

Family God's Way #6 - the Lord as Home-Builder

by Bob Hoekstra

To build a home that is pleasing to God, we must have the Lord as our home builder, committed to His word and purposes.

Duration: 54:48

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5

Topics: "Church Family", "Gods Mercy"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being involved in the larger family of God, which is the church. He highlights that God's purpose is for His people to declare His praises and share the message of His mercy. The speaker acknowledges that without God's mercy, we would deserve judgment and separation from Him. However, through His mercy, we have obtained salvation. The speaker also emphasizes the need to be committed to God's Word, as it provides the guidelines for building our lives and homes on a solid foundation. This is illustrated through Jesus' teaching in Matthew 7:24-27, where He compares those who hear and do His teachings to a wise person who builds their house on a rock, which withstands the storms of life.

Transcript

This is the last of our studies together on this wonderful subject in the Word of God, of Family God's Way. We have seen, first of all, that family begins as a divinely established partnership wherein two people become one unit before the Lord. The purpose of that is to serve Him as stewards unto the Lord God Almighty.

Second, we saw that family life is then developed as the husband and wife have a true, real, heart-held love relationship with the Lord God. And then the husband and wife, the parents are to pass this on to the children by talking about this relationship, talking about this true and living God, and then living out this love relationship that they have with the Lord right before their family and in front of the kids. Third, we also saw that the family must be alert to the gods of this world, the idols of this age.

There are spiritual forces and actual idols of the hearts and minds of men that want to bring compromise, even disintegration, into family life, God's way, the way He has ordained it. We need to watch out for those idols. Be careful, be aware, be alert not to bend the knee of allegiance and devotion and priority to them.

The world invests its life at these altars. We are to invest our life at the altar of the true and living God. In our fourth and fifth studies, we saw the pattern of mutual servanthood that is to guide all the roles and relationships within the household family unit.

Mutual servanthood is to rule the husband and wife relationship as well as it is to dictate the parent and child relationship. Husbands and wives, mutual servants. Parents and children, mutual servants.

Not identical in how they live out their servanthood, but identical in the heart of it, the spirit of it, laying down our lives for others in the family in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, the servant of servants, the servant of all. Now all of these things that we have looked at, they amount to a very, very high and lofty calling. And it should be very aware to us by now that it's far beyond what mere man can live up to, even with the best of intentions and the most dedicated of effort.

Our only hope of growing and developing in family God's way is that we have the Lord as our home builder. And that's exactly what the first scripture in our outline speaks of. Psalm 127 verse 1, the Lord as home builder, which is also the title of our study tonight and everything relates to that issue.

The Lord as home builder. Psalm 127 verse 1 reads, unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. Now whether it's the house of worship that would be built in the days of David and Solomon, or whether it is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house in which he dwells today now being built, or whether it's an individual household unit, the same principle and truth applies all the way across the board.

Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. Unless we, as the children of God, in our households, in our family units, unless we seek the Lord and allow him to be in charge of our homes and to be actively involved in every aspect of our family life, our labors to develop the family God's way will be in vain. And the word vain here is a very radical word.

It speaks about futility, fruitlessness, emptiness, being devoid of that which should be there. So we might have the patterns, the commands, the standards, and even the desires of the issues of the Word of God on family God's way. But unless the Lord is our home builder, we labor at it in vain, unto fruitlessness.

Our homes, without the Lord as the builder of our homes, our homes will be devoid of true godly spiritual reality. Building a home is a task that involves much labor. No sense getting into vain striving, trying to do it on our own.

But if we give ourselves to the task, there'll be a lot of labor involved. You know, with the babies, the infants, up all night, and then, you know, the toddlers cleaning up all day long, and raising them, teaching them, training, disciplining, husbands and wives, learning how to live as one, and sacrificing for each other. I mean, there is labor involved.

Now, it's a wonderful labor to be involved in. But it is a labor. Some don't realize that, it seems, and they are casual or careless toward their home.

