

The Christ-Centered Home

by David Alspaugh

The sermon emphasizes the importance of a Christ-centered home, focusing on obedience, honoring parents, and the responsibilities of both children and parents in nurturing faith.

Duration: 1:40:59

Scripture: Psalm 122:1, Proverbs 4:18, Ephesians 6:1-3, Colossians 3:20

Topics: "Godly Home"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a personal relationship with God. He references Proverbs 4:18 and Revelation 3 to illustrate that the path of the righteous shines brighter and brighter as they continue to persevere and press on. The preacher then shifts the focus to the topic of the home and the role of parents in transmitting the Christian faith to their children. He highlights the significance of a godly courtship and the need for parents to be born again. The sermon concludes with the recognition that it is a miracle for two individuals with different backgrounds and experiences to come together in marriage and emphasizes the importance of relying on God's guidance in this journey.

Transcript

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A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus. He's a wonderful, wonderful Savior, is he not? Some of the faces are old faces.

Some of them I do not know. I probably know Brother Moses and Sister Rhoda longer than most of you do. And we're grateful that our lives have crossed in the past.

Probably one of the first times I remember Brother Moses is when him and I and some other brethren in a motor home were endeavoring to share the gospel in Boston, Massachusetts. It's one of my first

acquaintances with Brother Moses. I'm grateful for that.

Like Brother Dean, some of my relatives are here and my sister. But that really doesn't matter, does it? So much who we're related to, who we know or who we don't. It doesn't matter if we're related to Jesus Christ.

We have a relationship with him. And if we know him in a real personal, ongoing way. A scripture that came to my mind as I sat here and listened.

I was tremendously inspired and blessed by the hymns and their messages. And the message there then, out of Revelations 3, was that one there in Proverbs 4, 18, where it says, The path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. And, brethren and sisters, it's that way to the child of God who will continue to persevere and press on.

God bless you this morning. Brother Dean thought it would be good if I'd share a message on the home this morning. He left that open to me, but I've chosen to do that by the leading of the Lord.

And we want to look at some of those areas this morning in very basic, fundamental ways. Maybe not so much in detail, but as a reminder, as our brother shared from Revelations this morning, we need to be reminded of things if we're going to strengthen them. And it's not that we don't know them.

I don't plan on sharing a whole list of new things with you that you never knew about the Christian home this morning. But we do need to be reminded, do we not, of truths. God has a way of stirring up our memories.

And one way is by the preaching of God's word and the reading of God's word. I believe that's why the psalmist says, I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Because it was there he remembered what he was taught as a child.

And he was reminded again and again as he worshipped his great God and listened to the preaching. So maybe we can just be an encouragement to you this morning in your homes this morning here as we share from his word. Let's bow our heads for prayer.

Father in heaven, we are thankful for the word of God. It's truth. It's your word.

It shall never pass away. It's forever settled in heaven. It's meat and drink to our soul.

It's the bread of life. And we're grateful for it this morning. We ask you to anoint the word, Lord, to the hearts in an effective way to each one that's here.

Each one that has an ear to hear. Let him hear what the spirit sayeth to them this morning. May we drink from your word.

And may we, Lord, not be then a forgetful hearer of the word. But as we go forth from this place, may we remember those things which we have heard and put them into practical applications in our life throughout the coming days. Bless the service for your glory.

You're on your praise and the good of each one here. You know the heart. You know what's going on in each side, inside of each heart.

I just pray you'd meet that need in a way that be beneficial to them and bring you glory. Jesus name we pray. Amen.

This morning, we want to first share to you children. The scripture in the New Testament has two very primary verses. One of them is Ephesians chapter six, verses one and three, where it says, Children, obey your parents in the Lord.

And I just want you children to remember, though you've heard that ever since you probably can remember that that commandment from the Lord has a tremendous and important meaning for you in life. Also, it says in Colossians 3:20, the same thing. Children, obey your parents in the Lord in all things.

It says this is right and it's well pleasing to the Lord. And to obey simply means to love your parents. Jesus said one time of his disciples, if a man loved me, if a man loved me, he will keep my words.

There's something about obeying your parents that God designed. Our God is a God of design. He didn't just cause us to be born into this world and hope we can get along the best we can and make the best of it and do the best we can.

No, God particularly designed a purpose, a plan. He has an intent for everyone in this building, even you children, every one of you. And there's something about obeying your parents that builds a foundation in your life that will benefit you the rest of your life.

But there's also, by the same token, a devastation by not obeying your parents. It has an undermining. It has a it has an unstable effect in a child's life, not saying the grace of God cannot intervene and make a difference later in life.

For many of you can testify and I can as well how it does. But there's something basic and fundamental about that commandment there of the Ten Commandments. Honor thy father and thy mother.

Here is the most beautiful picture. It's the prettiest scene in all the world, I believe, that our eyes can ever desire to behold. It's one of the things that's most pleasant, wonderful when a loving father and mother have children who obey and honor them.

It's something this world needs to see more of. It's something that is disappearing in general in the popularity of a society that's falling apart at the seams, as it were. A father, a mother have children who love them.

It's your father, mother's credentials of their godliness, children, when you obey them. Obedience is natural by God. It is.

It's right. It pleases God. It's going to go with you long throughout life.

To honor your parents. What does that mean? Young people, children alike. It's a weighty reverence.

That holds in all seriousness, high esteem and regard for your parents. Veneration is another word that describes to honor someone to hold them important in high priority and to value them greatly. That's what it means to honor, to look up to with fond favor and respect, to seem with appreciation and love.

Now, maybe you're here this morning and your parents aren't what you think they ought to be. Does God say honor your parents only when they're what they ought to be? No, the command is sure. It's simple.

It's straight. It's to all honor your parents, honor your father, your mother, obey your parents. Never be ashamed of your parents.

Maybe some things they do you are, but never be ashamed of your parents. I remember when I wasn't a Christian, sometimes I'd like to stand back a little bit from my father and mother if they were walking in public somewhere. I would have rather just not quite been identifying with them.

But to honor your parents is to never, ever be ashamed of them. Always be willing to identify and go with your parents. Honor them for who they are, not possibly what you wish they would be.

Always speak well of your parents to others, especially to other children and youth. We can get caught up so quickly in speaking evil of each other, of other people. But young people and children never get caught in the habit of speaking evil of your parents.

God will bless you for that. Yes, He will. Don't speak unkindly of your parents or to your parents.

Tell them you love them. You'll never know to your parent what that will mean to them. Thank them sincerely for what they have done by bringing you into this world.

Proverbs 1.8 says, My son, hear the instruction of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother. Listen with careful attention to the things your parents teach you. Hide it in your heart.

Cherish it. Write it upon the table of your heart. Determined by God's grace and the instruction of your parents to put into practice what they taught you.

And it's not that your parents never maybe taught you something wrong or never made any mistakes. But the things of God that they have influenced your choice. Remember, you are an individual as a child and as a young person of choice.

And God placed Godly parents in your life to influence that choice for Him. Practice what they taught you. They do it to give you guidance in the way you should go.

Even though you don't always understand. You think maybe they're too old-fashioned and maybe they're too out of step with time. And they don't understand.

Can't put an old head on young shoulders, they say. But, oh, I tell you, God's Word is sure that He has a purpose in your life by giving you Godly parents. As arrows in the hands of a mighty hand of a hunter, He has placed you.

And they pull back strong. You're not a frisbee that they just fling out and goes in your way. No, but you're an arrow, the Bible says, that they pull back on that bow.

And they aim. Normally a bowman aims, doesn't he? Now, one time we have a record in history when King Ahab was shot. There was an aimless, nameless hunter who says, Adventure, pull the bow.

And God directed that arrow into the ribs of Ahab. Doesn't give his name. He was the aimless, nameless hunter.

But that's not what God has in mind for you as parents and you children. They're aiming you to glory. They're aiming you to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And it is with purpose and much intent that your parents have labored and taught you and instructed you and lived an example before you so that you might go in the right direction. They were young ones, too. They know very well your temptations, your fears and your doubts, the things that you're struggling with.

