

Bringing Up Children Gods Way - Part 1

by Bob Hoekstra

The sermon emphasizes the importance of raising children in a loving relationship with God, grounded in biblical truths from Deuteronomy 6.

Duration: 53:45

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4

Topics: "Parenting Godly", "Family Discipleship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of embracing God's truth and love in family life, particularly in raising children. It highlights the need for parents to have a deep love relationship with God, teaching and demonstrating His truths diligently to their children day by day. The passage from Deuteronomy 6 is explored, focusing on knowing who God is and responding to Him properly, with an emphasis on loving the Lord with all one's heart, soul, and strength.

Transcript

Lord, we come to you with thanksgiving in our hearts, your goodness, your grace, your mercy, your kindness. Lord, we thank you for your Holy Spirit, and we do pray that as we open up the Word of God, you would pour out your Spirit, Lord, giving us insight, giving us understanding, giving us encouragement, giving us edification, all for your honor and glory, for your service, for your will. And Lord, as we look at this huge issue in the arena of family, which is a gigantic subject in your Word and your plan, this corollary subject, bringing up children, Lord, show us your heart.

Show us how you work in our lives as your kids, bringing us up yet in our pilgrimage here on earth. Lord, equip us for the responsibilities we have with young lives. Equip us for the responsibility that we have with others who have children.

And Lord, we know that you are here with us. We acknowledge you, we welcome your presence, and we trust you to do a great and a mighty work in our hearts, Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Deuteronomy chapter 6, Deuteronomy chapter 6, under this great subject of family God's way, and purposely putting that there, family as God designed it, found only in the Word of God, really, everywhere else you've got human opinions and human traditions and human theories and studies, we're going to concentrate on the Word of God and see what he has to say. He's the creator of our lives. He's the redeemer of our souls.

He is the creator of families. And all of our lives, we'll be ministering to people in family units and the great majority of folks called by the Lord to start families, raise families, children. And I agree with your pastor in his statement that your ministry to others on this subject is very, very important matter.

The Lord has blessed me with 40 plus years of marriage with my dear wife, Dini, and three children and 11 grandchildren. And looking back on that astounding flow of history, oh, I wish I'd paid attention to the Word of God earlier on every subject, including on this subject, including this subject. Family life, bringing up children.

Deuteronomy 6, foundational family truths for parents. So, you are parents. Of course, this is critical family truth.

Most of you will be parents. And those who God has called to another path, called to more years of single life, will always be ministering to families. And here are foundational family truths for everyone in a family.

And actually, you'll notice as we get into this, these critical issues here at the foundation of both of these studies that we'll look at today are critical issues really for every believer for every year of their life in the Lord. I mean, foundational issues for life with God, they're going to be across the board. And then built on there are some other issues like family or leadership or vocational ministry or other things.

But the foundation is the same for all of us. And you'll recognize in this passage one of the great passages in all the Word of God. But actually, we're not just taking a great passage and applying it to family and children.

We'll see that is the exact immediate context here. Foundational family truths for parents. The first one is in Deuteronomy 6, 4. The second one is in chapter 6, verse 5. Verse 4, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Then verse 5, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. Now, why do we say these are critical words from God to families? Well, look at verse 7, where we'll be in a few minutes. You shall teach them these words, these truths.

You shall teach them diligently to your children. And then the opening instruction in verse 2, To whom was God speaking? His commandments which I command you, Moses speaking in the name of the Lord, His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson. This is one of the classic household passages in all the Word of God.

And it contains two of the most foundational truths we'll ever come across in the Word of God. In fact, verse 5 is quoted often in the New Testament. Jesus referred to this very passage.

I mean, this is really what the heart of all of life is about. And of course, that's where we want to start before we get off into any so-called specialized area of truth. What are these family truths? What are these foundational truths? Well, verse 4, you can see in our notes, Knowing who God is, and then verse 5, Responding to Him properly.