They invest all kinds of energy out in the world, in business, and even recreation, but invest very little in their homes. That's a major mistake. There is labor in building a home, but it must be a labor the Lord is involved in.

Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. We want the Lord actively involved in all aspects of our family life. That's the only way for it to be built the way He wants it to be built, and to keep it

from being vain, futile, empty, fruitless, and devoid of the reality of God in that family.

Now, to have the Lord actually functioning as the one who is building our homes, requires a commitment to the very ways and means that He has ordained to use. The Lord Himself has laid out certain ways in which He works in and through our lives. And if we want the Lord to be the builder of our homes, we must be committed to His ways and means.

We can't say, Lord, build my home, and then we dictate to Him how He is to do it. No, if we want Him to be the builder of our home, we must be committed to the ways He has laid out, indicated, and ordained, such as His Word. The next issue in our outline.

If we want the Lord to be the builder of our home, we must be committed to His Word, because He is going to use His Word in the building of our home. He's going to use it to unfold the guidelines for our lives and for our family, and He's going to use the Word and offer it to us as a rock foundation to build our lives and our home upon. This is beautifully explained by Jesus Himself in Matthew chapter 7, verse 24 and following.

Jesus said, Therefore, whoever hears these sayings of mine and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat on that house, and it did not fall. What's the reason? For it was founded on the rock.

But, here's a serious contrast. Everyone who hears these sayings of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. Now watch, the same things are going to come.

And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat on that house, and it fell. And the Lord adds, a very sober note, and great was its fall. A wise man and a foolish man.

The storms of life are seen beating, striking, coming heavy against both of their lives, their households. The wise man, he's the one though who hears the word of the Lord, does it. And his house is then built on the rock.

What does it mean to hear and do the word of the Lord? Well, to hear it and do it would be to receive what we're hearing, believe in it, trust in it, count upon it, act upon it, obey it. This is speaking about living by the word of God. Being doers, not just hearers alone.

But hearing it and saying, oh Lord, that's right. Oh Lord, that's true. Oh Lord, that's what I need.

Oh Lord, that's what I want. Lord, that's the path I want to walk. I want to build my life on what you say.

I want to evaluate things by your word, set priorities by your word, make decisions by your word. I want to do your word. Now when a person has that attitude and approach to God and his word, when the rains and the floods and the winds come and they will come, they strike both the wise and the foolish man here.

You can't be so wise that you avoid the storms of life. They come to everyone. They came to Jesus.

They came to Job, the most righteous man on the earth in his day. They come to all. In fact, scriptures add in Timothy that all who would live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer.

The suffering at least of persecution. The storms come to all, but the wise man, when the rains came, the floods and the winds, even though they beat against his house, it did not fall. Why? For it was founded on

the rock.

What is that rock? It's the combination of the word obeyed, heard and received and acted upon. That's the wise man. He has his house on the rock.

The only foundation sufficient to sustain a household when the storms come is the word of God taken into our lives and we stand on it in confidence, faith and obedience. It's the only sufficient foundation. But praise the Lord, there is a sufficient foundation.

And you can look left and right around the world and sadly even in the church world. And the rains and the floods and the winds of life are blowing over many a house. Praise the Lord.

There is a sufficient foundation to stand against the storms of life. Now what was the problem with the foolish man? Well, he heard the word. Now notice, it's interesting.

Both the wise man and the foolish man both heard the word of the Lord. See, it wasn't an issue one heard, one didn't. They both heard.

The difference was one responded in obedience, the other did not act upon the word. So the foolish man heard the word, did not do it. And you know what that was likened to? Building his house, establishing his life and his home on the sand.

Now a home on the sand doesn't do well against the storm. I mean, you can throw it up pretty quick, but when the difficulties come, the house goes down. Building the house on the sand, hearing the word but not living by it.