Maybe they're a little bit different nowadays. But really, the principle behind it all is much the same. It's either for God or Satan.

You must choose. The wisdom of this world or the wisdom of God. It's your choice, young people.

God bless each one of you who have chosen the wisdom of God for your lives. Yes, you'll never regret it as you grow older. Love not the world.

No, understand as a young person through God's Word and instruction, your ministers and those over you who instruct you what the world is, where she's going, she's headed to the pit. Yes, she is. And you need to understand that Satan is after every soul, I think it can be said, of everyone in here.

As Jesus said to Peter one time, Simon, Simon, Satan has desire to have you. And it's Satan's desire to have everyone in this building this morning. Jesus says, Peter, I prayed for you.

And when thou art converted, he says, I pray for you that your faith fail not. When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. So, dear parents or dear young people, this morning here, I just want to remind you to be faithful, those of you who are Christians, and to be strong.

Don't throw in the towel. Don't allow yourself to be led astray, but strengthen the things that your parents have taught you and be faithful and be diligent. And maybe someday God will lead you into life as being a father and a mother.

And you'll be so grateful to God for the instruction your parents have given you. You'll never regret it. God's will for directing our children in the Lord, that's basically what we want to talk about.

We could talk about the marriage relationship, and that's very important in the home. Talk about a lot of other things. I just want to read Psalms 128 here.

Psalms 128. It says in Psalms 127, Children are the heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is His reward. As ours are in the hands of a mighty man, so are children of the youth.

Happy is a man that has his quiver full of them. They shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gates. Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord, that walketh in His ways.

It's being the right parent that matters. Sometimes we think we need to have the right children. Sometimes parents in frustration say, well, I have the wrong children.

My children are just different, and they're just this, and they're not that. Well, just be the right parent. That's what God wants us to be.

Be the right parent, and you'll see how maybe normal your children really are after all. Yes, and one of the ways of being the right parent is to fear the Lord. I want you to notice in this simple little chapter how many times fearing the Lord is mentioned.

For thou shalt eat the labor of thy hands. Verse 2 says, Happy days shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house.

Thy children like a lot of plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. What a blessing! The Lord shall rest thee out of Zion, and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

You're going to have a blessing in church life as well. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children. Peace upon Israel.

The Lord entrusts to us as parents the grave responsibility for teaching and training our children in the ways of the Lord and instilling the fear of God in them. We need to take it seriously and be sincere and be diligent in this God-designed responsibility. And I know you are.

And I just want to kindly remind and share some principles from God's Word that is helpful to remind us that we cannot shirk this responsibility. I know, young men, when you prayed and sought God's will for a wife, maybe some of you are doing that here. Maybe there's some couples here courting.

I don't know. But when the Lord leads you together and you anticipate the wedding day, it's a tremendous joy to be able to embrace the God-design of holy matrimony. But I want you young men to remember with that sweet little wife, as sweet as she is, comes a tremendous amount of responsibility.

Tremendous amount of responsibility. More than many young men ever really thought. Blessed is the young man that's instructed in that beforehand.

I've heard so many parents say after their children are raised, now we have the experience. Now we know how. When we had our children and they were little, we didn't know how.

And now that they're raised, it's too late. Well, I think a young lady and a young man that fears God first and plants His truth into their hearts before and to... I want to say this in the on start here. Maybe some of you who are single people here, some of you who are not married at this point, think maybe you can go to sleep.

This isn't for you. This is for you. There are people you can relate to.

There are people you can be fathers to. There are people you can be brothers and sisters to. There are many areas.

God is a God of purpose. And whether you are married or not married really doesn't make a difference to the God of all purpose. Whether maybe you're up in years and not married yet, that really don't matter neither to God.

One young lady was getting up in years and she was getting concerned she wasn't getting married. She went to her pastor and says, you know, what should I do? And he just calmly says, well, you know God's plan. It's one man for one woman.

You can't improve on that. She said, I don't want to improve on it. I just want to get in on it.

And that's the important thing, that you're in on God's plan. And if He leads you into marriage, praise God. If He doesn't, praise God again.

It doesn't mean that, God, you aren't fulfilled and you're not living after God's purpose and heart and life and whatever He leads you into. But if He does, praise the Lord. You don't need to be in a hurry about it.

Brother Dave Esch wasn't in a hurry. I'm not saying you all need to wait that long, but praise God. You know, as God leads, as you live under your parents' direction and serve the Lord and open your heart to His guiding and He leads you into holy matrimony, walk through the door and let God purpose His will in your life, then and that as well.

Our commitment to Jesus Christ and the level of that commitment is going to determine greatly how we're going to fare in being a right parent and in transmitting the Christian faith and the fear of God into the hearts of our children. Basic steps to being a virtuous parent is first preceded by a godly, pure courtship. I believe that's God's will and that's God's Word.

However, I want to say some came in later in life after courtship. I'm sure some of you were converted maybe even after you had children or even a number of children. And I know that God's grace and His marvelous power of restoration is able to raise up out of lives that have been wrecked and ruined by sin and shame and disgrace and turn some of the most beautiful people in His church out of those kind of situations.

Don't you despair. Don't you despair because you didn't have some teaching right. I didn't have a lot of teaching I should have had.

One thing I did have, I had a fresh conversion experience and I love my wife with all my heart. And I tell you, I'll be married 40 years in a couple of months. I don't regret one day of it.

Not one. I haven't always done everything right. I'm not saying I've always been what I ought to have been, but I tell you, I can highly recommend if you take Jesus Christ first and foremost take up His cross, you can as a husband and wife, you can be blessed of God.

In fact, some of those people God has used even throughout the Bible. He used Rahab the harlot. He brought different people into the lineage.

He brought Timothy forth. Maybe some of you are here as Timothy this morning saying, well, I don't have a godly father. So therefore, what you're saying, I just can't attain to it.

Was that Timothy's excuse? No, I'm not saying his father wasn't godly, but apparently he was an unbeliever. But his mother and his grandmother made up the difference. Mothers and grandmothers, if you're sitting here this morning, your influence in those young Timothys can restore what the canker worm has eaten.

Yes, God can raise up beautiful testimonies and lives and marriages and parents out of some of the most deplorable situations that you might have found yourself in. So don't you despair over that. Next to a pure courtship, I think parents need to be born again.

I mean, someone has said, and when they first said it, it struck me a little unusual. But the more I thought what they said, the more I agree. They say, you know, it really is a wonder that marriage is work.

I said, what do you mean? Well, he said, you take two people who live two different lives for 20 or so years in two different homes, two different cultures, bring them into one, expect everything just to flow nice and

sweet and lovely. Why? It's a miracle of God that two people can do that. But that's just exactly what needs to happen.

A miracle of God. If they're both born again and they both love the Lord Jesus with all their heart, their blood washed, their spirit filled, they're living in the fear of God. They're walking in obedience to His commandments.

Brethren, God can take them two lives as diverse as they were and bring them in and make one of the most beautiful flower gardens in His kingdom. He can do that. Praise God for that.

That's His will for your lives. That's His will for you as fathers and mothers living in the fear of the Lord. And the fear of the Lord is a tremendous teaching in God's Word.

The fear of the Lord is having an awareness of God always. That's what it is. It's having an awareness of God and understanding our accountability to Him.

Whether it's right or wrong, there are consequences. And because of His Word and because of His will for our lives, we understand those, then we live accordingly knowing the consequences. And it's not a thing of fear where we just live underneath Him expecting, well, am I alright, Lord? No.

Rather, the fear of God is living a joyful, intimate, close life to Jesus Christ. It's like sheep and their shepherd. We know His voice.

Stranger, they will not follow. Do you know what that word voice means in Greek? It's where we get our English word phone. P-H-O-N-E That's the Greek word for voice there.

That's where we get our word phone, our English word phone from the Greek word voice. It means a tone or something we can recognize. Those of you who have sheep, you understand how that works.