Who is He as revealed in verse 4? Hero Israel, the Lord our God. The Lord is one. The Lord is one.

He's unique. There's no one like Him. He's the creator of all.

He's the Redeemer of those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord our God. And there's a great revelation of who He is right here in this verse, in that great word, Lord, four capital letters, uppercase letters, differentiating itself from the term Lord, which means master ruler, capital L, lowercase O-R-D, referred to God.

He's Lord. He's master. That is not this word.

This word is really, it is the most important word in the entire Old Testament. Did you know that? This is the most important word in the entire Old Testament. And its corollary in the New Testament is the name Jesus.

Now, why is this tied into the name Jesus? Because Jesus means Yahweh or Jehovah is salvation. And this is the word that could be translated Yahweh or Jehovah. Yahweh is probably more precise.

But what is that word? That's the name of God, the name of God. When Moses was given his great commission, he had a stirring question on his heart. You might remember what he said.

He said, who shall I say sent me? Very important question. It's kind of humorous, really, you know? Okay, here's what you're called to, you know, go tell Pharaoh, let my people go. Go tell the children of Israel, you are going to lead them out of this bondage in my name.

No wonder he wanted to know. Who will I say sent me? Because he was sure to get one form or another of the greatest who said so in the history of human communication. Do what? Who said so? And God said, tell him I am sent you.

And just as Jesus is the name of God, the son, when he became flesh and walked upon this earth, so this is the name of the Godhead. This is the name of God. There is no more important word in creation in human history than God revealing his personal name.

He has a lot of great titles, and they're all majestic, and they all are to build faith and give us insight. But it's one thing to refer to people by their titles, you know? And if it's done appropriately, it is wise and significant. But, oh, there's something about that personal name.

And this is the very name of the living God. And, of course, when it's tied in to the son, Yahweh, Jehovah is salvation. That's the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Hero Israel, listen up, people of God. The great I am is our God, and the great I am, he's unique. There's no one like him.

That's the most foundational issue of life for everyone, for mom, dad, grandpa, grandma, children, grandchildren. No wonder that's where God wanted to start with his people when he had this great word about family truth. It's a word for all of us, for all time.

And little kids cannot be learning this too early. My goodness, if the first word that a child ever said was Lord or Jesus, perfect place to start using your mouth and your speech capacity. Cannot start too early with this.

Oh, the kids would grow up never remembering the day that they didn't know that there was a creator God who would give his son to be our redeemer. That's what God's getting at here. The Lord our God, the great I am, the Lord is one.

This is where you start in life. This is where you start with children. This is where you start in ministry.

But there's a corollary, a tightly woven truth of response. We must know who God is, the creator of all, the redeemer of those who believe in his son. The great I am, the name above all names, but God's calling us to respond to him relationally.

What's the proper response to one as great as I am is? What a name, I am. No one created him. No one started him out.

No one sustains him. He always was. He always is.

He always shall be. His name tells the story. I am.

What a name. No one but God could carry that name. The absolute farce, if anyone else carried that name.

No one names their child I am, you know, and those who name them Joshua or Jesus don't even know usually what they're naming. I am is salvation. No, I'm just calling him Joshua.

What a name. One so great as he, the only response that is appropriate. Everything else is way other and under the proper response is to love him.

You shall love the Lord your God and not just casually, not just partially, but comprehensively, wholeheartedly. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with everything that's in the core of your being, with all of your soul, with every aspect of your mind, emotions, and will, and personality, and character, and with all your strength, whatever energy God provides, pour it out in a life of love to him. They just go perfectly together.

When the great I am is revealed by the Spirit through the word to us, the only way to respond is to love him with all of our being and all out, head-on, lifelong love relationship with our Creator, Redeemer. That's where every life must be founded. That's where marriage life is founded.

That's where parental life is founded. That's where children are to be nurtured from the very beginning. These are glorious truths.

