "You have obeyed the command that your ancestor Jonadab gave you; you have followed all his instructions, and you have done everything he commanded you. So I, the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, promise that Jonadab son of Rechab will always have a male descendant to serve me."

5) Instructions That Test Faith

Isa 38:1-2 About this time, King Hezekiah became sick and almost died. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to see

him and said to him, "The LORD tells you that you are to put everything in order because you will not recover. Get ready to die." Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed.

If Hezekiah went by the principle that says a spiritual father's instructions are non-negotiable and took Isaiah's words as final, he would have died.

But as a man with deep covenant understanding, he saw it more as a test of faith and did pass the test with flying colours.

In the school of spiritual fathering, nothing is as important as discernment.

You must be very discerning to appraise whatever instruction from your spiritual father in its rightful capacity.

But again, such ambiguous instructions constitute the exceptions not the rule.

The bottom line is that the instructions of a spiritual father are none negotiable.

Anyone too small to instruct you is too small to bless you.

Father, fill my reader with discernment to maximize the covenant relationship of spiritual fathering in Jesus' name.

THE BIRTHING OF A SPIRITUAL SON

Luk 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

Before you step out to submit as a son to the one God is revealing to you as your spiritual father, taking the following steps will prove to be very helpful to your journey.

1. **FULL CONVICTION:** A Spiritual son must have full conviction of his action.

Any half-hearted effort in this regard may be counterproductive.

2. **FOLLOWERSHIP:** A spiritual son must purpose in his heart to follow his father till the very end and do so correctly.

As a rule, the person you're not following very closely is not your spiritual father.

3. **SUBMISSION:** A spiritual son must be humble enough to be fully submitted to the father's authority.

The smallest strive with authority in your heart disqualifies you from sonship.

One of the symbols of the anointing is water and it is interesting that water always flows downward not upward.

To receive from a father's anointing, you must be fully submitted to his authority.

Another interesting fact is that still, water that flows on level land soon becomes polluted.

Meaning, the father you regard as a mate or an equal has nothing but curses to offer to you.

Competing with a spiritual father for authority is the easiest thing you can do to destroy your destiny.

Spiritual things may look simple on the surface but the consequences can be transgenerational.

4. **ATTENTION:** A spiritual son must give his attention to his father and be available whenever he is needed.

Never be too busy to be part of your father's schedule whenever you are needed.

I heard God's servant Dr. Paul Enenche say there is no program or appointment too important to replace an appointment with a spiritual father.

He said once, he travelled to a certain city in Nigeria for a program and upon arriving the city he discovered that another person regarded as a father in the faith was to have a program in that same city at the same time.

Instantly he announced his program was cancelled and joined the father in question in his program.

He says whenever his spiritual father calls and ask him where are you now? His answer is always, “where you want me to be sir”.

In this life, nothing works by chance. Everything works by principles.

There are those who claim to be submitting but with zero evidence of the father’s grace at work in their own lives and ministries because they are hanging around not following.

My prayer for you is that you will begin to follow well in Jesus’ name.

5. **OBSERVATION:** A spiritual son must approach his spiritual father with the preparedness of mind to learn.

A wise son will learn more by observation than by instruction.

Imagine a son who doesn’t follow closely. Who can stay for months or years without visiting the father’s ministry, it is

obvious that his progress will be very slow because the more you are called around the more you observe and what you see determines what you can dream.

6. **ASSIMILATION:** Assimilation means to absorb. A true spiritual son is an absorber.

Picking up everything that maybe helpful to his assignment as he interacts with his father.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MENTEE

Php 2:19 - 22 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

- 1. A spiritual son must pray for the welfare of his spiritual father.**

Your prayers for your spiritual father will do more for him than complains and criticisms.

Jesus requested for prayer from his disciples.

Paul requested for prayer from his disciples.

And no father could be more spiritual than Jesus and Saint Paul for you to think they won't need your prayers.

Even if they don't ask for it you are to do it as a covenant responsibility.

Peter was anointed to the point that his mere shadow falling on a sick person was enough to heal the sick. But his anointing could not save him from prison.

It took the intercession of the church for God to dispatch an angel to rescue Simon Peter.