I've had sheep already. And they get to know your voice. You come and feed them every morning or every evening.

You watch over them. You care for them. You talk with them.

As soon as they hear your voice, they come running. But you let a voice of a stranger go into that pasture or into that barn and they scatter like everything. Why? They don't know His voice.

Living in the fear of God is knowing the voice of God. I'd like to illustrate it this way. Some of you children, maybe some of you little boys like to play farm.

We're losing some of our equipment here. You like to play farm and you have tractors that you play farm with. Some of you girls like to play dolls.

You have dolls you play dolls with. You know, after those tractors get used a while and maybe not always cared for as they ought to, what happens to them? They get looking a little bit the way they do. Maybe a wheel will come off.

Muffler will come off. They get bent. The steering wheel comes off.

A tire missing. Who knows what. And if two of you boys are playing in the room and you're farming, I mean, you're really farming for real, it's amazing how boys can farm for real.

And they got them old tractors down there on the carpet and they're plowing or disking or making hay or whatever they're doing. And the one brother decides after a while this old tractor he has is not as good as his brother's. The wheel keeps coming off and he don't like it.

It's bent, it's rusty and he flings it into corn and he reaches over and grabs his brother's tractor. Now boys, you're not supposed to do that, are you? No, you're supposed to share. But sometimes boys do do that, don't they? Yeah, they do.

Maybe it's the girls playing and maybe some of the dollies get looking a little like some of our dollies did already. They get ink on them. Maybe they get an arm missing or the hair pulled out or I remember one of our dollies, one of them had all the toes and fingers bit off one time by one of the boys and it just wasn't a nice looking dolly.

And maybe one little girl decides she don't want that old dolly and she reaches over for their sister's dolly and says, I want that one like her brother does the tractor. I want that one. And there they are pulling over this good tractor and they pull too long and they'll be pulling the muffler off of that one too or the wheel.

And they're not sharing this thing. They're pulling, I had this tractor, I had that long enough, you take this in. And all of a sudden father enters the room.

What happens? The door opens and there stands dad and the two boys are down there pulling or the mom, maybe it's the mother enters the room and the other girls are about pulling another leg off of the dolly, the good dolly. What happens usually? This is what should happen. All of a sudden the other girl lets go of that tractor, don't he? Yeah.

He just sort of very sheepishly goes back to the corner and grabs out of the old tractor and now he's farming him with that tractor. Now it's okay, isn't it? Nothing wrong with it now. It's okay now.

What makes the difference? Why wasn't it okay a while ago? Maybe this other little girl takes this doll again and holds it in her hand. It wasn't a while ago but now the mother's standing watching and it's okay. That's to illustrate just how the fear of God should be working in our hearts all the time.

Whether father and mother stands at the door, whether we see a policeman or whether we see the preacher or whoever it might be or our father or our parent or someone else watching should not indicate how we should live. When we live in the fear of God, it's having God's presence all the time in our mentality. Therefore, we're careful.

Sometimes we get a little reckless in our driving habits, don't we? Maybe not reckless, maybe just forgetful. And what happens when you are driving down the road and there sits an officer? Something... I mean, that's one of the fastest reflexes I believe there is. When that brake hits that foot, it goes up and hits that brake pedal.

Do you have to think very long, a very intelligent way to react to that thing? No. It's just right there. What is that? Really, that's a recognition of God, the presence of God.

It says we should be obedient to those that are over us. And there is a reminder. We shouldn't have to have that as a reminder.

And sometimes, maybe it's a reminder we don't want to pay a fine or don't want to get caught or get a point, rather it is really for conscience sake before God. But when we have the fear of God, I believe that places us in a position that we can adequately live and raise a family for the sake of God. God says of Abraham, I know him.

He's going to command his children after him. Yes, he will. And God wants you to do the same.

It's vitally important, dear ones, to teach your children in the ways of the Lord. Noah moved with fear. He had the fear of God.

What did he do? He built an ark to the saving of his house. I'd like to ask you fathers a question this morning. Are you building an ark for the saving of your children? Not out of gopher wood, not out of pitch.

No, not that kind of an ark. But are you building an ark by the materials God has given you from his word to provide a place of safety and security, so when this world goes to nothing and we see that new heaven and in that new world that our brother spoke about here recently, we have a safe place for our families. There was other men in Noah's day that did not fear God and they suffered the consequences.

They suffered being drowned in the flood because they did not fear the Lord. Cornelius is a New Testament man that we read about. Says he feared the Lord with all his house.

And I believe when he was converted, I would have loved to have been in that house when Peter was speaking and the Holy Spirit ascended upon that congregation of people. I believe he had his servants there and I'm not sure who all might have been there. His relatives, his neighbors.

He was waiting and anxious to hear the word of the Lord. Peter a little bit hesitant here going into this Gentile's house, but nevertheless he went and the Lord performed one of his marvelous works that day all because a man even a Gentile man as he was, even an army man as he was, he feared God. And God blessed that man and He will bless you the same today.

I believe we begin by prayer. We're reminded in the opening about our prayer life this morning. Pray for your children.

E'er they're conceived, pray for their souls. When you mothers hold and nurse those little ones, I believe God instilled a direct way of instilling some of the first principles that your child can receive when they there in their infancy and their innocency look up into your eyes and you hold them close and you whisper the name of Jesus to them. And when you pray God's blessing upon their souls and when you instill that faith like Lois and Eunice did in the little Timothy, when you hold them upon your knee, you tell them the stories of the Bible, when you tell them about the great God, Jehovah, when you tell them about His love in sending His Son, Jesus Christ, His death, His sufferings, His burial, His resurrection, His ascension, His coming again, you instill into those little hearts and minds the fear of God.

Don't ever take it for granted. Don't ever think it's a useless effort. It's one of the most important things you can do while your child is little.

Householders, you need to be strong and rise with courage and purpose in your hearts to be a godly example. As a priest, fathers, husbands, as a provider, as a protector, let the power and the blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ be channeled to you, through you, to your wife and to your children that you can have a sacred, godly, sanctified home separate from this perishing world. Paul tells Timothy, keep thyself

pure.

I want to just change that a bit this morning. Keep thy homes pure. You need to keep yourself pure to keep your home pure, undoubtedly.

But keep your homes pure. It's one of the, on this side of glory, it's one of the most sacred refuges from the battlements of this ungodly, wicked, chaotic world in which we live is your home. Keep it pure.

Keep it for God. Train up that child in the way he should go. Bring them up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord, Ephesians says.

Train and nurture means to restrain. It means to correct. They have a little evil heart in them, as cute and as little as they might be.

Inside of them, there is a nature that God wants you to train. They have a will that He wants you to secure. Secure that will for your children, of your children.

It says, in the admonition of the Lord, to those of you who feel young and inexperienced, I believe if we know how our Heavenly Father relates to us as His spiritual children, that will in turn equip us and enable us so that we may know how to be a physical father to our natural children. The Bible says, in Hebrews, we've all had fathers which corrected us and we gave them reverence. Shall we much rather be subject unto the Father of spirits and live? There is a parallel there.

There is a likeness as God deals, corrects, loves, encourages us as His spiritual children. That enables you as fathers and mothers to be able to nurture and correct your physical and your earthly little bundles of joy that He has brought into your home. Keep the eternal end in view.

Remember, you're raising adults, not children. You're raising people not for this life, but for the next life. It includes both.

Yes, secure that child's will by teaching them obedience, young in life. I know you people have teaching on this and I know you're practicing it. It's very evident.

But I just want to remind you that you need to take that disobedient child aside when He disobeys you. And you need to lovingly and kindly, but firmly and in a biblical manner, correct that child. Make sure that child understands what you're doing.

They need to make a commitment. They need to say, I'm sorry. They need to say, I understand.

Or they need to say, I'm not going to do it again. And then pray for that child. Take them back and go through it again and see if they understand.

And if they don't, do it again. I'm not talking about harsh beatings. I'm not talking about cruel anger fits of parents.

