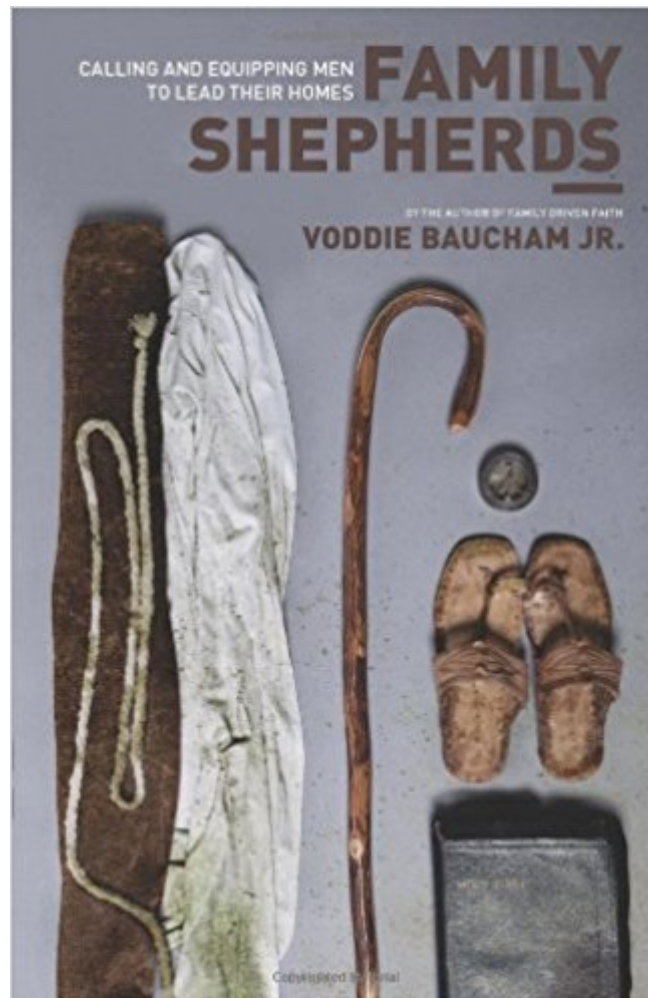




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Family Shepherds: Calling And Equipping Men To Lead Their Homes



Synopsis

It's hard to overestimate the importance of the family, and that of fathers in particular. We've heard it said, "As the family goes, so goes the nation." But it can also be said that "as the father goes, so goes the family." Consequently, Voddie Baucham has set out to teach men how to faithfully shepherd their families. Derived from Baucham's monthly meetings with men in his church, Family Shepherds calls men to accountability for their God-given responsibilities in their homes. Baucham's clear style and practical approach will spur men to protect their marriage, raise kingdom-minded children, value the synergy between church and home, and navigate difficult family dynamics. Family Shepherds is a book for any husband or father looking to lead well, and it will serve as an excellent resource for churches looking to equip the men in their congregations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Voddie Baucham has captured the keys to equipping men to be a leader in their homes! This book provides a practical, biblical view to reform a man's life to reach new heights in leading his home with the future of the kingdom in mind! I highly recommend this book to any man daring enough to step up, press in, and become the shepherd and leader of his home and to help end spiritual fatherlessness in this passivity-saturated nation." Joe White, President, Kanakuk Kamps; author, FaithTraining "Scripture gives us a clear directive to look well to the ways of our household. Unfortunately, for far too many Christian households, that mandate and responsibility gets relegated to anyone or anything but the precious institution known as the family

itself. In this powerfully important and timely book, Dr. Baucham challenges the church to reinstate the biblical concept of father-headship of households and to establish and implement the principles of family discipleship. As a wife and mother, I celebrate the clarion call this book offers to those who want to see real revival in the nation by understanding it begins at home.