Our prayers of protection and preservation for our fathers will make them escape the snares of the devil and fulfill their glorious ministries.

The longer they live the better for you as a son and the better for the body of Christ as a whole.

I request you drop this book now and take 30 minutes to intercede for your spiritual father, praying in the Spirit. Remember whatever you do for your father is a seed you planted for own life.

2. A spiritual son must absolutely defend the interest of his spiritual father both privately and publicly.

When God took the Spirit that was upon Moses and put on the seventy, Edad and Meldad, whose names were included on the list but refused to appear before Moses began to prophesy right within the camp as the Spirit of the Lord fell on them.

Joshua's reaction is what would have been expected from every loyal follower. He charged Moses to stop them

immediately because he saw their action as a threat to Moses' authority.

Nothing truly reveals Joshua's loyalty as the question Moses asked him saying, "Are you jealous for my sake?"(Numbers11:29).

Yes, my friend, every true son should be jealous to protect the father's interest.

Every loyal son must be jealous enough of his father's interest to the point of confronting others to protect it. Joshua's action revealed his loyalty to Moses.

To hold your peace and close your mouth in the midst of people castigating and assassinating your father's reputation speaks volumes of your character because silence is synonymous to compliance.

3. A spiritual son must defend the name of his spiritual father.

Family matters are handled in the family setting. To join others and castigate your spiritual father is an anti-covenant operation that carries plenty of curses.

You criticize your mate not your father. The father whose nakedness (weakness) you expose can only be a source of curses to your life.

Before you attempt to correct a father, ensure you must have outgrown his results.

And even when you outgrow your father's results you cannot outgrow his authority. A father remains a father.

4. A spiritual son should be accountable to his spiritual father.

The person you call spiritual father has the right to call you to other where and when you are missing it. For that to be possible you must be accountable.

For example if you are not accountable to your father for your marriage, you can easily abuse your wife and children.

If you are not accountable to your spiritual father for your finances you can easily indulge into all manner of gimmicks that can ruin your ministry.

5. A spiritual son must sow financially and materially into the life and ministry of his spiritual father in tithes, prophets offering etc.

It beats my imagination that some sons are greedy towards their spiritual parents.

What else could give you delight more than sowing financially and materially into the life and ministry of your spiritual father.

And I'm not talking about tithes here. The honorarium you give your father after hosting him is another matter altogether.

Sowing into the life of your spiritual father is different from your personal or ministry tithes and it's also different from the honorarium.

It is seed you package as your prophets offering which you drop periodically at the feet of your spiritual father.

If all you are releasing to your father is your tithe or honorarium then you are still charging up to start the journey.

To the glory of God, some of us have come to the place that we are able to gladly sow in multiple zeros.

The first thing on my list whenever I am to travel to see my spiritual father is what I am to lay at his feet.

Giving to the one feeding you spiritually is commanded by God in scriptures.

Some foolish sons who think spiritual fathers are sponsors are instead concerned about receiving financial help from fathers.

Listen to this story. It is said that at one time, Bishop Benson Idahosa called his son Bishop David Oyedepo into his room

and told him, “See all these bags are full of money of all types of currencies you can take as much as you want”.

Bishop Oyedepo declined the offer and said to him, “sir I don’t want your money but what gave you the money”.

This is covenant sense per excellence.

Amongst other things, your seed to your spiritual fathers does the following:

- i. Connects you to the grace on his life.
- ii. Opens your heavens.
- iii. Generates a financial harvest.
- iv. Provokes the release of prophetic blessings for the making of your destiny.
- v. Opens the heavens of your ministry.

6. A spiritual son must celebrate the promotion of his spiritual father.

Any son who is angry at the promotion of his spiritual father is a Judas Iscariot.

The higher your father rises the higher you rise.

The greater the name of your father the greater your name too will become.

The only reason why Bishop David Abeoye is an iconic church father today though not a founder is his covenant placement besides Bishop David Oyedepo.

The rise of your father is your rise.

Do everything within your power to see that you contribute to the growth of your father.

It is a seed you are sowing for your life and ministry because you also have sons under you and what you don't release you don't receive.

