

QUESTIONS FOR HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS

This document originated with Redeemer Presbyterian Church, of Madison, AL, pastored by Stewart Jordan. It is used here with permission.

These questions are to serve as a diagnostic tool, especially for husbands and fathers, serving as heads of their households. God has ordained that men are to lead their families in love and humility, reflecting and representing the loving leadership that Christ manifests towards his bride, the church. These questions are not meant to make us overly introspective or to discourage us, but as way of driving us to Christ for both forgiveness and renewal, on a daily basis. Think of these questions as a biblical target to shoot for, by God's grace. These questions sketch out the kind of family culture we desire our fathers to be moving towards creating.

These questions can also be of use to single men and younger men. There are many things here for single men to consider as they evaluate their lives in light of the gospel. This battery of questions can also remind single men of what they need to be striving for as preparation for marriage, should that be God's calling. These questions help point all men towards a well rounded, balanced, and faithful walk with Christ.

We encourage our men to use these questions for meditation during times of personal worship, to do regular "spiritual check-ups," to talk through with wives and friends, and to use as outline for prayer and goal setting.

Personal life with God

- Would the people who know me best say that I am a "slave of righteousness" (Rom 6:18)? That I seek God's kingdom and righteousness (Matt 6:33) and am zealous for the good works He has redeemed me to do (Titus 2:14)?
- Am I more aware of my sin and God's grace in Christ both for forgiveness and walking in obedience?
- Am I growing in my passion and love for God? (Deut. 6:4; Matt 22:37-38) Are there things in my life (use of time, money, etc) that are inconsistent with such a passion and love?

- Am I regularly in God's Word both for purposes of study/reading and meditation (See Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1; II Timothy 3:16-17). What steps can I take to be in the Scripture more?
- Is my prayer life very consistent? What steps can I take?
- Am I walking in purity before God? (Note - this has tremendous implications for my household! See Ex. 20:5-6; Josh 7:15, 22-26; II Sam 12:11; Ps. 112:1-2; Jer. 32:38-39) Integrity? Moral purity?
- Am I growing in awareness of, and commitment to, my God-ordained responsibilities in home, church, work, and world?

Overall leadership of household

- Am I exercising leadership with the goal of my household being used for God's purposes in subduing the earth and discipling the nations (Gen. 1:28; Matthew 28:18-20)? In what ways can I be applying this truth more actively in my planning, prayers, and actions? Am I pursuing this goal as a steward of, in accountability to, and in fellowship with, God's church through which He subdues the earth and disciples the nations?
- Am I conscious of the fact that God has established a relationship with me as the representative of my household (Gen. 7:1; Numbers 30; Acts 16:31)? Am I embracing that responsibility? Is it clear in my mind and heart that this relationship has nothing to do with my personality or my inclinations, but is based simply on God's purposes, calling, and chain of command?
- Do I know and believe that I can be an effective Head of Household because of God's faithfulness, the greatness of Christ, and the benefits of the gospel? Do I embrace it in faith and act on it? Do I sometimes substitute programs and imitation of others (though I should always be learning from others) for daily trusting in God?
- Am I spending time praying for my household and those in it? (Job 1:5) Am I *aggressively* seeking God for wisdom, for protection, for grace? Do I know well "the condition of my flock"?
- Am I spending time planning for my household ministry?
- What steps could I take to do more planning and praying for my household?
- Are there areas of household life (money, family schedule, activities, entertainment, etc) that I think should be different but that I am not addressing because I fear the reaction of my wife and/or children? (See Gen. 3:6,9,17; Gen. 35:2-4; Josh 24:15; I Sam 3:13; Prov. 29:25)?
- Can I say that in my leading, decision-making, and responses that I show myself to be consistently more committed to God's righteousness being seen in my household (Gen. 18:19) and to the heart sanctification of my wife (Eph. 5:25-27) and children (Eph 6:4) than I am to either my own

- personal comfort, convenience, or how well I am liked? In other words, am I leading in the fear of the Lord . . . and dieing to self in the process?
- Is our household life “out of control” sometimes? Often? What can I do to bring some order to it?
 - Am I consistently taking the log out of my own eye as I am addressing the specks in the eyes of my wife and children (Matthew 7:1-5)?
 - What Christian men could I get some help and encouragement from in walking with God and leading my household?

Relationship with wife

- Am I loving her as Christ loved the church (Eph. 5:25ff)? Do I yearn to see her pure and holy? Am I shepherding her toward that? Am I regular thinking about her spiritual and emotional life and how God wants to use me to lead her toward godliness? Am I regularly praying for her and for my own shepherding wisdom and commitment? Do I know and act on the fact that the basis for my fathering effectiveness is my faithfulness as a husband?
- In what ways is God calling me to die to self in order to love, lead, minister to, and deepen unity with, my wife? How am I responding?
- Have I bought into the lie that “if Momma ain’t happy, no one is happy”? In other words, do I take responsibility for walking in the fruits of the Spirit and bringing the fragrance of Christ to our home, or do I tend to justify my lack of those things according to how my wife is doing?
- Am I jealousy guarding our oneness? (Gen 2:24, Eph 5:31)? Am I ruthlessly repenting of anything that would threaten my commitment to that oneness (Malachi 2:14-16)?
- Is she inspired toward godliness by my example?
- Would she say that I am considerate to her, that I respect her, and live with here in an understanding way (I Peter 3:7)? That I protect her (Neh. 4:13-14; Numbers 30)? That I lead her (Josh 24:15)? That she is my glory (I Corinthians 11:7)? That I nourish and cherish her (Eph 5:29)? Does she know in her mind and heart – every day, no matter what her state of mind and heart – that I joyfully receive her as God’s perfect provision as a helper and companion? (Doesn’t mean that I’m not addressing sin in her life; part of this rejoicing is that I thank God for the privilege of being her husband/shepherd in humbly and lovingly addressing those things, rather than seeing her sin as a nuisance).
- Am I ever harsh with her (Col. 3:19)?
- Do I model and communicate to her a biblical vision of how God can use our household in His work in such a way that she can see great purpose in being my helper in doing what God has called us to (Gen. 2:18)? How would she answer if asked?

