

(Godly Home) Part 28 - the Overtaking Blessings on the Second Generation

by Denny Kenaston

God promises to bless the next generation if their parents live out His word, and this blessing will pursue, catch up to, and pass down to their children.

Duration: 52:26

Scripture: Exodus 20:6, Deuteronomy 28:1-2, Psalm 103:17-18, Psalm 112:1-2, Proverbs 20:7, Isaiah 54:13, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Godly Home Series"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker expresses gratitude for the opportunity to join the congregation and share in their spiritual growth. He emphasizes the importance of parents reaching for a deeper understanding of God's word so that their children can experience His blessings. The speaker also discusses the concept of ministry and how God calls all believers to reach out and serve others. He highlights nine areas of ministry, including courtship, and encourages parents to seek God's grace in these areas for the sake of their children.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Greetings to each one of you this afternoon.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to be here with you. It's a bit of a shift, five days since we came back from Ghana, West Africa, but I'm grateful to have this opportunity to be here with you, to join in what God has been doing here, what God has been teaching you, what you've been learning, what you've been responding to from God's Word. I'm grateful for the chance to be a part of at least the last half of it.

We've been here since, I think, Wednesday. So we've joined you for this last half. When these meetings were coming together, my father asked me whether it would be possible for me to come home a couple of days early, back from the mission station where my wife and I are working, to come home and share a message from the perspective of the next generation.

And I'm grateful for this opportunity to do that this afternoon. That is what I would like to do. My heart beats with all that you've been hearing.

My heart beats with what God has been doing here in your hearts, for your families, for your homes, for your marriages. It's the will of God. And I'm grateful to be able to come and share something with you.

God bless all of you for your sincerity. God bless you for the spirit that I've sensed here in the bit of time that I've been here. When I look at you as a group, I know that most of you are what we could refer to as first-generation Christians, or maybe first-generation godly families, or first-generation godly marriages.

Maybe some of you have a Christian heritage, but you're seeking to set the standard higher in your own family. So you're the first generation. I'm not.

I'm a second generation. And that's a privilege, and that's a blessing. That doesn't make me better or you worse, but it only is a difference.

It's a difference of perspective that we have as we sit here and look at God's Word. You're a first generation. For the majority of you sitting here, God has shown you something that your parents didn't see.

God has shown you something that you are striving for. That means you're first generation. God has also shown me things that I'm striving for, but I inherited most of what I have because I'm a second generation.

And I'm not the only one of the second generation here. Thank God for the work that He has been doing in families all across this country, and there are young people here, there are young couples here, who are also part of the second generation. And I'm elected to speak for all of you this afternoon.

It is our desire this afternoon to be an encouragement to you. It is our desire to give you words that will help you to keep pushing forward for the things that you are striving for. We are the voice of the second generation.

I hope to use the unique perspective that I have of having grown up with much of what you are now striving for. I hope to use that perspective to encourage you with some of the blessings that have flown out of that life that I've been privileged to live. The title this afternoon of what I would like to share is this.

The second generation and the overtaking blessing. In Christ there are no grandchildren, but I don't think you understand what I'm saying this afternoon when I say the second generation. You're sitting here and God has put in your heart a desire to give your children something that you did not have.

God has put in your heart a desire to give your children a family, a marriage, a home life, a church life that you did not have. You desire to give them a foundation underneath their feet as they set out to live their life that you did not have. That means you're first generation.

Maybe you had Christian parents, but you still set your goals to go farther than what your parents had. You've seen truths in God's word that your parents did not see. That makes you first generation.

But as I stand here today, I'm second generation. I have grown up under all the teaching that you've been hearing these last ten days. I've grown up under that.

I've grown up not only under that teaching, but I thank God that I've grown up under the reality of what you've heard the last ten days. And I know that I'm privileged and I'm very grateful to my parents and I'm very grateful to God. But we are the second generation.

We are those who have been raised with these principles in our life from the time we were young. And that gives us a unique perspective. And that gives us unique blessings.

And I would like to share with you some of those blessings this afternoon. We are now walking out the truths that our parents put into us from the time we were small, growing up through. And we're now living out those principles.

And we're finding unique blessings. We are the second generation. We are the second generation.

The generation of the overtaking blessing. And that's what I would like to share on with you this afternoon. Let's turn in our Bibles to Psalms chapter 112.

We'll read verse 1 and 2. Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon the earth.

The generation of the upright shall be blessed. We want to talk today about the blessed second generation. And I think it's important that we lay a foundation that it's clear in all of our hearts that God passes blessings from generation to generation.