7. A spiritual son should stay loyal and closely follow after his father.

Just anyone can claim to be loyal, but your loyalty can only be confirmed by your actions.

Talk is cheap but action is expensive.

If loyalty was just a matter of sweet talk and promises, then everyone would be loyal.

But how many people do you know who stay true to their commitments?

How many people do you know whose words are always followed by actions?

Few, very few and the simple reason is that loyalty is more of action than just words.

Loyalty isn't just a matter of words, it's a lifestyle.

Take Joshua as an example of a loyal son. I can't find a single scripture where Joshua pledged his loyalty to Moses, but everyone can see his loyalty from his actions.

Indeed, actions speak louder than words.

12 CHARACTERISTICS OF AN IRRESPONSIBLE SON

- i. Irresponsible sons don't pray for their father.
- ii. Irresponsible sons don't serve / minister to their father.
- iii. Irresponsible sons don't give to their father.
- iv. Irresponsible sons are a source of grief to their father.
- v. Irresponsible sons don't promote their father.
- vi. Irresponsible sons expect their father to sponsor their ministries.
- vii. Irresponsible sons don't participate in the ministry of their father.
- viii. Irresponsible sons don't honour their father.
- ix. Irresponsible sons are not accountable to their father.
- x. Irresponsible sons attack their father to their own detriment.
- xi. Irresponsible sons don't cover the nakedness of their father.
- xii. Irresponsible sons are a burden to their father.

HOW TO IDENTIFY TRUE SONS

Num 11:29 And Moses said unto him, "Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!"

In identifying sons and daughters, one of the key factors is follower-ship.

Apostle Jonas Clark says, "You know true sons and daughters by their pursuit." Pursuit is the key.

The father you are not pursuing is not your spiritual father.

A father can only invest himself into the life of a son to the degree the son is committed to pursue the father's grace.

Fathers should beware of folks who are not committed followers and only show up when their lives are challenged.

Impartation from a father is free but not cheap and only sons who are willing to pay the price will receive it.

Any son who feels too big to publicly identify with his father is too big for that father's blessing.

If it is grace you want, then submit.

If you came to learn, then submit. If you want spiritual covering, then submit.

A SPIRITUAL FATHER IS NOT A SPONSOR

Heb 7:7 And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

A spiritual father is not a sponsor to your ministry.

If you are looking for who to sponsor your ministry then ask God to connect you with destiny helpers and ministry partners.

Imagine how much money must have gone in for the construction of the glory dome.

Friends we are talking here about billions of dollars and in it all, God's servant Dr Pastor Paul Enenche said with joy and excitement that his spiritual father Bishop David Oyedepo didn't put in a dime.

To him, the land breaking, impartation, blessings, counsel, prayers and watchfulness of his spiritual father throughout the project is more valuable than a gift of one billion he could have given for the said project.

Only a fool who doesn't understand the battle in taking over territories will undermine the blessings of a spiritual father in carrying out such a venture.

If at any given time your spiritual father chooses to bless you financially or materially then consider a rare privilege and not a right.

Sons who run after fathers for sponsorship are into a misguided venture and the most they will get from it is offense.

Someone may argue and say, "But didn't Paul write to the church that it is for fathers to provide for their sons?"

No, sir. Paul never said so. Instead, this is what Paul said: "Now I'm ready to visit you for a third time, and I will not bother you for help. I do not want your things, but rather you yourselves. Children should not have to support their parents, but parents their children," (2 Corinthians 12:14, ISV).

Just like in a family setting, you have younger children who still depend on their parents for support and older "children" who've grown up to a responsible age, being the ones to provide for their parents.

In summary, fathers provide for their children, while sons provide for their fathers.

If you are still depending on your spiritual father as a sponsor for your ministry, then you are still a spiritual toddler.

To depend on others is to live as a liability, while to provide for others is to live as an asset.

Spiritual children are a burden, while spiritual sons are an asset. Spiritual responsibility is a measure of spiritual maturity.

If you are not financially responsible towards your biological and spiritual parents, then you lack maturity in kingdom financial stewardship.

