



MEN'S MINISTRIES

Seventh-day Adventist Church
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

May 2026
ISSUE 05



FORGED IN FAITH

FOR MEN'S MINISTRIES DIRECTORS

"Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

Ephesians 6:4 NIV



Message from the Director

THE FATHER'S COMPASSION: A WORD FOR MEN

“As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;” (Psalm 103:13 NIV)

For men, this verse carries a double weight. It speaks about the person we are called to become and who God already is toward us.

Most men carry an image of fatherhood—sometimes warm, sometimes wounded. Henri Nouwen, reflecting on Rembrandt's *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, observed that “becoming the Father” is the final call of the spiritual life—to move beyond simply receiving love and to begin offering it. This call lands squarely on the shoulders of men.

But Psalm 103 does not begin with our duty. It begins with God's heart. Tim Keller put it this way: “To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is . . . a lot like being loved by God.”

That's the compassion of the Father—not a distant approval, but a tender knowing. C.S. Lewis reminded us that “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains.” The Father's compassion meets us in all three places.

Many men inherit a script that says strength means silence and success means standing alone. Scripture rewrites the script. The strongest man is the one who has been undone by the compassion of God and who, in turn, becomes compassion for his family, his friends, and his community.

Hear it again today: He has compassion on you. Not because you have earned it, but because He is your Father.

César De León PhD LMFT
North American Division
Men's Ministries Director



Pastoral Note

THE MAN AND HIS FAMILY

Dan Schiffbauer, Florida Conference Men's Ministries Director

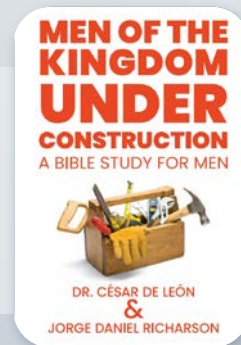
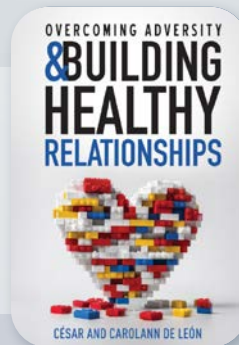
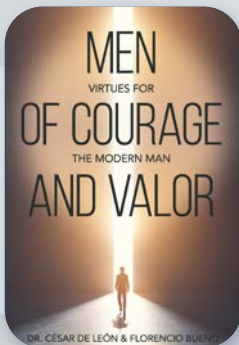
In Ephesians 6:4 (NKJV) Paul states, "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." When God created Adam and Eve, their purpose was not just to be a couple but to bring new life into the world through their children.

Bringing children into the world is a privilege and a great responsibility. How parents, especially fathers, relate to their children will, to a great degree, determine their happiness and success in life. And so, in Ephesians 4, Paul presents two options in dealing with our children: a positive one and a negative one. First the negative: "Don't provoke your children to wrath." Treat them gently with understanding and love. When they make mistakes and disappoint you, be patient and understanding. Don't be harsh and vindictive, punishing them punitively without mercy or grace.

But then, on the positive side, Paul says, "bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." The father in the household is referred to as the "husband" which comes from an old English word, "house band," which suggests he is like a cord that holds the household together. He models what it means to have a relationship with Christ as his best friend and helps his family make Jesus their best friend as well. His family can look to him as one who helps them take steps that will lead them to heaven. May God help us all be that type of husband and father.

RESOURCES for LEADERS

(Click on the images)





Testimony

FROM HEART TO HOME

Abner Vélez, Chaplain, AdventHealth Orlando

I'm Abner Velez, and I serve as a hospital chaplain at AdventHealth Orlando. My work places me in some of life's most fragile moments. Especially in the NICU, Pediatric Oncology, and the Children's Emergency Center, where families are holding on to hope, often in the middle of uncertainty.

I accepted Jesus as my Savior at a young age. I was baptized at 10 years old, but by the time I was 12, I began to notice more of the tensions within my family. In hindsight, that season opened my eyes to how much we needed to stay close to Jesus; not just individually, but together. It wasn't one defining moment, but a steady awakening. Over time, I came to understand that faith can't just be something I inherited; it has to become personal. God isn't distant. He is present, patient, and gently drawing me closer to Him.

Since then, my life has been shaped by a growing understanding of what it means to reflect Christ; not just in words, but in presence. Now, as a man and especially in the context of family, I've come to see that manhood isn't about control, but about care. It's about showing up, being consistent, and creating space where others feel safe, valued, and seen.

This journey has also become deeply personal as I care for my ill mother. Balancing ministry and family hasn't always been easy, but it has taught me that faith is most authentically lived out at home. The same compassion I offer to patients and families is the compassion I'm called to embody with those closest to me.

Following Jesus hasn't made life simpler, but it has made it purposeful. As Ephesians 6:4 reminds us, we are called to reflect the heart of our Heavenly Father by nurturing our families with patience, love, and intentional guidance.

CHALLENGE of the MONTH

Plan an activity that creates meaningful family time (a special dinner, celebration, outing, or family worship).

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