I'm talking about a father that hurts to punish that child as though he was being punished himself. Talking about a father in the sincerity of the Lord understands the weight and the responsibility of his place or her place as a mother that God has placed between Himself and the soul of that child. And that erring nature of that child needs to be molded.

We need to take our little trees and the saplings and we have to tie them up sometimes. We have to put a stake in and pull them over this way. It seems like by nature they have a bet in going the wrong direction.

And we need to stake them up and pull them in so that they can go the right way for the glory of God. You need to do that. Be calm when you discipline your child.

Be discreet. Ask God for wisdom. Be gentle, but be firm.

When this is done early in life, a child will soon learn to know that his parent's authority is not to be trifled with. They learn that. A child so disciplined will often, not often, need spankings, but will be a happy child, will be a content child, will be a secure child, will be an innocent child.

That's God's design for your child's innocence before they come to the age where they can make that choice themselves. It's God's will for you to cleanse their evils away in that measure by securing their will until they reach that age themselves. Blessed, happy, and secure are those children living under the protection of their parent's guidance and in accordance to the order of God.

How many of your 8-year-olds touch hot stoves in your house? Do they? Do your 10-year-old children touch a hot stove? They don't do that. Why don't they do that? How many of your 4-year-olds touch a hot stove? You know, I like to use this as an example. If a child knows that by doing something that it's not supposed to do, that it's going to hurt following that, it's going to think twice.

Your little toddler might toddle up to the hot wood stove and touch it, right? And he screams in pain as he pulls his hand away. Will he do it again? Not likely. Not even as a little toddler.

You don't have to say a word to him. He will not do it again. Maybe he will.

Maybe he'll accidentally do it. He might do it one more time, but will he do it again and again and again? I want to say to you parents, be consistent in your corrections and your children will learn that lesson quickly. They will learn like touching that hot stove if to do wrong and to disobey my father or mother hurts with a spanking, I'm not going to do that.

And that is such a blessing. It's a way that God bonds the hearts of your children to yourself. Don't ever, ever neglect it.

Neither abuse it by threatening and just yelling and saying, I'm going to do this and I'm going to do that. Chasing your son while there is hope and let not your soul spare for his cry. It must surely grieve the heart of God that so many, many parents neglect this responsibility.

Such children will become insecure living under the weight of guilt. They can't cleanse themselves. They're uncontent.

They're frustrated. They're bitter when their parents are inconsistent and unfaithful in this God-given assignment. Be faithful in your discipline and your correction.

Do it as God would want you to do out of love and mercy, but yet in His will. Colossians 3.21 says, Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath. I want to think about this just briefly.

Provoke not your children to wrath. How do we do that? It says, lest they be discouraged. That means to lose heart or to lose spirit.

They get weary. They get a bit frustrated. They begin to question some of their levels that God has brought into their life for their good.

Fathers, it's important not to provoke your children to anger or to wrath. I think probably one of the greatest ways that happens is when we are inconsistent with our children. They don't get the message.

It's one way one time and another way another time. It's either this or it's that, but we're not sure which. One way we can be inconsistent and provoke our children to wrath is expecting more of them than yourself.

That often has been the case in many a situations where a father wants his children to walk the line and he actually has a higher expectation for them than he does himself. That's one way you can easily provoke your children to wrath. Being harsh with your children.

Unkind. Rash. Rude.

Cruel. That's not God's order for discipline. No, it isn't.

God wants us to be like Him. He wants us to be a role model of Himself. As your children learn to know you as their earthly father, may they also learn to know Him as their heavenly father because they learn to know you.

Being impatient with your children. You ever get impatient? We do sometimes, don't we? Yes. I believe too much becoming impatient with our children can be harmful to them.

Angry with your children. Let it never be said that my father gets angry, my mother gets angry with me and impatient. Belittling your children by teasing them can provoke them to wrath.

Now, I'm not saying there's never no time for some teasing. We need to be very careful with that. That has developed a lot of insecure and, what should I word? Use the word timidness and attitudes of insecurity.

There's a word I'm looking for but I can't think of it right now. It's the opposite of being overconfident. Can't find it.

It just escapes my vocabulary. But having a disposition of being... That's it. Thank you, brother.

An inferior attitude in life because you were teased by your father and your mother when you were little. Maybe by embarrassing your children. Maybe by correcting them in public.

Irritating them. Being critical of your children is another way you can discourage them. Being critical.

You're never good enough. I've had so many people have such resentment and bitterness towards their parents because they say, that's how I grew up. I never was good enough.

It discouraged them. Fathers, God's command is provoke not your children to wrath but bring them up in the admonition to nurture the Lord Jesus Christ. Accusing them is another way we can cause our children to become discouraged.

Comparing them with others. Look at him. He don't do that.

He don't act like that. She don't do that. Why can't you be like them? And I'm not saying there's never time to use another person for an example.

But brothers and sisters and fathers, we need to be careful when we're relating to our children and their tender... Many times fathers require things of their children to save their own face. And children pick that up quick. Sure they do.

They pick it up. If you're a preacher's son or daughter and your father wants you to be better than anybody else, they'll pick up on that very early in life. And that can be discouraging to them.

Love them sincerely. I mean, love them like you do anyone else. That's one of the best ways I believe you can not discourage your children.

Maybe sometimes in our manners in public we're overprotective of others, but not of our own children. And I often use the example... If you have company at your house and this little boy's sitting there at the table and he spills his glass of water. Remember the water even come over and went down off the table and on your pants.

What do you do, fathers? Do you yell at that little boy and say, Johnny, why did you spill that water? Do you do that at home too, Johnny? Do you often spill your water? But you know, fathers can do that to their own children. When there's no one around but the family and then as soon as your Johnny spills their water, sometimes fathers get a bit harsh in their correction, in their concern. And maybe it is a problem they need to really work on.

But you know, if we would do that to other people, why, they'd probably be appalled. What do we do when the other little Billy comes and spills his water? We say, that's alright, Billy. Yeah, we'll clean it up.

What we're doing, we're trying to make him not feel so bad for spilling his water in public, aren't we? You know, if you would try that on your own children, it works too. Yes, it does. It works just as well.

Indeed, it does. God has called you fathers to be spiritual leaders and give direction and to teach your family the truths of God's Word. Be diligent to pour your heart, energy, time and money into your precious children.

You only have one short opportunity. That's what's so serious about this. Only one.

Don't waste it. Don't squander it. Away on things of other interest for the sake of your children's souls.

Jesus says in Mark 8, 37, what would a man give in exchange for his soul? I'd like to say, what would a father give in exchange for the souls of his children? I remember sitting in a cottage meeting up in Lebanon. I didn't know the man. We were there having a cottage meeting.

He was an older man. I was young. Our seven children weren't all born yet.

We had the oldest three or so. At that point, I was holding one in my lap. Maybe two.

I don't know. My wife had one. And we had cottage meeting in this man's home.

After we were done, it was opened up for testimony. He gets to his feet and he looks down at me and a couple of other younger men there. He says, I want to tell you young fathers something.

I says, listen to me. He says, I had two sons. Two fine little boys.

But when they were little and growing up, I didn't have time for my little boys. You see, he said, I was a businessman. I was making money.

I not only had one farm, but two farms. And I was in this. And I just simply didn't have time for them.

Now, he said, he said it so sadly, he says, now they're grown up and they're gone and they don't have time for me. They don't have time for me. He says, I want to tell you young fathers, take time for those children.

And it takes time. It takes patience. It costs money.

Indeed it does. It costs money and time. And we need to have our priorities so arranged that the souls of our children need to be more important than many, many other things that we can engage and spend much time on.

What will a man give in exchange for his children's souls? Communicate with your children. Talk often. Talk much.

Get their heart and keep it by relating to them. God closes the Old Testament by saying He's going to come. He's going to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers.

That's the heartbeat of God. That we have our children's hearts and they have ours. And that we are living in that time by earning their confidence that we're trustworthy.