Now what is it when one does not do the word of the Lord as Jesus said this foolish man did not? Well, it would involve ignoring the word or disregarding the word or forgetting the word or just plain outright rebelling against the Word of God. The person who behaves that way in hearing the word of the Lord, they're building their house on the sand. A sound foundation, sandy foundation for a life or for a home, spiritually speaking, is saying this.

That person, when the storms come, they're left to their own best efforts. They don't have the word of God believed and trusted in under their feet, under their life, holding them up. They have sand and it gets washed away.

The ways of man, when difficulties come, erosion begins immediately. It's a sandy foundation. Human effort, cultural traditions, sandy foundation.

The human resources of money, a lot of people think if they have some funds, they'll just buy their way out of troubles. Maybe you can out of some, but you can't out of all. The storms of life just keep pounding away, eroding that.

Some people think education will get them through. It's one of the great hopes of man today that we can change everything by education. If God is in our education, we can grow in the wisdom and knowledge of the Lord.

If He isn't, it's just more sandy foundation for life. When the storms come, it starts to erode. And when big problems come, many in the world, they are relying upon things like psychotherapy.

And it cannot face the storms of life. It cannot really get us through. It cannot make us whole.

It cannot make us like Christ. It's a sandy foundation. The rains, the floods, the winds, they come against the house of the foolish man as well.

And Jesus said that house will fall. And when the Lord added great was its fall, it's really something to think about. Have you ever watched a house fall? A household, a family? Maybe, very likely, many here have been in a home that fell.

Great is the fall, isn't it? The anguish, the heartache, the bitterness, the tears, the groaning, the years that seem to pass sometimes with a sense of hopelessness of ever being put back on a right foundation. The agony for loved ones, the agony for friends and relatives, sometimes the agonies of shame and disappointment and brokenheartedness and despair. Sometimes, the agonies of a testimony for the Lord damaged seriously, at least for a season.

Great can be the fall of the home. Thank God that He can not only build, but if there's an effort to build and it fell, He can rebuild. And many of you are already testimonies of that and are putting your hope in the Lord now as the rebuilder of the home.

Praise the Lord He is. But if you are in a household unit, oh, you want the Lord to be the builder and you want His foundation, the Word heard and acted upon. And if you're in a place where you've gone through disaster family-wise, or you haven't yet had a family but you're approaching that, here's the foundation either way, whether it's a new start, a rebuilding, or the first time ever to face a family unit.

You want the Lord to be your home builder by letting Him lay the foundation. Remember, not just hearing the Word, though, that is so important. Because if we have the right attitude in hearing the Word, it will give us faith.

Faith comes by hearing the Word of the Lord. It will give us direction, insight, wisdom. It will change our lives.

And if we have the right heart, we'll want to live in it, walk with it, count on it, and we'll have a rock foundation. So to have the Lord as our home builder, we certainly want to be committed to His Word. What else would the Lord want us to be committed to in order to allow Him to actually function as the builder of our home? Well, we want to be committed to His purposes.

The next issue in our outline, His purposes. 1 Peter 2. 1 Peter 2 verses 9 and 10. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light, who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

In thinking about the household family unit, it is so right to keep this in mind. We are first and foremost the people of God, the family of God. We're not first of all primarily in highest order a single household family unit.

Now that is a basic element the Lord uses in His kingdom, but it's not priority. We're first the family of God, and then as the family of God, He gathers us in little families, makes household units out of us. But the greatest family of all is not our family.

You hear ads like that on the radio. All of this is prepared for the most important family in the world, your family. Well sometimes we think that way, you know, but that isn't really the case.

Surely that's not too disillusioning. Our family isn't the most important family in the world. Which one is? The family of God, all of His people.

That's the most important family in the universe, and we're first and foremost the people of God. You are a chosen generation, a holy nation, His own special people. And we are here not to develop the best, most enjoyable, delightful family we can develop.

We are here to proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. If the Lord is going to be the builder of our home, we want to be committed not only to His word but His purposes for our lives and for our homes. And His purpose is that we as His people, as His family, as His holy nation, as His special family, His own unique possession in other words, that we would be people proclaiming the praises of Him.