THE BENEFITS OF A SPIRITUAL FATHER

1. A Father Helps To Nurture The Development Of Your Destiny And Ministry From Stage To Stage.

Spiritual fathers help sons establish and achieve goals both in life and ministry.

Fathers are bridges. Fathers are ladders. Fathers provide you with feathers to soar from one phase of ministry to another.

The truth is that without a backing mantle there are levels in ministry you may never attain.

Recently, I heard God's servant Dr Paul Enenche (pastoring the largest church in the world) say he is where he is today because of his submission to Bishop David Oyedepo.

Nothing works by chance but by choice.

Ninety nine percent of the son's of God's servant Dr Paul Enenche share the same testimony of a mighty shift in ministry after they came under the backing grace of the

heavy prophetic and apostolic mantles of his life and ministry.

2. A Father Provides Examples That Help You To Establish Principles.

Fathers are pace setters. Fathers are role models. Fathers are those who know and show you the path to excellence in ministry.

Fathers release to you trade secrets in ministry that make your ride to the top smooth and fast .

Spiritual fathers inject a spirit of excellence in their son's that eliminates mediocrity. The son of a giant cannot be a dwarf.

3. A Father Shows You Possibilities That Change Your Mentality.

Mentality affects both reality and destiny. What you see determines what you can dream.

Bishop Oyedepo told Papa Adeboye that if they are able to build an auditorium to gather fifty thousand people it was first because he saw the same crowd gathering at the redemption Camp.

Likewise by the time God's servant Dr. Paul Enenche build the largest church auditorium in the world, he told his

spiritual father Bishop Oyedepo that the only reason he could dare such a thing is because he first saw it at Canaan land. To see nothing is to dream nothing.

4. A Father Amplifies Your Voice.

Fathers have a name.

Fathers are references in ministry and identifying with such a father amplifies your voice as a minister.

When people know who your spiritual father is, it gives them an idea of what they can expect from you.

5. A Father Provides Covering Grace And Unction That Enables You To Operate Beyond Your Personal Grace And Ability.

Graces are in levels.

Mountains are in sizes and devils too are in sizes. Under the covering grace of a father, you begin to function with a higher grace that enables you to command the same order of results as your spiritual father.

If the Jordan bowed to the mantle of Elijah then the same mantle will command the similar results in the hands of Elisha.

6. A Father's Grace Upgrades You. Spiritual fathers are builders. A spiritual father will always challenge you for

greater strives in life and ministry because no father wants to see his child fail in his assignment.

Under the watchful eyes of a spiritual father you cannot rest on your laureates. Dr Paul Enenche says they were somehow very comfortable in their former church at Area 1 - Garaiki Abuja.

But one time when Bishop Oyedepo came to minister in their church and saw people everywhere with multiple overflows getting right to the road, he told him to move out of that place very fast.

By the charge of a spiritual father today the current church size is four times the previous one likewise the attendance.

7. A Father Delivers You From Unnecessary Journeys And Experiences Of Ministry. Our Nigerian brothers say, "Follow after the person who knows the road".

Fathers are custodians of ministry experiences you are yet to have and are best placed to help you avoid repeating the same mistakes some of them committed out of ignorance.

Besides, why take so many years struggling to discover what those ahead of you have already discovered with undeniable results?

The difference between you and the person you admire is what he knows that you don't know and have to sit and learn.

8. A Father Stands With You In Your Seasons Of Challenges And Confrontations.

Two are better than one. One will chase a thousand and two will chase ten thousands.

There will always be seasons of confrontations in ministry that will require the wisdom and guidance of spiritual father to overcome.

Those who don't honour grace are candidates of disgrace.

God appeared to me many years ago saying, "The fact that I am using you doesn't mean you don't need a father. Look for one and submit before you are disgraced".

My prompt obedience to that instruction rescued me from a major assault of the enemy on my life and ministry.

A son of Dr Paul Enenche after his Sunday service just collapsed and slumped into eternity. All efforts to resuscitate him proved helpless.

On the way to the mortuary the wife succeeded to place a phone call through to God's servant and just one command from the mouth of God's general checked that demon of

death back to hell and he who was dead came back to life all to the glory of God.

If he didn't have a spiritual father his ministry would have ended that day.

