

**Greater Works Christian Church**  
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**Parent- Child Relationship**  
**Father- Son Relationship**

In our studies we have found that there are three levels of relationships as it pertains to those in leadership and those these leaders have been given to lead.

***These relationships are:***

**1. The Shepherd- Flock Relationship**

This relationship is seen in two areas:

- A) Shepherd- Lamb Relationship
- B) Shepherd- Sheep Relationship

**2. Teacher- Disciple Relationship**

Also known as the:

- A) Master- Slave Relationship

**Note:** Slave here is better understood as, “bond-servant”.

**3. Parent- Child Relationship**

**Note:** This relationship should grow to the father – Son Relationship

**4. Father- Son Relationship**

**Note:** The Father- Son Relationship is the level of relationship that we press towards.

**Question and Discussion:** Upon looking at these levels of relationships, where do you see yourself and why? Please share your opinion.

As already stated, we press onto the “Father- Son Relationship,” because this is the place of receiving our inheritance. The Father- Son Relationship is the deepest relationship we can enter with those over us, but we will never get to the fullness of this relationship without going through the other levels of relationship. Each level has certain criteria that must be met before we can advance to the next level of relationship. This of course is not done in a manner that would resemble a promotion on the job, but the evolution of an ever-deepening relationship based upon love and trust.

***What is to be learned in the Teacher-Disciple Relationship:***

1. Honor
2. Respect
3. Submission/Obedience
4. Interdependence (mutual dependence)
5. Commitment

6. Loyalty
7. Dignity
8. Servanthood

***What we gain by heeding the voice of our teachers (Masters):***

1. Expert advice in the area of the teacher's expertise.
2. Long life (Prov. 3:1-2).
3. Length of days (Prov. 3:1-2).
4. Peace (Prov. 3:1-2).
5. (Similar to #1) The instruction on how to do what the Teacher can do (Mark 6:12-13;30-31 and Heb 5:12-14).
6. We ourselves can become teachers (Heb 5:12-14).
7. We become skilled in the words of righteousness (Heb 5:12-14).
8. Our senses exercised to discern both good and evil (Heb 5:12-14).

**Question and Discussion:** Who are your Teachers? What have you learned from them? Be as specific as possible.

***The Transition from Teacher- Disciple to Parent- Child***

**1 Corinthians 4:14-17**

14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*.

15 For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

16 Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.

**Note:** Paul states, the church of Corinth had plenty of instructors (teachers) but lacked Fathers. It was the desire of Paul for the people of this church to move beyond the Teacher-Disciple Relationship, to the Parent-Child Relationship. Although Paul states that he was the one who gave birth to these (begotten), this was their initial birth into the kingdom. He was in essence a Father to them, but not in the greater capacity that was needed. Paul was urging them to grow beyond the primary relationships, and into the deeper relationships that would benefit them more.

In this passage Paul touches on several levels of relationship that we have studied and looked into.

**These Relationships are:**

1. *Parent-Child Relationship* (v.14, "my beloved children").
2. *Teacher-Disciple Relationship* (v.15, "ten thousand instructors").
3. *Shepherd-Flock (Lamb) Relationship* (v.15, "I have begotten you").
4. *Teacher-Disciple and/or Parent-Child Relationship* (v.16, "imitate me").

5. *Parent-Child (Father-Son) Relationship* (v.17, "I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son").

**Note:** v.16 "*imitate me*"

**Imitate**= [3402, Grk.] mimetes (mim-ay-tace)-  
an imitator:- follower.

**Note:** This word is very similar to mimic, and mime.

**Note:** This above word is very similar to the word "mime". As we know a mime is someone who acts out a scene without speaking or making noise. This is a great illustration of how we are to grow from one level of relationship to another. We are to be observers of those placed in leadership over us. This does not mean that we become "seen and not heard", but when we are heard it should be in a way that is appropriate, honoring those in authority over us. Doing this leads to further growth.