They're for each of us, and they're for each of us to pass on to others, and certainly it's so with children. And as is recorded in 1 John, this is about loving God who is love, 1 John 4. Loving God who is love, 1 John 4, 16. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us.

God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him. The truth from the Word of God about the great I am is not just that his character includes love. It's that his character is love.

It's not just that he's capable of loving and wants to love. It's just who he is. God is love.

This is one of the great revelations of the Lord our God, 1 John 4, 9. In this, the love of God was manifested toward us. How do we know that God is love? How do we know the extent of the love of God? In this, the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. What a heart of love that God the Father gave God the Son, his only begotten Son.

Now, God has many children, all who've called upon the name of the Lord have been begotten of God, born again through faith in the Lord. But there's a uniquely begotten Son. We are the sons of God.

It does not yet appear what we shall be. When we see him, we'll be like him, and then we'll catch more of the majesty of what he's called us to. But he has an only begotten Son, a Son who is begotten in a way that none of the rest of the family of God was born.

How is that? Born of a virgin? How's that? That sets it aside right there. Art, unique. But here's another one.

This one who was born of a virgin, he had an everlasting history before he was ever birthed. There's no one like this Son. This is the everlasting Son.

This is the one who said, before Abraham was, I am. If you're an English teacher, you can't hardly even hear that. You know, just great song.

You're like, ah, that's not good English. No, but it's perfect biblical theology. It's glorious truth.

Before Abraham was, I am. Not I was, because he was taking that name of the everlasting God and applying it to himself. It's amazing how people can be so dull when they read that.

Those in Jesus' day and age were dull on that. When he used language like that, they were ready to stone him instantly, making himself equal with God. Well, sure, because he was God.

He always was and always shall be. In this, the love of God was manifested toward us that God has sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Jesus didn't come to give us religion.

He came to give us life. And this is truth for all of us. In the context, in the correlation here with Deuteronomy 6, this is what little lives need to hear.

Cousins and nephews and kids we're ministering to at church or on campuses or in our own household. They need to learn this, that there's a living relationship with the living God, and it's ours through Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior. God loves us so much.

He gave his Son, two of our three children are sons. I found it as a father, it's very hard to watch them suffer. As a father pities his children.

Boy, some of the most painful times of life has been watching our children suffer. And everyone is going to suffer on this sin-scarred planet. You imagine giving your son, giving your child for others who are guilty and deserve separating death of justice and punishment.

What a love. What a love is ours in the great I Am. He gave his Son for us that we might live through him.

Jesus said, I came that you might have life and have it more abundantly. God, help us not to pass on to the little ones, the children or in discipling parents. Oh God, help us not to just pass on procedures and principles and rituals, you know, but to let them know that this is all about where life is found and how life is developed.

The Lord came that we might live. The Father gave the Son that we might live through his Son's death and resurrection on our behalf. Foundational truths for parents, really for all of our lives too.

Knowing who God is, he's the eternal creator who wants to be our Redeemer through his only begotten Son. And he wants us to respond to him properly. He has a heart of love for us.

And 1 John 4, 19 tells us we love him because he first loved us. Us loving God is not some great accomplishment on our behalf. He has revealed himself to us.

He has shown us his great love through Jesus Christ and he has won our hearts. Can you remember any days through your years where you resisted the gospel? I did. I grew up in a wonderful home.

My father was a pastor. I had a grandfather and a great-grandfather on one side of the family who was a preacher of the Word of God. I thought everybody in the whole wide world went to church.

But no, it starts here with the love of God. It starts here with the love of God and it's to be responded to. And if you pay attention to the Lord, you know, you listen to those who testify of him.

You're in the Word to see who he is. You look out at creation and the majesty, you know, you put it all together. It grabs your heart.

It grabs your heart. And you end up repenting of days of self-indulgence and selfishness and worldliness and sinful disobedience. And I must say my own testimony would be God won my heart with his great love.

