

Four Types of Leadership

fathers discern their leadership style

The following diagram illustrates four types of leadership and **how fathers with these characteristics lead their families.**

This diagram is simply used to help a man discern what type characterizes his pattern of fathering and allows him to **see the potential results of his leadership** if nothing changes.

Fathers often move back and forth from one type to another, and they may demonstrate different responses in different areas throughout the process of their own growth.

Credible Messengers

The top right square of the diagram represents Credible Messengers. They are “high” in their understanding of God’s love and in their application of God’s truth.

A Credible Messenger **loves the Lord and keeps His commands.** His children can see God’s truth at work in his life, and they are open to hearing his counsel and teaching. He has learned to lead through humility, and this is evidenced by his servant-leadership within his family. (See Matthew 20:25–28.) This man, like Aquila and Priscilla in Acts 18, is currently discipling others in the faith.

Faithful Men

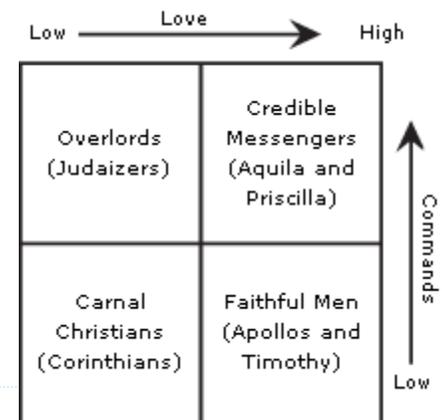
A second type of father is represented in the lower right corner of the diagram—Faithful Men. These men are “high” in understanding God’s love, but **they need more instruction and support to grow in understanding God’s principles** and standards of living.

Just as Apollos and Timothy were zealous for the things of God but needed further instruction, a faithful man loves the Lord and seeks to learn more of Him. (See Acts 18:24–28 and II Timothy 2:2.) He is willing to be disciplined and to learn how to apply God’s truths to His life.

Overlords

The upper left square represents an Overlord type of leadership. Overlords have a “high” understanding of God’s truth and way of life, but they fall short in understanding His love. They **focus on personal convictions and standards, but lack love for Jesus and others.** These men resemble the Judaizers in the early Church who falsely believed that keeping the Jewish Law was necessary for

Leadership Diagram



Fathers can discern the pattern of their leadership and consider the potential results if nothing changes.

salvation. (See Galatians 3:2–3.)

This kind of father builds his life on various truths, but not on the Truth of Jesus and a personal relationship with Him. (See John 14:6.) Because he does not communicate his convictions and standards in love, he alienates his children and creates contention in the family rather than a nurturing environment for growth. (See I Peter 5:3, II Timothy 2:24–25, and Ephesians 6:4.) Those who emphasize truth without love cannot produce eternal fruit and need to become broken before God.

Carnal Christians

Finally the square in the lower left corner represents Carnal Christians. These fathers are “low” in their understanding of God’s love and His truth, and they resemble those in the Corinthian church who abused Christian liberty. The Apostle Paul admonished them, *“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any”* (I Corinthians 6:12).

This father may be **distracted by positions, possessions, and pleasures**. (See I John 2:15–16.) He is unwilling to become conformed to the image of Christ and to let the Holy Spirit produce fruit in him. This double-minded man is unstable in his leadership and in all other areas of life. (See James 1:8 and I Corinthians 5:1–9.)

The Potential Results

Parenting from the perspectives on the left side of the diagram—Carnal Christians and Overlords—often results in bitter, sensual children who are not prepared to fulfill the potential of God’s purposes for their lives.

Parenting from the perspectives on the right side of the diagram—Credible Messengers and Faithful Men—often produces the fruit of loving, obedient children who are ready to be released into the fulfillment of God’s purposes for their lives.

In order for a father **to gain and keep his children’s hearts, he must understand how to grow in loving God and keeping His commands**. As he is disciplined in his own walk with God, he can share an example of Godliness with his children. This will allow him to clearly communicate truth to his children and will pave the way for them to respond to the Lord.

September 2006