—Janet Parshall, Host and Executive Producer, *In the Market with Janet Parshall*

“In seeking to develop gospel-driven family ministry, there’s an unavoidable question that too few resources have clearly answered: ‘How do we develop a church culture that equips and mobilizes men?’ In *Family Shepherds*, Voddie Baucham goes beyond surface-level solutions that identify biblical masculinity with everything from watching mixed-martial arts to participating in emotionally-charged stadium events. What Voddie provides instead is a simple and straightforward biblical vision for equipping men to embrace their God-ordained roles as servant-leaders. This vision flows from Voddie’s commitment to articulate biblically what it means for men to shepherd their families well.”

—Timothy Paul Jones, author, *Misquoting Truth: A Guide to the Fallacies of Bart Ehrman*

“Rarely does a church see the husband and father as the key to shepherding his own family. Instead we have developed ministry expertise in the local church that seemingly no longer needs a man to step up and serve as the spiritual leader of his home. There are few mistakes more tragic than this one, and generations have suffered and will suffer if we do not call men to step up and serve as the spiritual leader. *Family Shepherds* is the primary tool that pastors and church leaders need to bridge that gap and to execute the building of the local church as God intended and has communicated in his Word.”

—Brian Doyle, Founder and President, *Iron Sharpens Iron*

Voddie Baucham Jr. (DMin, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary) is dean of the seminary at African Christian University in Lusaka, Zambia. The author of a number of books, including *Family Driven Faith*, *The Ever-Loving Truth*, and *Joseph and the Gospel of Many Colors*, Baucham is also a pastor, church planter, and conference speaker.

Darrin Patrick has said that there is a "man crisis" in today's church. One could argue that this is a consistent theme among God's people, and humanity in general, beginning with Adam. Mark Driscoll has said that in becoming a Christian, particularly for men, we must put forth an effort to be like Jesus and not like our earthly father Adam. While both of these statements ring true, it has left me with a question of how men are to step up and do what we can to resolve this "man crisis" by

being more like Jesus and less like Adam. This is why I am incredibly grateful for Pastor Voddie Baucham's latest book, *Family Shepherds: Calling and Equipping Men to Lead Their Homes*, which Crossway books was kind enough to send me as part of their book review program. In this book, Baucham rightly points out several key components that will enable men to step up and fill the gap we are leaving in today's church. The first point, and this is crucial, men must step up and lead in their homes first (1 Tim. 3:4-5). He must lead his family in the study of Scripture and teach them about the Christian faith. Baucham spends the first few chapters examining why men are to lead their homes and churches, and how he believes that should look in the home and in church. True, many men aren't pastors or home group leaders. Many men have no formal Biblical training, and feel inept at the idea of teaching Theology. This may be due to laziness (because today we really have no excuse to not immerse ourselves in the wealth of solid Biblical teaching available online) or it may be due to simply being a new Christian. Yet, they are still commanded to lead their families in spiritual matters and in the teaching of doctrine. So, what do these men have to offer their children when they are just learning themselves? I love Baucham's answer: Catechism. Those who have only heard the word "catechism" in a snide reference to the Catholic church may be apprehensive at the mere mention of the word. However, catechism is merely a way of methodically teaching Christian doctrine. This will serve both fathers and children well because as the father teaches his children (and I would add his wife, if she is a new believer), he also teaches himself. Catechism can range from simple questions with simple answers, to questions with more complex answers, and also includes Scripture references supporting the answers to help one gain both Biblical and Theological literacy. The biggest thing I love about Baucham's book is that he pulls frequently from Scripture, but he also pulls from the wisdom of the Puritans and the Theologians of the past. This did make the book somewhat hard to read in certain places, but it is well worth the effort. Baucham does a fantastic job of presenting a gospel-centered, Christ-exalting view of what a family shepherd looks like, and how men can better lead their homes and churches.