That they're not afraid to ask us questions. When God was giving the children of Israel their directions there on the Passover and many other things, He said, In time to come when thy sons shall ask thee, what meanest these things? That's spoken in the context that fathers and their sons and daughters and mothers will have an open relationship where they can talk about things. And that's good.

We need to keep it that way. I know there's a lot of emphasis today on relationship. Relationship.

And it's good. We need to have that relationship. But in that relationship, use it then to teach the truths of God's Word to your children.

And that's the way that they will get it the best. Not when you can't talk to each other, but you just give it to them and give it to them and they sit there and start looking. Yeah.

You know, we can get out of balance real easy. We can have a family that's very God-looking, really in order, disciplined, sit up straight, pay attention, but we can't talk. That's not God's will that we can't talk to our children and our children can't talk to us.

Now, we can talk about what's to be done today. We can talk, you know, how the cows were melted. Or we can talk how many pieces of lawn furniture we got made today or how it sold or didn't sell.

We can talk about those things. That isn't what I mean. I mean, when we're just together, can we talk? And I realize it comes hard.

It comes harder for me than it did my wife. My wife's a whole lot better talker than I am to our children. But we need to be able to communicate.

And then when you communicate like that, in that setting, teach them the truths of God's Word. So many parents, I've seen this happen. You have too.

They'll have an orderly family and they see then that is this thing's out of order. We've got to be able to relate. So they'll sacrifice on principles for the sake of relationship.

Others sacrifice a relationship for the sake of principles. But when we can get them both together, then we have what John says of Jesus. He came full of grace and truth.

Amen. Grace is God's forgiveness. Grace is God's love.

Grace is being able to share with God. But it's more than just that, is it not? Yes, in that forgiveness, in that sharing, in that relationship, God has truths He wants us to abide by and live by. So we need to be balanced.

Yes, we do. We need to have salt and we need to have light. Jesus says you're the salt of the earth.

He also says you are the light of the world. Salt there means savory, tasty. Job 6, 6 says, can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt? Does the salt of an egg or does the weight of an egg have any taste? He says no.

You need salt on it, don't you? Now, I know we're living in a day and age when a lot of people, you know, they got to watch the sodium business here and you got to lay off the salt. I was at a place, had meetings one time and this lady, I was there for the week and she sort of was apologetic. She said, now, you're going to be staying with us, but we eat a little different around here, Brother David.

I said, that's fine. I said, we'll just, whatever you have, that's fine. She said, we don't cook everything.

We eat a lot of stuff raw. I said, that's okay. She said, it's called the Hallelujah Diet.

Oh, I said, I've been on that ever since I'm saved. I said, we'll get along fine. Well, she had a little bit of an interpretation of what the Hallelujah Diet was than I did.

She said, we don't eat salt around here. I said, really? She said, no. So she made me a big sweet potato, a baked sweet potato.

Now, I like sweet potatoes, but I always eat butter and salt and sweet potatoes. So we were getting our food fixed. I said, I'll take some salt, please.

We don't have salt. She was apologetic, you know. And we do got some.

I guess I could get you some, but we just don't. I said, that's okay. That's okay.

And we had a good time. And I told her, Jesus said, salt's good. Yes, it is.

And we had a good time until we were done with that week of meetings. We were all eating salt. A lot more salt.

Yes, we were. Anyhow, salt is tastiness, Jesus said. Salt is not so much what you do, it's how you do it.

The light is what you do. A light is an example. When the world looks at the Christian nation, they should see a light of how to raise a family, of how to spend money or not spend money or earn money or whatever it might be.

That's a light. But how we do those right things is the salt. Sometimes we can do them and they're so tasteless and morbid and just formal and there just isn't enough life and inspiration.

Oh, we're doing the right thing. It's like going to church this morning. You're here at church.

You've probably been by a lot of neighbors and other people's houses that don't go to church. Well, going to church is good. Staying home is not.

We're not to forsake assembling ourselves together. But how you go to church and what you do here is more important to God. You can come in here and sit like a bench warmer and just warm the seat and go back out and not participate and not receive any blessings.

That's God's will for your life. No. He wants you to get in the service and contribute to worship and praise and teaching of God's Holy Word.

He wants you to be a participator, not a bench-warming non-participator. So it's not what we do. Maybe it's how we do it that really is important as well.

I believe it's back in Colossians 4, verse 6. It says, Let your speech be always with salt, seasoned with grace, that ye may know how to answer every man. Not that you may know what. It's how.

The salt is the how. It's the way you do things. Not so much what you do.

The light is what you do. And I want to just keep that parallel here in teaching your children. It's important to relate to them, but then we must relate true to them.

And it's important to relate true to them, but we still need to be able to relate to them in doing so. And we can get that parallel together in the grace of God. You're going to have a beautiful, beautiful family life, home life.

Teach your children to pray by faith and to trust God. Have a place for family devotions. Yes.

Make much of Jesus Christ. Make much of God to your children. Make much of His word.

Make much of His people, the church. Make much of His ways involve and include them in Christ's kingdom. Intentionally make many warm and colorful memories of serving the Lord with your families.

That going to church isn't just some old drudgery. It's just some old duty. Some necessity.

We've got to go to church Wednesday night. Prayer meeting. We've got to go again.

But all do it, brothers and sisters, with an enthusiastic heart. Let your children catch that vision. Yes.

And even add a little humor to it. But not at the price of not being serious. Some people are too humorous.

But I think we do need to have a touch of humor. We really do. It really helps to make colorful and warm memories.

When we have our family devotions, get them involved. Memorizing, praying, singing to learn to sit and be quiet. It's expected of a child when they go to first grade.

They know how to sit still and be quiet. Well, that's not only good for school. It's also good for church services and anywhere else.

To be orderly and to participate. It prepares them for the importance of public worship. Teach your children the importance of worshiping the Lord with the saints.

I wonder what God thinks of all the excuses people use today by not assembling themselves together with the believers as the manner of some. Are you some of the some or who are you? Who am I? Traveling has become maybe the tickets are cheaper on Sunday. I don't know.

But traveling Sunday, the Lord's Day has become a big travel day for a lot of folks now. Unfortunately, they're not all unbelieving people. Going to the mountains and going to the cabin and going here and going there and doing this and doing that.

And I'm not saying there's never time for any of that. But I think our children need to learn to know what is important and what God's Word teaches us. Teach them the importance of going to church, being attentive, being prompt, being reverent, being involved and supporting in the congregation.

And let me add this there on that yet. Watch what you say to your children about the preachers and the church, the ministry. Many times fathers and mothers, it does irreparable damage to your children.

You might not understand that at the time, but I have seen it. You've seen it. If you're the kind of a father and a mother who's always picking at the faults of your preachers and if that's what you're here to find, I'm sure you can find a few.

If you can't find any here, you can come up to us. You'll find plenty of us preachers. If that's what we're looking for and if we're going to be reminding our children this and that and the other thing and the church and on and on and on, that sort of leaves a sour taste.

And I tell you what, there's a lot of young children that's out there in the world today that don't even claim the name of Jesus Christ who would otherwise be with the body of Christ if their parents would have been a little bit more, maybe I should say a lot bit more discreet in venting their feelings towards their preachers. Be careful with that. I believe that is important.

Not saying your preachers don't have mistakes or that it can't ever be talked about in a constructive way. Teach and practice honesty always with your children. Honesty is openness.

It's just baring your heart in reality of who you are and what you are. We need to be real. We need to be apologetic when we admit, when we make faults, we admit them.

Yes, we do. When we say something wrong, we correct it. We don't try and cover it up.

We try and hope no one ever heard it. No one got that. Be truthful.

Be forthright. Be open. Bury your hearts together always in integrity and uprightness.

It goes a long way to building confidence and trust in your children's hearts. Be understanding and lead the way of biblical Christ-like forgiveness, reconciliation, healing, and restoration. We have problems.

We have failures. We have faults. We make mistakes.

We say things. There's clashes. There's this or that.

Be a Christ-like model, fathers, in going and making the way clear. Be humble. That goes a long way.