And looking back the years where I hesitated or ran or argued or in any way dismissed this great message. What foolish years. What foolish years.

Oh, may God use us to help young lives learn this truth early on and live the rest of their days. Listen, this is the greatest thing parents can ever do. Teach them of a loving God and the love that we can grow in for the Lord.

So foundational truths these are, foundational truths for parents. Now, how about parents passing these truths on to their children? Back in Deuteronomy 6, continuing this great family life passage. Deuteronomy 6, has God designed a path, a clear path for parents to walk that they might pass these truths on to their children? Well, if you're married and have children, listen up to God.

If you're married and children are yet to come, you'll only be thankful you paid heed in any preparation before they came. And if you're not even married yet, if God has that for you and generally that's his path foremost, though he does have a path of a single life or single years for many for his higher purposes and he's fully sufficient to make that fullness of life as well. But if children, if God has children in your future, or if you're ministering to those who have them, these are huge words.

How do you pass these great truths on from one generation to another? Well, verse 6 starts out with embracing these truths in our hearts. And God is speaking to his people through Moses, verse 6, Deuteronomy 6, and these words, these words of who God is and how to respond to him properly. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart, in your heart, not just in our head, not just in our ears, and not even just in our mouths, but they shall be in our hearts.

These words which I command you today shall be in your heart. That's where it starts out for us, but this next verse leads right into teaching these to children. We're not to pass them on just from our minds to the next generation.

We're to pass them on from our hearts. The heart is the core of our being. God wants us to embrace these truths in our hearts, as it's put in Ephesians 3, 17, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

This great message of the great I am and his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, we're to embrace that in our hearts, take it down into the core of our being, bow down to it, let the Lord, Lord come into my life, make my heart your home, make the core of my being a place in which you dwell, not just the place he visits and not just the place he hangs out, but dwell there, you know, our heart, his home. That's the arrangement he has. And again, we're talking about a relationship here, aren't we? I mean, the core of life, as God intends it on earth, is for people to enter into a relationship with the living God.

Religion really, as man knows it and has created so many different kinds, is the scourge of humanity. There's nothing like this anywhere but in Christ. And it's to be a heart issue.

You know, the heart is where all of life begins, sustains, and flows out. Proverbs tells us, guard your heart diligently, from it flow all the issues of life. Jesus said, from the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

True life, the Christian life, life in Christ is a heart issue. God has not designed households for parents to drop them off someplace. And the only place they ever hear about God is someplace that parents drop them off, you know, church, school, Christian, friend's house, or whatever.

Praise the Lord for any godly influence along the way. Praise the Lord for that. But that's not the core of the issue.

It's a heart issue. Letting a loving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ be the commanding, dominating reality of the very fountain of our being, the heart. For we are always becoming really who we are.

A place where only God can see and a place where only God can touch and shape and change. These words which I command you today shall be in your heart, overtaking us, rearranging us. You know, it's one thing to have a guest in your home, but Jesus is not to be a guest.

A guest doesn't rearrange the house. Well, most guests don't. You know, the Lord Jesus is Lord.

He's to be the Lord of our lives. And the place He wants to dwell is at the core of our being, developing a life there, and arranging and rearranging anything and everything for His good pleasure, His glory and honor, and for our great good. Praise the Lord when children can hear the truth about God.

But God has designed this passing on of life and truth to the next generations to be a heart issue. Children need to hear from people who have been overtaken in their heart by the living God. These words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

Children need to hear from those who have a passion of a spiritual love relationship with the great I Am. And that's what God offers to us in Jesus Christ. This is not something for some select few, you know.

Come unto me, all you who are weary and heavy laden. God so loved the world that He gave His Son, that whosoever believes, the Lord is just saying come, come, come. And what He offers us is this united relationship where He dwells in our hearts and develops a life.

Oh, when a heart is filled with the reality of the Lord and that life from that heart speaks out to children. Wow. I know with our kids, they're now all three in their mid-30s.