One of the greatest threats to the church is found right in the homes of many Christians in the form of fathers who are either not equipped or not inclined to lead their families. As befits the seriousness of the issue, there are many books being published calling on men to step up in their homes. Voddie Baucham's latest book, *Family Shepherds*, is the latest entry and comes with Voddie's particular brand of hard hitting teaching. Like other books he has written, *Family Driven Faith* and *What He Must Be...If He Wants to Marry My Daughter*, *Family Shepherds* comes at this issue from a decidedly old school and counter-cultural approach. Voddie makes no apology for highlighting the

unique calling of men as leaders in the home, a stance that is drawn directly from the Bible although it is also rarely addressed even in the church. Family Shepherds is a solid addition to this conversation and comes at the issue with more emphasis on the writings of Paul than the pontifications of Dr. Spock. This is a very good book, especially for those who are less familiar with the topic and haven't read much of Voddie's prior writing. Some of the material will be repetitive if you are familiar with his prior writings and the positions of the Family Integrated Church movement. In places the material felt vaguely like something I have read from him several times over and it takes some patience and time to get to the point of the book because the background material takes so long. Again, if this is your first exposure to this information it may not seem as tedious and the information certainly is valuable but I could have stood to have less background information and more of the meat that is found in the second half of the book. Once I got to the second half of the book, the information became more applicable and the reading more enjoyable. As with all books, there are weak spots and the most glaring is in Voddie's reliance on the institutionalized church model. Reading chapter 13, Church Membership, was almost physically painful. When he states (on the opening line of the chapter and elsewhere): "Church membership is the most important aspect of lifestyle evaluation", that strikes me as an entirely unserious and counter-productive statement. Of all the lifestyle qualifiers of a man, whether he is a "member" of a local church (a "healthy" church of course which means a church that is doctrinally compatible with what Voddie holds to) is one of the least important. A man who is a member of a church is not more likely to be a family shepherd than one who is not since church membership as we understand doesn't appear in the Bible, it is hardly appropriate in a book calling on a return to a Biblical understanding of fatherhood. In other places Voddie inserts other cultural understandings of leadership in the church (like assuming that Acts 6 is speaking of deacons). When he focuses on the home and the unique, irreplaceable role of fathers the book is very strong but in places where he strays into ecclesiology his arguments lose a lot of their strength. All in all this is an important and valuable addition to the conversation regarding fathers as the spiritual head of their households. If you are familiar with the literature in this genre, I doubt you will find much that is innovative but Voddie as always delivers his message forcefully, persuasively and unapologetically. Virtually every man in the church that I know needs a spiritual swift kick in the pants and that sort of jarring is Voddie's forte. This is a book that fathers, elders, new husbands and young men considering marriage would all benefit from. (This was also the first book I purchased for and read in its entirety on my Kindle Fire and I enjoyed the experience, esp. the ability to book mark and highlight sections with ease!)

Drawn to this because of a deep rooted concern for godly fatherly leadership from Christian men, I found this book to be not only encouraging (for nearly any author can play the cheerleader for 200 pages with little substance) but also deeply christocentric and biblical. Timothy Paul Jones addresses the fact that very few of the leadership and "exemplary" Christians in most all churches participate in any regular times of family worship practices. Baucham Jr. presses this issue and provides proven practices from the past which have long since been abandoned. Men would do well to study this together then purchase The Family Worship Book and begin catechizing their children. The intimidation of not knowing enough will only end when we begin leading and teaching therefore learning more in the process. We cannot continue to avoid leading because we feel inadequate as we are commanded to do so. Voddie Baucham Jr. lays out a clear directive for men to do that which they are created to do, glorify God by imaging Him and leading their families to glorify Him as well.

Amazingly honest and informative. No truth is held back! It's a call to all men who call themselves followers of Christ to stand and be counted! Having grown up in different foster places, see both sides I dare say that practicing what is written in this book will not be easy, but change and growth never are. I'm going to ask that this book be added to our church reading list and my websites'. Check out the appendixs' for tools to follow-up and build accountability!

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