A proud father's not a good father. It's just how it is. God hates a proud heart.

In fact, Peter says, Be closed with humility, for God giveth grace to the humble, but He resists the proud. And a proud father is one who usually raises proud children. So we need to be humble before God, brokenness before the Lord, contriteness before God and our wife and our children.

Keep your word, fathers. Be dependable. Be responsible.

Be trustworthy. Be an example. That's the best teacher you can have.

Keep your home, for God has already said, and you must have some guidelines and requirements. And wives, support your husbands. You need to be together.

If children soon learn that father has one set of rules and mom has another set, they'll know where they can go very quickly to get what they want. But be agreed. Be agreed on what you're going to do, how you're going to carry them out, where the boundary lines are, and when there can be exceptions to those boundary lines.

There needs to be that too. Indeed, there does. Children will learn that quickly in life, where you're at.

And it's very important that they know. Teach your children to identify, while they're young, their carnal nature. And to learn to overcome selfishness.

It's a very unhappy child that never senses and realizes that part of his lower nature. Teach him to deal with that selfish gratification. Teach him to be temperate and not to be overindulgent.

Teach him to be a good loser when they're playing a game. That's good. That's who the winners are, the ones who are good losers.

Teach your families and your household that we have things that, there's things that we don't do in this house. It's good to have that. I think some children don't know simply because they're not taught.

Unfortunate they are. Need to understand that all in our house, understand that we don't fight here. We don't allow fighting in our house.

We don't hit. We don't argue. We don't fuss.

We don't make fun and depreciate each other in our house. Those are good things that you need to teach your children. We don't yell and talk back.

We don't use rough or slang language in our home. Our home's a refuge from that. Our home is a sanctified place and shrine where husband and wife and children worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

We don't lie. We're not disrespectful. We don't discount each other by criticizing each other and gossiping and speaking evil and slanderous towards each other.

That sows discord and it makes for terrible feelings in a home life. Now, teach your children to be hospitable. The Bible says we're to be given to hospitality without grudging.

Yes, without grudging. Maybe in front sometimes, maybe we're having supper and so and so pulls in the driveway and one of the children says, oh, so and so is here. Maybe Papa will say, oh, not them again.

Oh, my, when they were here the last time, what a goings-on that wasn't. Well, they're here anyhow. They're coming now.

They come up the walk. They knock on the door and we open. They rise and open the door and we say to the brother, oh, it's good to have you here.

Come on in. You know, children learn real quick in life. They learn those things.

We're not fooling anybody. We're not fooling God. Our brother said this morning, you can't fool God.

And you're not fooling your children neither. You're fooling yourself. That's all.

We need to be hospitable. I'm sure you've all had situations. You could tell stories.

You could maybe write books on some situations. We had a family arrive at our place one time and said, we're here to come to your house. I said, oh, okay.

Well, I said, we have plans for tonight. We're going away. Well, we'll wait till you come back.

I soon seen he wasn't going to go away. I mean, they looked like they lived in a cave. Maybe more than they understood.

Later they lived in an automobile for I don't know how many weeks with their children. I said, well, you just come right on in. We're going away.

We have an appointment. In fact, we were going to Dennis Benegy's to get gospel tracks. That's where we were heading that night.

And I didn't know who these people were. Are they from a southern state? And when we come home, did they ever use the house? I don't know how people could cook so many tea bags in one evening. But they cooked them.

They made themselves at home. And I didn't know what to do with this man. He said he was just here to stay.

I said, where do you live? He said, I don't have a home. Well, I soon got some references out of him. I said, well, did you want to work? No, I can't work.

I'm disabled. And this just went around and around after a while, you know. And God will try us.

Indeed, He will. He'll try us. We finally found a place to relocate them, but we need to be open to hospitality.

And it isn't always what we might prefer. Teach your children to be hospitable, to be kind, to be pitiful, to reach out. And that life is not just about me and what I want and want to do in my time, but it's about others as well.

We need to teach our children to deal with pride. That feeling of being superior over others. Being better or greater.

Better looking, sing better, do this better. Whatever it might be. Intelligence, skill.

Oh, it can be a number of things. From the very family dog. We have a better family dog than you do.

We have a better vehicle than we do. We don't drive Chevy. We drive Fords.

And we don't have Ford tractors. We have John Deere tractors. You know, we need to teach our children that that feeling of elevating ourselves above other people is not good.

It's not a healthy thing. God hates it. Yes, He does.

That might really come into play when we associate with people from other cultures. They don't look like we do. They don't dress like we do.

They don't talk our language. They don't do the things we do. Sometimes our children maybe are a bit rude by just staring at those kind of people and making them feel a bit uncomfortable.

God help us that we might be able to teach our children not to be that way. I have some other things here I want to share yet. I'm missing a page here.

We need to teach our children how to handle money. Really? Yes, really. We're living in a society that's living off of these plastic cards and children grow up and they just don't know the value.

I realized probably when I was younger, my parents thought I spent too much money on some things and now maybe I think my children and grandchildren spend too much money on some things and I realized that's how the economy is going and it just keeps going that way, but it's not always good. And I believe that's why America's in the straight she's in today is because people were not taught that it is dishonest to spend money you don't have. If I spend money for something, especially something just to upgrade surely not a necessity.

It's not food. It's not shelter. It's just a bigger one or a better one or a nicer one or because someone else has one, even though I don't know where I'm going to get the money to pay for it.

That validates the principle of dishonesty and being honest with an honest conscience before God. And we need to teach children and young people to prepare for life by teaching them how to earn money. They need to earn money.

It's not given to them and grows on trees. Maybe it does some places, but it doesn't around our place. It does not grow on trees or anything else.

It needs to be earned. You need to go out there and you need to labor for it and you don't send off every third thing that comes in the mail to win this and win that and get this and get that. That kind of get quick, rich, quick mentality has entered into the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's not only what didn't even used to be in worldly people. The old timers would have never had no time for all that carrying on and going on like that. They had enough of fear of God in them.

Many of them, even though they weren't really believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, they had enough of fear of God in them that you don't spend money like that and take risks and gamble like that just to get money quick. They had a lot more fear of God in their heart. They learned how to cover their bodies.

They wore decent clothes. Yeah, they did. Even a lot of the unbelieving world did.

Why? You used to have to have so many yards to swim at the public beaches in America. So many yards of material for a swimming suit. I read some of them.

I can't say how they kept from drowning with all that material they had to use to make a swimming suit, but there was regulations. There was guidelines. Used to be in Lebanon, you'd get charged a fine of \$5 if you'd be going up the street without a shirt.

That's less than 100 years ago. It's less than 80 years ago. That was a law in the city of Lebanon.

There was fear, at least for God's word, in a measure even in the unbelieving world. Teach your children then how to save money, how to earn it honestly, how to save it discreetly. Put back.

Put back. Save. You're going to need it someday.

It's going to be very valuable someday. You might have to drive a car that's older. It might not quite be up to date with some of the other cars that the young people were driving.

You might not have to have so many pairs of shoes, but it's okay. Save money. Learn to save money.

Parents, teach your children that virtue. Save money discreetly. Teach them how to give money generously and cheerfully.

Teach them how to give. They need to be taught that. Teach them then how to spend money wisely.

Yes, we must spend it. We're not here to hoard it and never spend it. We're here to earn it honestly.

We're here to save it discreetly. We're here to give it generously, and we're here to spend it wisely. We're not going to take it with us.

No. We're going to have needs, especially if you're going to start a family, and you're going to have a house, and you're going to have children. You're going to need lots and lots of money even to live in a meager lifestyle.

And a lot of money was spent foolishly on electronic gizmos or cars. I'll never forget the first time I brought a pair of mag wheels for my car. I hid them so my dad wouldn't see them.

But somehow it sneaked out and leaked out, and he heard I bought a pair of mag wheels at Green Dragon for my old 57 Chevy. And he came to me and laid his hand on my shoulder and said, David, don't spend

your money on that. My father taught me a lot of things, which I'm very grateful for.