They were kind of extended triplets. They're 34, 35, and 36 now. I'm glad no one chronicled all the mistakes we made.

But along the way, time and time again as the Lord was touching the heart of mom and dad, and we let that inner truth out in the open to our kids. Looking back and watching them and seeing amazingly how they love the Lord now and want to serve the Lord and want to have godly homes. I remember one day my son was an Air Force pilot, wrote a note and said, thanks mom and dad for letting us know how much you love the Lord.

Sometimes you wonder if they're even listening. But that was what he remembered looking back, you know. And then you look at the word, oh wow, that's the way it's supposed to work, you know.

That's the way it's supposed to work. And what can you say? Yeah, I love him, but it's because he first loved me, you know. It's not an accomplishment or an achievement.

It's a phenomenal gift of grace. So embracing these truths in our hearts, that's where it starts. But what is to follow that? Teaching these truths to our children.

Verse 7, and you shall teach them diligently to your children. Them, you shall teach them. What? These words, these great truths in verses 4 and 5 that God is sharing with his people through Moses and down through the generations even to us.

You shall teach them diligently to your children. The instruction about the Lord that comes from the word of God and is to impact these little lives in homes is the privilege, the calling, and the responsibility of the parents. Well, and the grandparents.

Again, the context, verse 2, you and your son and your grandson. So the older generations are to teach their children and their grandchildren. Anyone who has children will appreciate help in nurturing those children.

We just had three kids, but there were only two of us, and it always felt like we were outnumbered about 12 to 1 at least, you know. Oh, anyone who has children, you appreciate so much those who take time to nurture them in the things of the Lord. But ultimately, it's not the responsibility of others, of Christian schools, or even the Christian church.

Thank God for the help that any of those resources can give. But you shall teach them diligently to your children. And this obviously goes way beyond having the gift of teaching because not everyone has the gift of teaching.

This is a parental role and privilege and responsibility. And not every parent has the gift of teaching. It's not about a gift.

It's about a relationship of testimony and insight, sharing with the children what we've been learning about the Lord, who He is, and how much we love Him. And just keep that on display and communicate it with the kids. You shall teach them diligently to your children, diligently, persistently, consistently.

And as the world darkens in its evil and its foreboding impact on households, and as the church sometimes, some places, grows weak, you might even say, teach these tenaciously to your children. Obviously, can't count on the government to do this. In fact, they'll get in the way every way they can, it

seems.

You shall teach them diligently to your children. You might say, when and how are we going to do that? Well, the Lord's addressed it right here. And shall talk of them.

So talk of these truths, who God is, and how great He is, and how you've come to love Him and why, because He is love. And that was demonstrated in the sacrifice of His Son. Talk of these, you know, it's biblically normal.

Sometimes you use the word normal, people think you're talking about average. Average is just the sum of a group behaving and divided by the, you know, the sum of it all. Average, that could be anything.

Normal means you're measuring it by a norm. And here's the norm of life, the Word of God. What we find in here is normal.

It's not weird. People out of line with the word, they're the weird ones, you know. This is normal living.

And here's what is normal in the sight of God. You shall talk of them. Conversation around a household about the reality of God and our love for Him is to just be normal family communication.

And of course, here the responsibility is laid on the older generations to sort of lead the conversation. But it's amazing how little ones will pick up on it quite soon, you know. And yeah, sometimes you have friends over, relatives over.

If you're off the conversation subject that's normal, you know, God, how great He is. It's amazing how from the mouths of babes, you know. Uncle Joe, why don't you love Jesus? You know, boom, now we're on track.

So, talk of these things. It's just, it's normal for God's people to have conversation around the house about Him. When are we going to do things like that? Well, look at this.

When you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up, there are the places to do it. Think it might fit in? Along the way, we used to have a house church. The kids called it, let's play church tonight, you know.