How so? Just telling people how glorious He is, how wonderful He is, this one who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. That's our purpose in being here. And sometimes we can forget the purpose of God for us and our families and we can kind of get sidetracked, self-centered, and get our priorities wrong, and we can think that the greatest assignment we have, the greatest purpose before us is to make our household the most blessed, the best, the most enjoyable in just the way we want it to be.

Oh, we also want God to be pleased with it. Yes. Here is the purpose of God, that we would be His people declaring His praises, telling others He called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Praise the Lord. Isn't His light marvelous? Can you remember much the darkness? How unmarvelous it was? How smothering? How destructive? How twisted? How painful? How displeasing to God? How alienating among mankind the darkness was? Well, you stagger around in the darkness, you crack your shins, you trip and bust your head, and you do the same spiritually. And you also damage others.

The darkness is an awful place to live, but His light is so marvelous. And He called us out of the darkness into His marvelous light. I love to recall when and how the Lord called me out of that darkness.

It was almost like, aren't you sick enough of that yet? Could you make any greater mess of your life or agony for those who know you than you have? And don't you see now the thing you want so much, which at that time was my wife-to-be, which I felt at that moment I lost the chance forever. What a shock it was that Christmas before, our first Christmas we were engaged when she wrote in this Bible she gave me. What a gift to give a young man, I mean, a Bible.

For Christmas! And then she wrote in there, Dear Robert, may we build our home on this rock. And I died. Things were really rolling up until then.

We were engaged, going to get married. I realized all of a sudden she thought I was a Christian. Not that she didn't have some things that could fool you, you know.

I carried a Bible, I went to church, I worked as a manager in one of the church departments, this big church with a radio ministry. I had the quack of a duck, the waddle of a duck, the feathers of a duck. I just didn't have the life of a duck.

And I was decimated. All I wanted was her, I mean, what's wrong with that? Why does she have to want a godly home? She's gotta mess this whole thing up. And I literally wept for a week.

But as I wept, the Spirit of God was just pounding on my heart. I grew up in a pastor's home, I knew the gospel. I had heard it, I didn't act on it.

For 10 years, from 15 to 25, I did not act on it. I'd been running and rebelling. You know, that, at that point, was the greatest week, though, of my life.

I thought I was dying as I went into it, and I was, but I found life. Crying out in contrition and repentance and brokenheartedness, Lord, Lord. What a fool, what a fool.

Forgive me, please, just give me a new life. And praise the Lord, He did. And He threw in a wonderful wife, too.

He's a God of resurrection. He can raise up that which seems dead. It's wonderful to be called out of darkness into His marvelous light.

His light is so marvelous, it has love and joy and peace in it, and wisdom and knowledge from God and direction and fruitfulness and purpose. I mean, it's great to live in the light. You don't have to trip over every bad thing and bust yourself up in others.

It's just wonderful. His light is marvelous. And we're the people of God.

His purpose is, tell others His praises by just telling them how He called us out of the darkness into His marvelous light. Also, we once did not have mercy, the next verse says. We deserve judgment and alienation and separation from God for time and eternity, but now we have obtained mercy.

Isn't mercy wonderful? What do you think you would deserve if God gave you what you really deserved? Isn't mercy wonderful? Mercy means we don't get what we deserve. How wonderful that is. It's wonderful to tell people about that.

Because those who don't yet have mercy, that's exactly what they need. There's no hope. There's no future if they don't find the mercy of God.

And we once didn't have it. We can tell them, we know what it's like to not have mercy, to live under the apprehension of the judgment of God that is due you. And yet now we have obtained mercy.

I deserve to be separated from God forever and suffer eternal agonies as true justice for my eternal crime of sin and doubt and many other forms of disobedience and rebellion against an eternal God. But I've now obtained mercy. What a message we have to tell people.