- Am I giving the leadership and oversight she needs for the day to day tasks, decisions, and pressures she faces?
- Do I pray with her for the accomplishment of God's purposes in and through our household?
- Do I regularly communicate to her how much I rejoice in her as the helper/companion God has provided to me (Gen. 2:18-23)? Am I specific? Does she feel rejoiced in? Does she feel esteemed?
- Would she say that I humbly receive her help in seeing my sin and shortcomings, and then finding ways to improve and grow?
- Do I support, enforce, and model submission to, the desires she has in managing the house?
- How could I help in encouraging and developing her gifts and strengths for God's purposes?
- Are there other women she could be ministering to (Titus 2:3-5)? How could I encourage and support this?
- Are there other women who might could encourage my wife (Titus 2:3-5)? How could I take some leadership in helping to bring that about?
- Does she ask me questions about the Bible and get informative and humble answers (I Cor. 14:34-35; also see Neh 8:13)? If she hardly ever ask me, why not? If she doesn't get informative and/or humble answers, why not?

Relationship with children

- Can I say my heart is turned toward my children? Is their heart turned toward me as their father (Mal 4:5; Luke 1:17)? If not, why not? What can be done about it?
- Am I praying for them? (Job 1:5) As I pray and parent, am I taking hold by faith of God's promises to be a God to my children (Gen. 17:7; Isa. 32:14-7; 44:3-4; 59:21; Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:39)?
- Do I embitter or discourage my children through anger and impatience? (Colossians 3:20) Can I say that I am gentle (a fruit of the Spirit) with them when I discipline? Do they sense that I rejoice to be their father/shepherd even when they are struggling with sin? Would they say that I respond to their sin and struggles more as something that makes my life hard, or as an opportunity from God to lead them to fuller life in Christ?
- What difference would it make in my fathering if I embraced, with all my heart, the goal of raising children more godly than I am? What difference would it make if I were gripped with the goal of seeing a vibrant godliness in my descendants three generations from now (Psalm 78:1-7; Deut 6:1-3)?

- Am I actively evaluating how they are doing in their lives with God? Am I involved with them enough to know? Am I focusing on their heart as well as addressing behavior?
- Am I teaching my children God's word and wisdom on a daily basis? Am I making the most of day to day life to do this? Am I having regular ways of teaching and applying Scripture to them? (Gen. 18:19; Deut 6:1-9; Psalm 78:1-7; Prov 4:1-6; Eph 6:4)
- How could I be better evaluating my children's gifts and abilities and working to develop those gifts and abilities for God's purposes? (Note - this includes **every** aspect of life and skills.) Do I relate to their "schooling," as well as other activities, as aspects of my overall discipling them for usefulness to God and being faithful to our calling in Christ? Do they see it that way?
- Does my life, manner, and character cause my children to respect me and to want to follow Christ?

Relationship to the body of Christ and beyond

- Would those in my household know that they are called and claimed by God to be members of His church through which God exalts His name, and brings blessings to all the nations of the earth? Is this the culture of my home? Are there things that are inconsistent with this?
- Are we worshipping with God's People on the Lord's Day unless providentially hindered? Am I preparing my family members for corporate worship and equipping them to be active participants?
- What could I be doing to better prepare my family for worship, and better follow-up worship?
- Are there ways I could be making better use of church teaching in leading my household (Neh 8:13)?
- Am I demonstrating a biblical relationship to church leadership (I Thess 5:12-13; Heb. 13:17) and helping my family understand the importance of this?
- What gifts and resources do we have as a household or individually that could be put to use in or through the Body? What leadership steps can I take to help bring this about?
- Are there people in our church God might want us to reach out to and minister to or serve in some way (Psalm 68:5-6; 71:16-17; James 1:26-27)? How can I involve my family in this?
- Is our church "socializing" kingdom oriented (see Luke 14:7-14, Deut 14:29, Rom 12:16), or it more like the way the world socializes – be with people I like, am comfortable with, that might invite me back, etc.

- Are there some men in our Body who I could encourage in the Lord (II Timothy 2:2)?
- Are there some others in the Body younger than me that I (we) could encourage (Psalm 71:17-18)?
- Are we praying regularly for others in the Body? What could I do to help see that we are?
- What could we do to become more involved in hospitality with Christians and other? (Acts 2:46; 5:42; Rom 12:9-13; I Tim 5:9,10; Heb 13:1,2; I Peter 4:8-10)
- Do our neighbors (or others we have regular contact with) know of our commitment to Christ? What can we do to get more involved with them?
- Are there other unchurched people that God has put in our path to minister to? What positive steps could I take to do that? Are there ways I can involve my family in this?
- What missionaries or countries do we have a particular interest in? How could we become more informatively involved in praying for and supporting them?

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