I pray for you today that your life and ministry will not crash in Jesus' name. You will end well in Jesus' name.

9. A Father Defines and Reveals Your Potentials.

A spiritual father believes in his son when everyone else sees nothing to affirm because he sees the son beyond what the physical eyes can communicate.

Spiritual fathers judge their sons by their content not the container.

A spiritual father understands the prophetic destiny of the son and challenges him to take giant steps towards the fulfillment of his assignment.

Spiritual fathers place demands on you that stretch you for greater productivity.

Fathers won't ask you to do what is within your ability but what is greater than your ability in a bid to stretch you.

A mother eagle will throw off its eaglets from the nest ten thousand feet above sea level in a free fall and just when the eaglet is about to crash on a rock underneath it will swoop

under it and pick it up and will repeat the same process over and over until the eaglet learns to flap its wings and begin to fly.

The purpose of the rather harsh exercise is to define and reveal the potentials of the eaglet as a giant of the air.

I pray for the unfolding of every potential in your life in Jesus' name.

10. A Father Releases on You Prophecies That Unfolds Your Destiny.

The patriarch Jacob gathered his sons together and told them he wants to tell them what the future held for each of them and released on each of them prophetic blessings that shaped the course of the twelve tribes of Israel till this day.

There is power in prophetic blessings to unravel destiny. Your future resembles the kind of prophetic blessings released on your life.

11. A Father Calls You To Order When You Are Missing The Mark.

To surround yourself with “Yes-men” is a disaster.

No matter your results you must have an authority over your life. Who can call you to order when you are missing the mark.

To command authority, you must be under authority. Travelling “en solo” is always a dangerous venture because even the mighty apostle Paul was led by the Spirit to meet the leading apostles to submit his revelation of grace to them to be sure he was not missing the mark.

Lack of submission to spiritual authority was the reason for the crash of great men of God in the past and is still the cause for the sudden disappearance of many today in ministry.

Just because you hear God doesn't mean you shouldn't hear from man.

All the strange doctrines we hear today in the body of Christ is as a result of the insubordination of young preachers nowadays to the authority of established fathers in the faith.

I prophesy you shall not miss the mark in Jesus' name. Only a spiritual father can tell you the truth others may not be bold enough to tell you.

Spiritual fathers provide room for accountability which is a fundamental requirement for a long and lasting ministry.

12. Spiritual Fatherhood Provides The Opportunity To Give Back to the next generation what you learnt from the previous.

Life is about contribution not consumption. Students today will be teachers tomorrow.

Those who follow today will be those leading tomorrow.

Paul asked Timothy to pass the training he'd received from him to others.

The work of God is in succession and nobody occupies the stage forever.

Learn today so that you can teach tomorrow because you can't release what you haven't received.

To every Elisha, there must be an Elijah. To every Joshua, there is a Moses and to every Timothy, there is a Paul.

DOES A PASTOR NEED A PASTOR?

*Psa 145:4 One generation shall praise thy works to another,
and shall declare thy mighty acts.*

Ministry is military so there is more to ministry than the glamour portrayed on TV by successful ministers.

Statistics reveal pastors are quitting ministry at an alarming rate.

A recent study reveals over 1500 pastors quit ministry each month and thousands more leave churches without cause.

Nobody can lift himself up without the help of strategic destiny helpers.

Spiritual fathers are designed by God to be destiny helpers. They make your life journey easier and sweeter.

Why should you be struggling to find what others have already found?

Why should you be straining to cross a bridge others have crossed successfully?

Everyone needs a pastor including pastors.

If you are too big to have a pastor over you then you are too small to have people under you.

What fatherless children suffer naturally is what fatherless ministers suffer spiritually.

The outcome of a lack of both parents in the home is lawlessness and the same is true spiritually.

Nobody can give what he has not received.

Nobody can pastor effectively who has not been pastored.

Nobody can be in authority who does understand how to be under authority.

Don't expect to receive what you do not release.

Boasting that nobody ever laid hands on you is being a spiritual ignoramus.

Nobody can lift himself up without the help of strategic destiny helpers.

Spiritual fathers are designed by God as destiny helpers.