And that's the purpose of God for us, that we be the people of God, declare His praises, and tell about His mercy. Our families must fit into this high purpose of God. We must not ever let our families exist as a little circle of self-interest.

And that's a temptation. Oh, these wonderful things of God and our wonderful Lord. Oh, make my family a little heaven on earth.

And then we want a saying, make the world go away. You know, just make it good for us. You know, from the front curb to the back driveway, Lord, oh, bless.

That's a rather small vision. It doesn't really fit His purposes. We're His people, His family first, declaring His praises.

And if we dedicate our homes to His purposes, oh, He'll make our families a taste of His goodness and greatness and a foretaste of heaven, little by little, more and more. But we must be committed to His purposes. See, if we want the Lord to be our home builder, it's not just a matter of saying, Lord, build my home.

He's raised these issues in His word. Okay, you want me to build your home? Are you committed to my word? That's where I give you the guidelines for the home and life with me. That's where I give you a foundation to put your life and home upon.

You want me to build your home? Are you committed to my purposes? Do you want the work I do on your home be dedicated to the purposes I've ordained for the people of God? To the extent that we are committed to His ways and means to work in and through our lives, we'll see Him working as the builder of our homes. Here's another matter He wants us committed to. Not only His word, His purposes, but also His church.

Ephesians 1, Ephesians 1, verses 22 and 23. And He, that is the Father, put all things under His feet, that is Jesus' feet, and gave Him, the Lord Jesus Christ, to behead over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. We who know the Lord Jesus Christ, all of us are members of His body, that is, of His church.

And it is right there in church life that we are to find and experience and grow in fullness of life, spiritually. See the church, the body of Christ, His family, where He dwells and all of His goodness, light, life and resources are proclaimed and there to point to and draw on one with another. The church, His body, is called here the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

What life does the church live on? Not just the dedicated life of its members. The life of the body of Christ is the life of the head we live by the life of Jesus Christ. That's why the church can be called the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

He who has all the fullness that would be anywhere to be found or would need to be, He lives among His people. One of the reasons some families have a significantly meager family life spiritually instead of fullness of life is because they are distanced from the rest of the family of God. They do not live in the church life so they are not moving about among, sharing in, learning of, being built up in the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

All of this family life that we have been studying about thus far is to be learned about, and developed in the context of deep involvement in the larger family, the family of God. All of this family life that we have been studying about thus far is to be learned about, and developed in the context of deep involvement in the larger family, the family of God. What the Lord is building here is His church.

He said, I will build my church. Not I will build the greatest string of family units ever seen on the earth, though in the process of building His church He can do that. But He said, I will build my church.

And we are members of His church's body. And it's called here this amazing phrase, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. If we want the Lord to be the builder of our home, the Lord wants us committed to life together as a family in His church, in His body, sharing together the fullness of His life, and letting it impact our families to the glory of God.

In fact, the glory of God is the next issue we are going to consider that the Lord wants us to be committed to. If we want the Lord to be the builder of our home, the Lord wants us to be committed to His glory, Colossians 1.18. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things He, that is Jesus, the head of the church, may have the preeminence, may get first place in everything, in other words. The Father has so designed His plan among His people here on earth so that in all things Jesus Christ, His beloved Son, may have the preeminence.

In all things, Jesus is the head to the church over all things. Everything that takes place in church life, from gathered church life to scattered church life, to family life, to the family and business, to family relationships, to evangelism, to you name it, Jesus is the head over all things to the church. He's to be calling the shots on every issue in every life, every home.

And also, He is to get the preeminence in all things, in everything. He's to get the glory. He's to get the honor.

The implication of this for our study in Family God's Way is that Christian families are not to be establishing their greatness, but rather the Lord's greatness. The glory of a godly, fruitful, biblically designed and sustained Family God's Way, the glory of it is all to go to the Lord Jesus Christ. If we want the Lord to be the builder of our home, we must not anticipate that we'll have Him build it so we can take the bowels.