**Question and Discussion:** Think of your spiritual leaders (teachers and spiritual parents). Do you honor them as you should? If so, what do you do to honor them?

Do you Mimic your spiritual teachers? If so, in what ways?

Far too often the students begin to act as if they are the teachers; or the children begin to act and speak as if they are the parents (the teenager that knows everything). Not only is this a statement of arrogance on the part of the student and/or child, but it is dangerous to the listener, and disrespectful to the teachers and parents of these ones.

**Arrogant because:**

1. They take on this role by assumption.
2. In order to do this one must think higher of himself than he ought.

**Romans 12:3**

For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

3. This role wasn't given to him/her properly by those who have been placed as a teacher or parent in their life.

**Question and Discussion:** Several years ago, there was a young man in the church who went around telling people he was going to be the Youth Pastor at the church. There were two problems with this. First, he was never given that position; second, he was living in sin. He took this position upon himself.

Have you ever struggled with taking upon yourself things you did not earn (as shown above)? Have you ever thought you had more spiritually (or in maturity) than you had? Please be as specific as possible.

How did you overcome this? Did you sit down with your spiritual leaders and apologize (humbling yourself)? Did you seek their council about how to actually achieve the level you previously thought you were in?

**Dangerous Because:**

1. At this level of maturity and relationship, this one has not been developed enough to carry the weight of the role he/she is attempting to be in.
2. Their words have not yet been weighed and tested by those in authority over them.
3. It is the same principle of the “blind leading the blind” (or in this case, the immature leading the immature)

**Luke 6:39-40**

<sup>39</sup> And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?”

<sup>40</sup> A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.

**Disrespectful to the Teacher or Parent because:**

1. It shows a great deal of disrespect those over us.
2. It is dishonoring to those over us.
3. This one is falsely representing his/her teacher/parent.
4. Shows a lack of submission and obedience.

**Note:** As a people that are to “imitate” (mimic) our leaders, it isn’t that we become voiceless automatons, but instead followers and children worthy of double blessing.

**Question and Discussion:** As shown above, when we assume positions of maturity we aren’t not ready for, it is Arrogant, Dangerous and Disrespectful.

What other problems come up with this type of mindset and activity?

**2 Kings 2:9**

And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?”

Elisha said, “Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.”

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Notice that *Elijah had to tell Elisha to ask him for this blessing.* Elisha honored Elijah to the point he dared not ask him of anything until he was given the opportunity by Elijah. Until this time, Elisha merely observed and learned, while serving Elijah as a servant.

This quality of servanthood took Elisha through all the levels of relationship that we have been discussing, until ultimately receiving the inheritance and continuing the prophetic ministry that was established by Elijah.

### ***We Determine Our Own Blessing***

#### **Genesis 49:28**

All these *are* the twelve tribes of Israel, and this *is* what their father spoke to them. And he blessed them; he blessed each one according to his own blessing.

#### **Note: “he blessed each one according to his own blessing”**

The statement “according to his own blessing” is a statement meaning, “what they deserved by the level of blessing they were to others”.

#### **Gen 49:28 (NASB)**

All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him.

**Note:** Just as these twelve received what they earned (so to speak), we do the same today as well. When we are people of honor and submission, then we can be trusted with greater things. If we become impatient, rebellious, argumentative, etc. then we can only be trusted with lesser things. As we see from this passage, in a large part we determine the level of blessing we receive within the framework of these relationships.

**Questions and Discussion:** Elisha worked his way into being the #1 Prophet in Israel. This he did without ever asking for it.

Are you living and working in such a way as to become something great in the House of God? Imagine for a moment God says you will someday be the head of the church. What can you do to earn that position? Be specific.

Are you doing these things now? If not, why?

#### **This was the first Question-**

**Question and Discussion:** Upon looking at these levels of relationships, where do you see yourself and why? Please share your opinion.

After going through this outline, has your answer changed? If so, how? Why?