

Title: CAPTIAN OF THE SHIP, MARK 4:35-41.  
(Chatham, NJ; 06/21/09, AM) [Pc – Topical]

Theme: Just as Jesus calmly lead the disciples through a storm on the sea, fathers act as captains to guide their families through the sometimes perilous journey of life.

Purpose: To exhort fathers to lead their families by their faith.

Introduction:

1. As with many episodes in the life of Christ, this one can be mined for treasures on several levels.
2. The most apparent is the shock of the disciples that Jesus could control nature, and another is their legitimate question, “Who is this?”
3. Just as importantly is the lack of faith exhibited by the disciples. Jesus assumes that even in the midst of a raging storm they would trust in God.
4. We have every expectation that post-resurrection there would be leaders to exhibit such faith and lead God’s people through the difficulties that surely come as a result of being Christians (Paul’s comment in Acts 14:21-22).
5. Such a mantle of leadership falls on fathers (Eph. 5:25 & 6:4).
6. God has called men to exercise their God-given role as fathers to be men of courage and faith. Like any good captain they provide guidance and assurance.
7. Fathers can do this for their families in several ways.

I. Bring them up in the admonition of the Lord, Eph. 6:4. (I return to the reasons I mentioned last week that cause faithlessness.)

- A. Give them the right perspective on prosperity.
  1. Most men take seriously the role of providing for their families. However, daily provisions can become idols: “What shall we eat, drink, and wear?”
  2. Teach your family that prosperity comes from God alone and that we don’t live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.
  3. Demonstrate that truly important things cannot be purchased.
  4. The needs of your children will not be filled by giving them whatever they want but by teaching them that material things are not all important.
- B. Teach your children to depend on God not the government nor anyone else (1 Thess. 4:11-12). A good work ethic comes directly from the teachings of Christ.
  1. An attitude of entitlement is being feed by government programs.
  2. Lack of faith in God brings this about (remember 1 Samuel 8 where Israel’s request for a king grew from faithlessness). Also see Psalm 20:7-8.
  3. Teach your children that what they receive they should work for, not something they are entitled to.
  4. Paul gave the following law to the church, “He who doesn’t work shouldn’t eat.”
- C. Teach them that self-control, purity, and discipline are still valued in your house.
  1. For boys, these are truly manly virtues, not characteristics of wimps.
  2. For your daughters, remind them that celebrities are not models of virtue and purity. Repeat to them Proverbs 11:22.
  3. Demonstrate these in your own life.
- D. Don’t let them take Christianity for granted.

1. Writer Andrew Klavan declared his Christian faith a number of years ago (note what happened when he first read Luke), and he claims that it made him a better writer because it made him a “far, far better observer of the human condition.”
2. I mentioned British author A. N. Wilson last week. He also was one who moved from atheism back to Christian faith. Note some reasons why.
3. This faith we hold has depth and beauty beyond any worldly philosophy.

## II. Be the leader God wants you to be. We can learn a few good lessons from Joseph.

### A. Start by being a good spouse.

1. Love your children’s mother.
2. Real men treat the women in their lives with respect and purity.
3. Learn to resolve your conflicts constructively.
4. Treat them with honor, 1 Peter 3:7.
5. Your leadership is compared to the self-sacrificing role of Christ.
6. Joseph was a righteous man, Mt. 1:19. Note the context of the statement.

### B. Develop a strong sense of duty.

1. Joseph followed the lead given him through his dreams.
2. In every respect he became the provider and protector of the most important child the world has ever seen.
3. He seemed to understand that his task was a sacred one; as fathers today, ours is no less a sacred and anointed task.

### C. Ordinary does not mean failure.

1. Here is how one author put Joseph’s life in perspective, “Measured by today’s standards of manliness, Joseph may seem like a failure. His fiancée was pregnant with someone else’s child, he was unable to provide a suitable place for her to give birth and he was forced to take refuge in Egypt rather than fighting Herod’s minions. Indeed, Joseph’s humility and ordinariness stand in contrast to the commanding manliness of today’s wealthy CEO or to the haughty, intellectual snobbery of a university professor.” (*Touchstone*, March 2009, p. 15, Joseph Fornieri).
2. Joseph consistently put aside his own ego in the service of God and family.

### D. Be the authority figure which God has ordained for you.

1. Somewhere between the macho warrior and the hapless, witless caricature often seen in sitcoms is a real man lurking inside of you seeking to provide courage and leadership for your family.
2. Perhaps it is best illustrated in the childhood play of one set of boys (*Touchstone*, May 2009, p. 7).
3. You are the warrior who fights evil in society, protects his family from it, and teaches his children how to recognize and cope with it.

## Conclusion:

1. God needs men of faith and strong leadership.
2. He needs them to bring about real change by leading the next generation to Christ.
3. In reflecting upon what a father is, being a spiritual leader is right up there at the top of the list. Happy Father’s Day!