And that is a temptation. It's not wrong to want our homes to be good and strong and mighty in God, if it's for the right purpose and the right one gets the glory. But if we just want our family blessed and strong because it's our family, we want people to know we have a good family, and in fact, we wouldn't mind if they found out we had the best family.

We're just being tainted by the lusts and the cravings of the flesh for self-glory. It's not right. God can do glorious things in the household family unit.

And praise the Lord, we ought to want Him to do such things. But when He does them, He should get all the glory for doing these glorious things. The Lord will not let anyone rob His glory, and we should not even want to.

Isn't it our joy to give Him the glory? Well, the Lord not only wants to build our homes through our commitment to His Word, His purposes, His church, and His glory, but also in commitment to His wisdom and guidance. Oh, this is so important for family life. Many places in the Word would speak of this or give us application for this, but perhaps no place better than in Proverbs, the book of wisdom, and two of perhaps the most famous, well-known, and maybe even to you in your own personal life, delightfully helpful, critical verses.

These are two of my favorite in the whole Word of God. I just would have no way to count the times I have prayed in them, read them, wept in them, rejoiced in them, studied in them. Proverbs 3, 5, and 6. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.

In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. These are great words to meditate and pray over periodically just for no other reason than that they are so rich. But they are especially good to read, to consider, to meditate upon, to pray about when we personally or our families are confused, or perplexed, or bewildered, or stretched, or discouraged, you know, like every other day maybe.

Sometimes it seems that way, doesn't it? Well, these are great words from the Lord for such times of difficulty. Another great time to consider these words is when we are deciding on something, beginning to enter into something, or preparing concerning some great issue of life affecting us or the family that we are a part of. Oh, these are great words to take before the Lord at such a time as that.

We are told to trust in the Lord with all of our heart, no part of it doubting Him or depending on us, but trusting in the Lord with all of our heart, all of our inner being, all of the very core of who we are in Christ. And we are to lean not on our own understanding. Do you ever find the struggle of wanting the comfort of leaning on our own understanding when the Lord is saying, just lean on me, would you? Now, He is much better one to lean on, but I think most of us, I know I do, find a tendency, I want to understand this so fully, Lord.

What's happening? What's going on? What's coming down? What's involved? What to do? Where to go? And where it's going to lead? I mean, come on Lord, I want to have faith, let me know these things. Sometimes the quest for those things can almost fight against your faith, you know. I mean, it's a blessing when a lot of those things are evident and all you're doing is just your heart's dancing and you're praising the Lord, you know.

That's wonderful and God does things like that. But so often a lot of those elements are missing, aren't they? And even if you have a lot of these elements revealed by God on a lot of issues, there are plenty where they aren't there yet, right? Well, we're to trust in the Lord with all of our heart and lean not on our own understanding. We're not to count on just what we understand, we're to count on God who understands everything.

And the call here is to live by His understanding and wisdom and guidance and trust in Him with all of our heart. And not lean on our own understanding, but in all of our ways. In everything we're involved in.

Home, work, the kids, church life, decisions, finances. In all of our ways, acknowledge Him. And here's the amazing end result of growing in that process.

And He shall direct your paths. To the extent that we're trusting in the Lord with all of our inner being, not leaning on our own understanding of everything, but in every way acknowledging Him. We can count on this.

It's a promise. He shall direct your path. Now see, that's where we're to find comfort, confidence, peace and hope.

Not that we understand it all, but even where we don't understand it, we're leaning on Him. And we're acknowledging Him in all of our ways with this great confidence. He shall direct my path.

He shall direct my family. He will lead us in the way we should go. Now what does it mean to acknowledge Him? Because we must acknowledge Him in all of our ways to anticipate the blessing of this promise of direction.

Acknowledging Him, it would involve recognizing the Lord as in charge and able to handle it. If we're facing something we're agonizing over, we need to acknowledge Him. Lord, what am I doing? You're the Lord.