They make your life journey easier, faster and sweeter.

SIGNS OF A MINISTER WITHOUT A FATHER

In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes. (Judges 17:6)

The absence of a spiritual father in the life of a minister will be characterized by the following signs:

1. **Bankruptcy of principles.**

Both Moses and Joshua were on the mountain and heard noise coming from the camp of the children of Israel but their interpretations were different.

Joshua said it was the sound of war whereas Moses said it was the sound of rebellion.

Fathers provide sons with tested and proven examples to follow.

But for Moses, Joshua would have taken the wrong action on account of what he thought he heard.

Paul was taken to the third heavens where he heard deep spiritual truths he was not permitted to share.

Yet, by the leading of the spirit he went to Jerusalem to submit his teaching of grace to the leading apostles for testing lest he had run in vain.

2. Lawlessness and recklessness in ministry.

To command great authority without being under authority is a great risk.

If you have no one to call you to other you can easily miss it.

Roberts Liardon in his book “God’s General” makes it clear that the reason a person like John Alexander Dowie went astray doctrinally was because he failed to submit to the spiritual authority of more matured ministers like Maria Woodworth Ether.

God in his wisdom organized their coming together but John Alexander Dowie felt too important to submit himself to her tutelage.

He was surrounded with “yes men” who eventually left him on a spiritual dung hill.

3. Captivity and imprisonment of destiny.

The destiny of Saul unfolded when he encountered Prophet Samuel.

The destiny of David exploded when he crossed the path of Samuel.

The destiny of Elisha came to life when he met with Elijah.

The destiny of Simon Peter was unraveled by his encounter with Jesus.

To lack a father is to lack feathers to fly.

4. Seasons of confusion in life and ministry.

One wrong move in ministry can terminate your ministry. Either moving in the wrong direction or moving ahead of God's timing could be very disastrous.

Fathers are men and women with a high degree of spiritual discernment who like the children of Issachar have understanding of the times and season of ministry and can successfully guide spiritual sons in making the right moves at the right time for maximum impact.

5. Seasons of confrontations and attacks with the capacity to silence the ministry completely.

The fact that you hear God doesn't mean God can't use man to speak to you. Every prophet needs a prophet.

In the heat of confusion in David's ministry, it took the wise counsel of his own prophet, Nathan to provide David with the wisdom he needed to escape calamity.

The mentality of “I am anointed and hear God” has caused many ministers to die prematurely. You will not crash in Jesus’ name.

6. A long journey of ministry with unnecessary sacrifices and pain.

Fathers show you the way and help you to make your journey in ministry less stressful, quicker and more impactful.

7. The capacity to disappear suddenly out of ministry is very high.

There is a lot of doubt as to the authenticity and origin of the ministry of a minister without a reference.

Fathers are references to your ministry.

If you don’t have reference, others won’t make reference to you.

9. Inability to break land marks in ministry.

Spiritual fathering is the escape route from disgrace and frustration in ministry.

May you never see disgrace to become a negative reference in Jesus’ name.

THE PITFALLS OF SONS

Mar 14:3 - 6 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, "Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor". And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, "Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me".

1. **Malice:** Sons who become bitter with their father because of the manifestation of his humanity will eventually disconnect.

Like someone rightly said every father has armpits.

2. **Criticism:** Sons should avoid criticizing their father because it attracts divine judgment.

The weaknesses of a father are a great test to his sons.

Noah was wrong to be drunk and expose his nakedness but it didn't stop the curse of his mouth plaguing the lineage of Ham.

Moses was wrong in marrying an Ethiopian woman but it didn't stop the wrath of God falling on Miriam because she criticized him.

3. **Wrongly Associating:** Sons who associate with rebels, those who attack and show contempt towards their spiritual father will malfunction and eventually crash.

4. **Competitive Spirit:** Sons who compete with their father are into the wrong competition and will eventually crash.

That is what is called the spirit of Absalom.

Sons who compete with their father will always predict doom for the father and his ministry.

Such a son feels he is better than his father so he tries to project himself instead of his father.

A son with a competitive spirit is usually angry with the promotion of his father.

5. **Pride:** As a son never allow your results to enter your head.