I think it's very clear in all of our hearts as we look around society that curses pass from generation to generation. I'm quite sure that that has been preached in the last ten days here. That it's possible that a curse on the life of your parents because of the life they lived or your grandparents can pass down to you.

That is a principle in God's Word. God works that way. That's listed time and time and time again in the Old Testament.

And it's a principle that's a part of the character of God. The curses pass down from generation to generation. But it's also very clear when we look into God's Word that blessings also pass from generation to generation.

And that is what we want to focus on this afternoon. Let's turn to Deuteronomy chapter 28. These are some of the most lovely verses of blessing in the whole Bible, surrounded by about three chapters of curses.

But because our hearts this afternoon, I trust, are sincere, we can read just the verses of blessing and God can use it to motivate us. Deuteronomy chapter 28 verse 1 and reading. And it shall come to pass if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth.

And all these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy ground and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kind and the flocks

of thy sheep.

Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face.

They shall come out against thee one way and flee before thee seven ways. The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses and in all that thou settest thy hand unto. And he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

The Lord shall establish thee and holy people unto himself as he hath sworn unto thee if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God and walk in his ways. And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, in the fruit of thy cattle and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord swear unto thy fathers to give thee.

The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season and to bless all the work of thy hand. And thou shalt lend unto many nations and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head and not the tail.

And thou shalt be above only and thou shalt not be beneath if thou hearken unto the commandment of the Lord thy God which I command thee this day to observe and to do them. And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day to the right hand or to the left to go after other gods to serve them. We'll stop reading there.

This is a portion of blessing. God in these words is giving Israel a chance to be blessed. God has been giving them in the chapters leading up to and after this.

God has been giving them his law. And God has been promising them in these verses. If you will obey my law, you will be blessed.

And if we continue reading, then God says if you break my law, you will find nothing but curses. But I want to focus this afternoon on the blessings. I think if we looked around us in the world of today, we would see multitudes of examples of the overtaking curse.

We see generations after generation after generation inheriting curses, adding their own curses because of their own sin, and passing it down to the next generation. That's clear to all of us. We agree on that.

But the same principle works on the flip side, praise God. The blessings also pass down. And that's what we would like to look at this afternoon.

We have a clear understanding of the passed on curse. But I would like to motivate you this afternoon with the truth of the passed on blessing. If we look throughout God's word, there are many verses that speak about the next generation.

How God will bless them. How the generation of the upright shall be blessed. So the blessings do pass down.

As you parents choose to follow God, as you choose to live out what God is teaching you, as you choose to set your sights higher, God promises to bless you. And God promises that as He blesses you, He will

bless your children. Both directly and indirectly.

As you fulfill God's word, your lives will be blessed. And that's wonderful. If it stopped right there, it would be wonderful.

It would be a worthwhile life to live out God's commands if it stopped right there. But it doesn't stop right there. The blessings that God pours out upon you are passed on to your children.

Hallelujah. That is what God's word is giving to us this afternoon. If you take the promises of God's word to bless the next generation, the promises that our seed are going to walk in the right path if we teach them, if you take those promises and then couple them together with the blessings that we've just read here in Deuteronomy chapter 28, you have the title that we have this afternoon.

The second generation and the overtaking blessing. Because God promises to bless your children. Because of the steps that you are taking, because of the decisions that you are making, because of the battles that you are fighting, God promises to bless your children.

Let's look a little bit more specifically at this word, overtake. Verse 2 says, All these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee. Overtake is not a word that we use in American English, but I come from where I live is a British colony and we still use the word overtake.

When you're passing a vehicle and you get into the passing lane, you overtake a vehicle. That's the word we still use in Ghana to describe passing. The word overtake means to pursue, to catch up to and to pass.

And God promises to us this afternoon that as we live out his principles, God will send his blessings to pursue us, to run after us, to catch up to us and to pass us. That's God's word. These blessings will come on you and not just come on you, but they will overtake you if you will live out God's word in your marriage, in your family, in your church, with your children.

God's blessings will come on you and they will overtake you. Ponder with me. You as godly parents are living out God's word as you see it.

You are striving for something greater in your lives. You're striving to put into practice God's word in whatever area you put the area in. You know what area you're striving towards.

And because you are striving to fulfill God's word in that area, God promises you an overtaking blessing. But now take it a step further. Those blessings that overtake you, they overtake your children.