You're the Master. You're in charge of my life. You're able to handle this.

I just acknowledge You as the Lord of it and one who's able to handle it. Acknowledging the Lord would also involve admitting our total need for Him to do what only He can do. Acknowledge Him in all your ways.

It also would involve confessing. In fact, recognize, admit and confess are three synonyms for the word acknowledge. It would involve confessing Him as our Lord and Master, as our all in all.

We can come to these verses, look at the impossibility perhaps or the opportunity that overwhelms us and say, Lord, I can't measure. I can't hardly evaluate. My understanding is so meager.

I just want to trust You completely by acknowledging You in all of this. Lord, I want to confess. You're my Lord, my Master.

You're my all in all. Just be who you are. Do what you can do.

No other approach will be sufficient. You know what the Lord says to that kind of heart? I shall direct your paths. Who would you rather have? Full knowledge of every detail down to the most minute point that God wanted you to walk on and then said, here, go do it best you can.

Or be left with a whole lot of perplexities in which you had to acknowledge Him and you did and you started walking with this promise. He shall direct my path. I'd choose the latter, wouldn't you? And we should choose the latter because we will never be given the former anyway.

And if we were given the former, don't you know we'd find a way to blow it? You know? Acknowledge Him in all your ways. He shall direct your path. I don't know how many times I have with tears sometimes of agony, brokenheartedness, read and prayed in these verses for my family or for individual members in the family and many times for my own great needs.

Oh, if we want the Lord to be the builder of our home, then we want to be committed to His wisdom and His guidance. And through that, He'll build our homes. One last matter to be committed to.

So many things in the word to consider, but this is maybe a good place to end. If God is going to be the builder of our home, He wants us committed to His strength. Ephesians chapter 6, His strength.

Ephesians 6.10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. What a great call this is. Family life, maybe you've noticed, it's a strength sapper.

Right? Don't you often feel like you don't have the strength to meet the need or take advantage of the opportunities in or for the family? It's a strength sapper. No matter how strong you think you are, the family is up to the task of sapping your strength. Let's apply this to the family.

Let's be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. He has enough strength for family life and for every member of the family and for every family that is His. The Lord has the strength for us.

Note too, and we don't want to make the wrong thing of this, but the context here in Ephesians 6 is strength for battle. Hmm. Surely there's a family implication there, right? You know, the Christian life is a spiritual battle.

And establishing the family God's way is a battle. Let's just remember who the enemy is, right? It's too easy for families to fight with each other. Oh, how wrong, how futile, how foolish, how displeasing to the Lord, how vain, how destructive, how nonproductive.

God wants His family standing together against the common foes. And another application here, we don't wrestle against flesh and blood. Our fight is not with a person or people, especially in our own household.

Now, the spiritual battle can sure surface there. I mean, it can surface there between household members. But let's remember, it's a spiritual battle.

And we don't have the strength for the battle. So we must be strong in the Lord. Stand together in the Lord's strength against the common foe.

Be strong in the Lord in the strength of His might. A question at this point. Maybe there are some among us in our study that feel right now especially weak and are maybe thinking, you know, this thing of being strong in the Lord and the strength of His might, I don't see how this can work for me.

All I'm aware of is my absolute own weakness. Do you remember the amazing word in 2 Corinthians 12, 9, if you want to jot it down? That His strength is perfected in our weakness. If you are overwhelmed with the awareness of your own weakness, you know in the kingdom of God, it's the opposite of what it is in the kingdom of man.

In the kingdom of man, you know, the only next step is despair. In the kingdom of God, this is a point of expectation. Because you are now qualifying to be a vessel in which He will perfect His strength.

That is, He will develop and ensure it in its greatest extent. Because there will be no mixture of His with yours. It's just Him at work when we are nothing but weak before Him.

And if you're kind of pressed down by a tremendous sense of weakness right now in your own life or family life, be encouraged. You qualify all the more quickly, easily and clearly to be a vessel in which the strength of God is ready, willing and able to go to work. Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might.