And he still is. He's 84 years old. But he taught me you don't spend money and invest money in automobiles.

He said it's the worst investment you can make. The day you pull that off the dealer's lot, it depreciates so much. You went back and tried to sell it to him, a lot of times he wouldn't be near what you.

He just learned to get by with lower, lower vehicles. Now, he said, if you're going to spend money, invest it rather in real estate. He says that increases where automobiles decrease.

I never forgot that principle in my life. And I tell you what, it has helped me tremendously. I wish I'd never spent that money on those old mag wheels, but after I got converted they came off the car anyhow.

Yes, they did. Praise the Lord. The old muffler come off.

I used to have a muffler that made the thing sound like a big old diesel truck. And I had the thing jacked way up in the air in those days. That was a thing.

It jacked the car way up in the air and had a little tiny custom steering wheel. It wasn't safe to drive with and all that nonsense I spent money on. Brothers and sisters, if I'd been converted first or just listened to my father, it would have saved me a lot of dollars and cents that I would have needed later in life to raise my family.

We need to do that. That's very important. Teach your children about growth and the development of their bodies, about reproduction and how and why God made us the way He did.

That's very important. There's something about you transmitting that information to your own children that will help bond you to them. And if you fail to do it, remember someone else will do it.

Yes, they will. It might be distorted and perverted and it might be a whole bunch of garbage attached that they're going to have to sort themselves through. And a lot of young people have suffered from that because they've not had a healthy, godly, biblical teaching of how God designed us as males and females and how His design is perfect when it's in His will and following holiness.

It's a blessing. It's sacred. And with that, teach your children the value of purity, of chastity, of their virginity.

It's of tremendous value. Teach them the importance of modesty in their dress, of not exposing the nakedness of their bodies. This thing gets shorter, shorter, shorter.

This button comes open, then the next button. And after a while things shrink. Things get shorter here, shorter there.

And on and on it goes. And it's not all out there in the unbelieving world today. Teach your children what God's Word teaches about the shame of nakedness and the moral purity that God's Word attaches with purity.

It's important to teach them that. Very, very important. Teach your children to work.

I didn't say be a slave, but teach them the value of work. They need to learn to work. They need to learn to take responsibility.

They need to learn to get the job done and not leave it half done. I tell the men at work, sometimes you're not done till all the tools are put away, everything's swept up, the cords are wrapped up, hung in their place, and everything's finished. Then the job is done.

Once the job you have begun, never leave it till you're done, be it great or be it small. Do it right or not at all. Someday, your child will be worth something to someone who needs a responsible person that has learned God's value to healthy and in a Christian manner, work.

So many people don't know how to work. They know how to work their jaws on the cell phone. They know how to do texting and do a lot of other things, but put them out there to do manual labor, and they're, oh, it's hot, my back aches, and on and on it goes, and I'm not saying it isn't ever hot.

That's not to say our backs don't ever ache. But brothers and sisters, that's God's will that you teach your children the value and the blessing and the responsibility of being a good worker. Teach your children the value of contentment, to be content.

We're living in a day and an age when young people and children seem to be so discontent, and the reason for that is because of how and why they see many others their same ages that just seem to always got to be running, always got to be doing this, always need to have this, have that, do this, eat this, and go there and go here. Why? It's almost boring to sit at home in the evening and read as a family. The average young person would call that boring in the world in which you live today.

That's one thing we taught our children, the value of reading, and they all like to read yet, all seven of them, and it just contents them. Now, of course, it can be wrong reading. You need to have good reading material for them, but the blessing and the value of reading, it contents your children.

It leads to many expensive toys. Some of the best toys that my three boys played with the most, still around there yet, my grandchildren still play with them, is sticks I made out of rough wood. I made these sticks different lengths, and they made pens, and they made barns, and they made this, and they made that, and the imagination had no limit what all they made with them little things of various lengths, and they had them, the little ones were hay bales, and it just was a lot of things that they contented themselves.

They didn't have a lot of racetracks. In fact, they didn't have any of them, and all kinds of expensive toys, and toys that are geared to destruction, blowing things apart, explosions, loud noises, ugly faces, and all the stuff that the world is playing upon us. Fathers, keep your homes pure! There's an awful world out there just trying to get into your home.

Make it easy for your children, I already said this, to discuss their problems and their questions in life with you. Make it easy for them to come to you and say, Dad, I'm just really struggling in this area, or I don't understand this, or Dad, I had a situation at work today, and I don't know what to do. Some young people grow up in life, and they feel uncomfortable about going to their father and their mother, and they struggle, and many of them are under guilt, and some of them are in bondage to bitterness, and they don't know how to relate, and they just struggle over things that God has never intended our children and young people to struggle with, simply because God placed you between Himself and them to be that intercessor, to be that person that can give them those answers in life.

In teaching your children contentment, teach them to be creative, to make things. Well, we used to live on a little old farm. Our three oldest girls were down in that meadow all the time.

They had little houses. They had church houses. There was an old pond down there.

My girls probably would have been baptized 37 times apiece. I don't know how many times. They were always baptizing each other down there in that pond, doing this and doing that.

They still talk about those memories. In fact, last year, when they were all home, our one daughter lives in Ohio. Last year, when they were all home, they said, Let's go back to that place and walk down to that meadow, and we just want to see it again.

It's 26 years since we lived there. I couldn't believe that meadow. It wasn't a meadow anymore.

It was a wilderness. You couldn't see where you were going. I couldn't believe some of those trees actually could get that large in that short a time, and brows and brangles, and we tried to find a little way down to what was the old pond at one time, and it was difficult to get there.

But, you know, it made many beautiful memories for my three oldest daughters as they played and romped on them steep hills there and down in there. Restrain your children from evil. Don't give in to permissive sin.

What do I mean? I mean it seems like with the trend, with the apostolic age, with the passing away of godly principles and truths, as our brother said, those things that have died, those things, why did they die? Simply because some people like Eli did not restrain their children. That's why they died. That's how they died a lot of times.

Sometimes you can get the generational pictures out and see how the trend has gone. That's what it means when it says Lot pitched his tent towards Sodom. He was pitched the wrong way.

It's been said there are still lots and lots today pitching their tent towards Sodom. Going along with what their children are bringing home and saying what the others are doing to Dad and Mom. Be careful about giving in to permissive sin.

That means you allow it. Maybe it really wouldn't have been what you would have allowed with some of the older children, but, ah, you know, it's a little different now, so giving in, giving in, giving in. We need to be careful.

We need to restrain our children. Sometimes it's not always pleasant for them. I raised my children in a situation where a lot of those around them were allowed to do a lot of things that I didn't allow my children to do.

But, praise God, it has paid off. It doesn't always make for them to be at ease with the other children and the young people, and maybe they'd be a bit awkward sometimes. They don't know how to relate.

But, brothers and sisters, you cannot throw in the towel. You cannot because everyone else is doing it. You cannot because it's the way to go nowadays.

Just allow your children to do it. God replaced you here to pull back on the reins. Do it right.

Do it in a right heart. Yes. Relate about it.

Be on top of who your children associate with. Oh, I can't emphasize this too much. I can't say how important this is.

You've heard it hundreds of times. Parents say, I just never dreamed they would get into this over there. I just never thought those children would influence my children like this.

I was just so naive. Be on top of where your children are, what they're doing, who's with them, what the conversations are. Talk with your children what they are.

I remember one young fellow dating one of our daughters, and she come home and told Kathy, my wife, and she told him, and he says, you mean you told your wife, your mother, all that? Yeah. Well, she said, I tell her everything we do. Really? You know, that was just a new breeze for him.

But, when you can't talk, mistrust sets in. When you can't trust, I tell you, that's a dangerous place to be. Guard your home.

I want to close here. Guard your home from influences that's going to be harmful to the souls of your family. Whether that be by telephone, whether that be mail, or whether that be email, or computer things, whatever it might be, programs, internet, or people.