And we had some family church times, you know, we'd sing songs and then a little teaching and praying, you know. And we had some good times that way. But, you know, sometimes those turned into absolute disaster, you know.

When kids are fighting over who's going to lead the songs and you have bloodshed and you're not even started, church is late, you know. It's like, okay, everyone to their rooms. We'll approach this one at a time, you know.

So, it doesn't even take special times. It just takes built-in times. I mean, sure, you can have special events if God pours out special grace for those events, but it just is to be woven into life.

Look at that. Talk to them. When you sit in your house, whenever a family sits down, at a meal or a game or whatever the setting, it's good to talk about these things.

So, when you walk by the way, go for a walk out in creation or a bike ride or a cross-country family trip. I remember when we lived in Dallas, Texas and we were from out here and I was pastoring there 14 years. Every year, we'd take a family vacation to Southern California, you know, 1,500 miles one way.

What a stuff of faith. You know, oh, some of those days when they were 1, 2, and 3, 4, 5, and 6. It's like no car is big enough for this, you know. I remember once we pulled into Fort Worth, you know, 40 minutes away from home.

There already had been blood in the backseat and Matthew says, are we there? Older we could be. We have two and three-fourths days left to go. Well, we packed.

We packed our car in those days with every Jesus tape, video, coloring book, anything. We wanted the presence of the Lord to just permeate that car. But, you know, when you walk by the way or you might render that when you drive down the highway, good time to be communicating on these things.

And if you can't find a way in those settings, how about this? When you lie down and when you rise up, going to bed at night, great time to talk with the kids about who God is and how much you love him. Great time, phenomenal time, especially when they're young. We found something weird started happening when they were junior high age, you know.

And it's like, okay, dad, you know. Don't need you here kneeling down beside my bed with me, you know, especially with my friends here. But what a great time.

Oh, my goodness, we went through so many Bible devotional books with our kids. We absolutely wore them out, just page after page, just falling apart out of the book. And that was just at bedtime, you know.

It was kind of cute, you know, that they're begging for one more story, thinking they're staying up. Yeah, exactly. They're staying up and we're thinking, okay, we'll let you hear one more time about God, you know.

Why not? When you lie down. Then when you rise up, we found in our household that was strategic for our three teenagers. Boy, when we had 13, 14, 15 year olds and all in that range for a few years, sometimes it was a real challenge.

We wanted to communicate these things with the kids as they were older, just like we did as they were younger. And it seemed that when you rise up, breakfast time was a great time. And neither my wife nor I are great chefs, though I do believe my wife was a wonderful cook in those heavy duty years.

But we'd take turns. One would cook breakfast, one would read the Bible, and we'd trade off, you know. And kind of watching the kids, watching the clock, watching each other.

And then when we saw they were getting restless or about, you know, say, I got to run to school, we'd stop just early enough just to pray about the very Scripture we had read. Very, very, very simple approach. But, you know, if it's kind of like an everyday thing, you don't need a major production.

You just need reality, you know, just reality. If the love of God has overtaken your heart, you're going to have a passion that the kids know that. And there they are, ravenous little animals at breakfast.

Feed them their food and all the while be feeding them the Word. And I don't think they even noticed the significance of those days until later years. God's planned these.

Teach these to our children. And see, it fits Colossians 3.17, which says, whatever you do, do all in the name of the Lord. Talk about the Lord should not be for a certain building at a certain time on a certain day each week.

Though what a privilege that that can be a part of our worship and fellowship life. And it is not to be neglected. But whatever you do, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

You know, not just praying in Jesus' name, but actually living in His name. You know, living, counting on who He was and who He is and what He did and what He's going to do. That's what His name stands for.

His person, His character, His truth and His work. Whatever you do, let it be in the name of the Lord. Let it be in reliance upon Him in line with His revealed will.