Thank God for the power of heaven that can come down, visit our lives, touch us and our family members and bring the strength we need for the things we face. The Lord wants to be the builder of our homes. He wants us to have a desire for Him to be the builder of our homes.

And if we can just but see it rightly, we should desperately sense a need for Him to be the builder of our homes. Well, if we will commit ourselves to the ways and means He uses, He'll do the building. And this would apply to all of our lives, individuals, every Christian, certainly every household unit.

The Lord wants us to have a commitment to His Word, a commitment to His purposes, a commitment to His church, a commitment to His glory, a commitment to His wisdom and guidance and a commitment to His strength. Just a couple of thoughts in conclusion. This all means, surely we see, that we will need to be people of prayer and families of prayer.

We will need to be those who are looking to the Lord habitually in prayer. Those who want the Lord to build their home and seeing that it requires His Word, His purposes, His church, His glory, His wisdom, His strength. What are those people going to be doing? Crying out to the Lord concerning these matters day by day, step by step.

Oh Lord, work these ways. Oh Lord, do these things. Oh Lord, be this to us.

Oh Lord, make us what You alone can make of us. Well, in just a moment I'd like to encourage everyone that we knit our hearts together in prayer. Kind of conclude our study by committing our lives, our own walk with the Lord and our families in a fresh new way to the Lord as our home builder.

Let's pray together and just speak to Him about these matters and ask the Lord to do what He says He can do. Lord, we do seek You now. We ask You, Lord, to be the builder of our home.

You alone can do it right. We want You to build our homes, our lives. And Lord, thereby we want to be committed to Your Word.

Committed to be in it, committed to reading it, praying in it, committed to responding to it, acting upon it, believing in all it says and all it provides. Lord, use Your Word in the building of our homes. Fill our homes with Your Word.

Help us teach it to our kids. Work through Your words. Lay a foundation for our lives.

Lord, we want to be committed to Your purposes. In a new way, show us how clearly we're here to be Your people proclaiming Your praises, telling of Your marvelous light and Your great, great mercy. May Your purposes dictate our family life, Lord, we pray.

Lord, we want to be committed also to Your church, loving her, praying for her, serving among her, learning as we live together, encouraging one another, stirring up one another to love and good deeds, sharing the glorious, wondrous grace of Jesus Christ. Lord, build our homes through involvement in Your church, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. Lord, we desire to be committed to Your glory.

Forgive us any way or time that we have taken the good things You've done in our homes and let the glory come to us and not to You. Lord, we want to be committed that in all things, the Lord Jesus, the builder of our homes, will get the preeminence. Lord, we commit afresh to Your wisdom and Your guidance.

There's so much we don't understand, so much we yet need to learn, so much in which we desperately need You to function as our shepherd, our guide. Lord, we want to be committed to trusting in You with all of our heart, not leaning on the things we understand, but just acknowledging You as Lord, Master, home builder in everything, that You might truly direct our paths. And Lord, we want to commit afresh to Your strength.

Apart from You, Lord, we can do nothing. In and of ourselves, spiritually, there's but weakness. There's no life.

You are our life. You are our strength. And Lord, even among the weakest here tonight, in the greatest ways and most full extent, perfect Your strength.

And we all look to You, Lord. You alone have the strength we need. Lord, we ask You to touch any hearts, even right now, that need Your glorious salvation, that Your light and life might really enter into their life

and into their role in their family.

Thank You for the forgiveness of sins. Thank You, Lord, for Your Holy Spirit that gives us new life from above. Oh, fill us with Your Spirit to abundant, overflowing life in our walk with You, in our households, and from our households, flowing out to one another, and on out to a world that's still in darkness and still needs the mercy of God.

Lord, take all the things we've looked at in these visits together in Your Word on Family God's Way and work out Your wondrous perfect will in each of our lives for Your great glory we pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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