Just simply people. Guard your home. While you are, be open to hospitality, while you, but you need to have some lines.

You need to be careful what kind of men you're bringing in your home if you have young daughters there, for example. You need to know what's going on, what they're bringing with them. Yes, you do.

It's very, very important what for influences is coming into your homes. It's important, brothers and sisters. Used to be, and years ago, you had to go to the cities to see the evil.

Today, Satan has learned a lot of fast and easy ways to bring the city into our homes, hasn't he? And the evil and all the stuff that goes on there. God bless you as parents, as you make endeavors to raise your family. Timothy 5.8, 1 Timothy 5.8 says, If any provide not for his own, it says, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel.

And I believe that's actually talking about physical provisions for your families, widows, or whoever it might be. But if that's what God says about us as fathers and householders, if we don't provide in those areas, how much more important and serious do you think it is when we don't provide the spiritual necessities for our children? God bless you that you can, with John, say and testify someday I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. God bless you, fathers, and you dear mothers.

Another thing I want to tell you, then I'm going to sit down. We already heard it once. Love your spouse.

Love your spouse. I mean, that goes a long, long way. That brings a bond into those children's hearts that nothing else would do.

When a father and mother is so deeply in love with each other, they barely know what they're doing. I mean, they just adore each other and they love each other and they praise each other and they're committed to each other and they're faithful to each other. They serve each other.

They love the Lord Jesus Christ and they love each other. That brings a security into the lives of those children that nothing else will do. But on the contrary, the opposite is just as true when there's bickering, when there's distrust, when there's unfaithfulness, when there is this tearing down for husband and wife.

That brings such an unstable effect into the hearts and lives of your children that nothing else probably can equal as well. Love each other. Love the Lord Jesus.

God bless you. It's been a blessing to be with you all. Thank you, Brother.

Well, Brother Jeff opened up the way for us here this morning. And Brother David just walked through the door there and gave us something to look at to strengthen what remains. Maybe you've failed in your home, but let's not be discouraged.

Though the church there that in Revelation 3 was said to be dead, God didn't give up on it, did He? He said, strengthen that which remains. And I guess I just admonish us to take it that way this morning. Let's strengthen what remains.

Let's grow. Let's gain ground from this. Do we have any testimonies this morning? You raise your hand and we'll get a microphone to you.

Yes, earlier as was said, I believe that was Brother DJ Wall that preached that message on 1st Peter, 2nd Peter there, I believe that was DJ. But I just wanted to give God praise this morning for what we've heard as a young father. I just want to cherish an old father standing up there giving instruction.

I don't want to let that fall on deaf ears in my heart. I want to take those things and run with them, get the tape, listen to it over and over, and I just want to say I appreciate that Brother David for sharing that this morning. I just really cherish that.

Yeah, I appreciated the message tremendously this morning. Thank you, Brother David, and I also want to thank God for it. One thing that I thought about some time ago, well, a few months ago, my brother John's family, a lot of his family were killed in an accident.

And I was telling somebody that, you know, I appreciate them so much because of the example they were as a family and the example they were to my children. My children always really loved, we all really loved going to John's. And I said they were very dedicated.

They loved the Lord, and yet they really enjoyed life. They had fun. They really enjoyed life.

And when I told someone that, someone in my family kind of rebuked me in a way, but they said Daddy, they enjoyed life because they were dedicated and because they loved the Lord. It wasn't, and yet, I shouldn't have said it that way, and yet they enjoyed life. It was because of their dedication and because of their love for the Lord that they enjoyed life so much.

And I just appreciated, I was reminded of that by David's talk this morning. So, God bless you, brother David. Did you end up with it? Jared, brother Moe's down here.

What a joy to be here this morning and renew our hearts. Took my mind back over the years and the strengthening effect we can have on each other as we remain faithful in our Christian life and walk. I appreciated both messages very, very much this morning.

I felt too as Dean brother Jeff opened the door to strengthen those things that remain and I love those words and that even though we can find ourselves perhaps at a bit of a low ebb at times, there's a way to take what we have left and to strengthen them and begin to grow again. And the promises of God are there for us to be able to do that and I appreciate that very much in the book of Revelation. And secondly, I appreciate the practical part of the message so much in brother David's message.

And I believe that's how we strengthen the things that remain. Instead of having everything up here where it's hard to interpret and hard to give a practical side to it, we need to come down and bring it right down to what we do and how we live and how we walk and how we treat each other and how we raise our children. And to be able to reap the benefits of that practical life, I just want to thank God for it.

It's been very, very rich this morning and I am overwhelmed that God has allowed me to be here and to experience this again. Thank you. I want to give my thanks to God this morning and just say I needed that.

When Jeff was preaching this morning and also as David was preaching, I found my heart very thankful that in my Christian life, I find myself so prone and needy to be reminded of things that I should never have forgotten. And I consider myself a recipient this morning of the goodness of God that brings another reminder in my Christian life. While Brother Jeff's message really ministered to a need in my life and caused me to examine my heart and ask the Lord those things that I had lost or I need to strengthen, I did find that here in this message from David that the Lord spoke to a number of areas that I sense that are needing to be strengthened.

I thank God for it. Praise be to His name. I just want to bless the Lord and praise Him and also bless my dad for building an ark for our family.

Also the message, there was many precious memories, many happy things that my dad did and my mom for us. So many things. I just want to say it's possible to have a happy home.

They fought for it and God gave it. When my dad made mistakes and disciplining, he always came to us with tears and asked forgiveness, even little children. And just doing it God's way made such a difference for me.

And I want to say that I don't want to do that for my home. I've failed in praying for my little child like I should. I just want to be able to take what my parents handed to me and go on and run that race.

I just can't thank the Lord enough for what He's done. For what He's given. It's possible.

I just praise Him. Is there anyone else? I just want to take this rare opportunity to bless my parents publicly. I hesitated for a bit because I knew Christopher might possibly hear his mom's voice, but since he's crying anyway I can go ahead.

Thank you mom and dad for all you did for me and for all of us. It's a blessing to see that you're still going after what God is showing you and it's a blessing to have you here with us today. Amen.

What a treasure to have parents that love God and loved us and would train us in a right way. Well, let's be faithful to one another in these things. If you see me falling down in my home, I know I'm not a very good communicator to my family and I want to rise up above that and I would love if you brothers could pray for me and if you have some help for me, I welcome that.

Let's pray for our brother Dean. Our Heavenly Father, dear God, we lift our dear brother up before you in the name of Jesus. We have many failings and faults in our character and our lives at times and we struggle to do things the way we believe that you want us to do them.

We bring our brother Dean to you dear God and ask you to lay your hand upon him and help him to be a communicator in his home with his children, his wife, being able to rise up above these things and be strengthened, be encouraged and go forward and improve and strengthen in these things. Thank you dear God for saving his soul from a rebellious streak in his youth and having him have a faithful family and faithful life these many years. But we now pray you just take him forward and onwards and upward from here.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you brother.

I just kept thinking of brother Jeff Chapman saying, you know, what have we lost to look at what we've lost and I just want to confess that I used to really adore my husband and I really want that again. I want those things to be strengthened and I just think of that blade of grass. There's ways that I want to show my husband it seems like there's blocks and I don't want that.

I want to adore him and I want to be a faithful helpmate to him. Is there anyone else? Brother Don? I'd just like to say there's as I look back over the years and seeing that there were many things that I failed in with the children and my wife and leading out and seeing that just the cares of life just really kind of strangled me at times and I'd get up and go again and and I just want to testify to the faithfulness of God. How He would pick me up and pick my family up and provide opportunities for them that I that I failed in and I just want to thank the Lord for that and of His faithfulness and ministering to them and to me and I do thank the Lord for for being here I wish it was many years ago but it's not but God is faithful.

Jared, your mom Yes, I just want to take this time to just ask for prayer for me and my children and I know that I have failed in communicating and just being Mom and me and the brothers and sisters help to pray for me that we would prosper in the Lord that's my whole heart and my desire for my children.

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