The more God lifts you, the humbler you are to become. Don't forget that pride always goes before a fall.

6. **Ignoring The Humanity Factor:** Your spiritual father as anointed as he is, is still a man not an angel.

He is a “man” of God. Prioritize the humanity factor before the divinity factor. So make allocations for mistakes because in the flesh none is perfect including you.

THE PITFALLS OF FATHERS

Then the old prophet from Bethel said to him, "I, too, am a prophet just like you, and at the LORD's command an angel told me to take you home with me and offer you my hospitality." But the old prophet was lying. (1Ki_13:18)

Fathers should never forget that fathering is a school to both the father and the son.

In learning you will teach, and in teaching you will learn.

The pitfalls of fathers happen when fathers run into excesses and the relation becomes abusive.

Most often than not, a spiritual father who practices such vices is motivated by another spirit and not the Holy Spirit. Some of these vices include:

1. **Manipulation**

A manipulative relationship is a relationship wherein someone uses mental distortion and emotional exploitation to influence and control your actions.

The ultimate goal of manipulators is for you to serve their goals and selfish interest.

Some manipulative tendencies include flattery, blame and isolation to the point of devaluing you into something less than what you truly are.

I am eyewitness of a story where a spiritual father encouraged his son to make a wrong move in ministry and relocate to a different town simply because he wanted to take over the sons ministry and make it part of his ministry.

There is witchcraft in Christianity and plenty of witchdoctors who postulate as gospel ministers.

Friends lets beware.

2. Abuse

An abusive relationship is a relationship wherein you are treated with violence, disrespect, cruelty, harm or force. Abusive father-son relationship is mostly emotional.

Many spiritual sons have been injured because of abusive relationships and this has negatively imparted their lives and ministries.

My counsel is that you run from any such relationship because it can destroy you.

3. Man Worship (or Ego-Centrism)

This is the quality of being overly interested in oneself at the expense of other people. People who suffer from

egocentrism live in their own universe and think life revolves around their petty ambitions.

A spiritual father plagued with egocentrism will lie in the name of the Lord to tell a son he is not called to be a founder just to keep the son serving under him.

People who suffer from egocentrism have two main problems.

First, they feel insecure and see the success of others as a threat to their own success.

Left to them, every other person should serve in their ministry.

Secondly, they lack an understanding of the prophetic destiny of those God brings into their lives.

They forget to know that a servant today can become a master tomorrow.

An usher today maybe called by God to be a general overseer tomorrow.

4. Bitterness

I am of the opinion that the greatest pitfall of spiritual fathers is unforgiveness.

Some sons are known to have seriously injured the life and ministry of their spiritual fathers such that the fathers find it difficult to forgive and forget their offenses.

Some break the church of their spiritual fathers to start their own church.

Others after leaving their fathers begin to fight them on social media.

What they forget to remember is that life is a seed and whatever they plant today in the life of their fathers is what they shall reap tomorrow from their own sons.

Beloved father, I know how painful it may be for you to call that your son, forgive him, bless him and release him.

But please, for the sake love, your welfare and the kingdom of God, please do so. It is part of the price to pay for fathering.

Forgiveness and brokenness is what makes a father, not slaying people under the anointing.

The hallmark of spiritual fathering is walking in love.

If you can't walk in love and forgiveness then you are not qualified to be a spiritual father because periodically, some of your sons will do things that will anger you.

God forbid that you allow the mistakes of your spiritual sons to determine your fate both in time and eternity.

You shall end well in Jesus' name.

About The Author

Rev. Dr. Bobbs Lyonga is the senior pastor of the Throne Of Glory Ministries International (TGMI). An outreach based ministry with headquarters in Kumba, Cameroon.

As a missionary Pastor he has a unique grace to minister God's healing and deliverance power with a mandate to teach faith and demonstrate the glory of God.

He holds a Diploma in theology, B.Sc. in Plant Biology, a Masters in Ministry and Doctors in Ministry. He is married to Rev. Mrs. Lyonga Eleanor and together, they are blessed with four wonderful children.

As an outreach minister he is greatly used by God in crusades. He equally ministers over Majesty TV which is the television ministry of the Glorious church.



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