So that these times of sitting in the house and walking by the way and lying down and rising up, there's not an interest to exclude the Lord from these things. Quite the contrary. To just include Him.

Because He's there, you know. He's there. And ideally, in mom and dad and grandpa and grandma's heart, He's there right in their hearts.

And all of our children trusted in the Lord at a very young age. And I think that also is biblically normal. But God's ready for an abnormal person like me who doesn't do that till they're 25, you know.

Praise the Lord, there's room for abnormalities like me, maybe you. But can't you see the Lord just wants the children to grow up inundated with this reality, just surrounded with this reality? So, how do we pass these great truths on to the children once they've overtaken our hearts? First, embrace these truths in our hearts and then teach them to our children. And then last, demonstrating these truths before our children day by day.

Verses eight and nine. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand. Again, what is the pronoun referring to them? You shall bind them.

These words, you shall bind these words that speak of these great truths of who God is and how much you want to love Him with all your being. Bind them as a sign on your hand. And they shall be frontlets between your eyes.

You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. This speaks of a comprehensively demonstrated real relationship with the Lord day by day in the lives of the older generations around the household. Take these words of who God is and loving Him with all of our being and bind them on your hand.

In other words, the word of God in this love relationship ruling the things we do or don't do. And tie them as frontlets between your eyes. And Orthodox Jews actually do this still to this day.

Tie that on your hand, tie it between your eyes. So this truth about who God is and your desire to love Him with all your being will rule what you look at and right there, you know, what you're thinking about. And then write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Let this truth of who God is and your love relationship with Him, let these dictate when you go and where you go. And as you return and gather as a family in your house, the comings and going of the household ruled by this love relationship. So the children are to grow up seeing, wow, this matter about God, He's

real.

His love is real in the lives of my folks and grandparents. Wow, this is what life is all about. It's like 1 Corinthians 11.1. Paul said, follow me as I follow Christ.

When parents follow the Lord in this love relationship, the children can see lives led by the Lord, impacted by the Lord, and they can follow the path of the parents as they're learning to follow the Lord. You know, this is not complicated, is it? It's simple every day, living, loving relationship with the Lord. That's how the Lord wants to impact the next generations, you know.

It's not, you know, with, you know, explosive great ideas and programs, though if the heart is so that to God and the mind is to a pattern of cooperative ministry to children, God can greatly use that. But this is every day, every day life in the home. Nothing is ever more real than what happens right where you live every day of your life.

And that's where the Lord wants to make Himself known to mom and dad, grandpa, grandma, and the children and the grandchildren. No one can look at the will of God like this for very many minutes, really, without being stirred with vision, yes, but also maybe convicted over shortcoming and failure, you know. And that's why in conclusion, I just thought we would read these wonderful words in 1 Peter 5, 5 and 6 about God giving grace to the humble.

1 Peter 5, 5 and 6. You know, for the failures of life, for the lack and inadequacy of man, the Lord is always the one to turn to. Not to hide it, not to deny it, 1 Peter 5. Likewise, you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another and be clothed with humility.

Why is that so important? For God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you, lift you up into victory and reality in due time at each proper step of growth. God resists the proud, those who think, hey, I can handle this, or I don't make mistakes in things like this.

Well, that's pride and God resists that, but He gives grace to the humble. You know, Lord, I haven't always lived this way. I haven't always thought this way.

I need your help all along the way. For that kind of heart and attitude, God gives grace. And our God who is love is also, according to 1 Peter 5.10, the God of all grace.

Well, let's pray together, shall we? Lord, we humble ourselves before you, thanking you for this great love relationship you have for us with you. You have won our hearts by your love. And Lord, we love you now.

And we want to be instruments of your love and truth. And we want that to impact our own children and grandchildren. We also want that to impact our ministry to young people and also ministry to those who have young people in their lives right now.

Lord, you have a great plan here. Use us, we pray, to spread the knowledge of the Lord in household after household, including our own, near and far. Lord, we pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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