Those blessings that come on you, that pursue you, God sends them running after you. Could we say that? They pursue you. God says, you see that person? You see the life they're living? You see how they're obeying my commands? Here, blessing.

Go and overtake that person. Go and overwhelm them. That's the word I like to use.

Here, blessing. Go, overtake that person. That person is living out my word.

And God promises that to you and he promises that to your children. God promises your children, your generation, your seed will be blessed. We need to claim that promise.

And we need to be motivated by it this afternoon. So God says, blessing will overtake you. Not blessing in one area.

Blessing in every area of life. I know as we look at these Old Testament verses, you may say, well, that looks like we're going to be rich. That's not the focus.

We're in the New Testament now and God's blessing is poured out in so many other ways besides just increasing the cattle that we may or may not have. But God promises to bless us. It's very clear when you look down through this list that every area of life, physical or spiritual, is encompassed in this overtaking blessing that God promises.

And God promises that to us this afternoon. Blessed in the city, blessed in the field, blessed in the farm, blessed in work, blessed going out, blessed coming in. God promises that for your children and you dear first generation parents this afternoon.

If I could this afternoon give you a spark of faith that would help you to reach out and claim the blessings that God is promising for your children. I know that it would encourage you. I know that it would motivate you to pull through some of the difficult battles that you are fighting for your children.

So the second generation has the overtaking blessings, not only of their own life, but the overtaking blessings that come because their parents have set out to follow God and to follow his word. And that blessing overtakes them. It's not possible for me to share this without making it personal.

That is the testimony of my life. I'm a second generation Christian. I've grown up from a small child living under what you've been hearing the last ten days.

No, it wasn't perfect, but I've lived under that. There is a legacy of godliness underneath my feet as I stand here this afternoon. And I'm not proud of that, but I'm awfully grateful for it.

I'm very grateful for it. I'm a second generation. I am one who has picked up what has been given to me, and I'm now endeavoring to build on it.

And your children are going to do the same. If I were to call others to come and stand here, we would all with one mouth say, We are the second generation, and we are living under a special blessing of God. The overtaking blessing that God poured out upon our parents because of what they've done.

It is on us as we live out our lives, as we now endeavor to obey God's word in our own families and live out what God is showing us. There is in our hearts a consciousness of a supernatural blessing of God that is so far beyond what we personally have done in our life in following God that the only answer to where that blessing comes from is to say that it is the overtaking blessing that God put on our parents, overtaking us. Hallelujah.

That is what God is promising to us. And that is my testimony this afternoon. There are many, many times in my life with my wife and my young family that we look at each other with tears in our eyes and say, God, why are we so blessed? What have we put into our marriage? What have we put into our family? What have we put into our life that could possibly explain this blessing that you've put on our lives? And in the end we look and say, it must be the blessing of the foundation that we've been given.

We have been given a legacy to stand on. We have been given a heritage of godliness. And we stand upon that.

And as we stand upon that and then endeavor with our own heart and our own soul to follow God, the blessings of God just multiply upon us. A waterfall, a cascade of blessings coming down upon our life through our parents and now into our own life. And you first generation parents, that should motivate you.

That should encourage you. Because you are fighting for something. And your children will be blessed because of what you are fighting for.

This message could have been called, Fighting for the Next Generation Part 2. I believe last night you heard a message about fighting for the next generation. And this message could be called Part 2. This is the perspective of the second generation now looking back and saying, Yes, my father, my mother, my parents have fought for me. And now I'm standing here on the ground that they fought for.

The ground that they achieved by the grace of God. I now stand upon it. This is Part 2 of that message.

Because indeed our parents have fought for things. They put forth a heroic struggle. And I've seen that struggle.

What I have observed in my parents' life over the last 20 years is a heroic struggle to put God's Word to practice in their daily life, in their marriage, in our family, in our church, in our personal lives. They have put forward a heroic struggle. And I've observed that struggle.

But now I'm the second generation. They have fought for standards of godliness in their marriage. They didn't inherit it.

They didn't have it. They honestly didn't have it. Maybe it could encourage some of you, if you would know where they came from in the last 20 years.

If you could know the struggle that they have put forward to come to the place where they are now, it would encourage you, because maybe some of you are struggling in the same areas. They struggled to put godly principles in place for their family. And we observed that struggle.

We lived through that struggle. Some would say we were the guinea pigs. As they found their way in how to have a godly family, how to preserve a godly seed, how to discipline us, how to raise us up to follow God.

They fought for that. In church life, we ran the gamut when we were young children, finding our way to a place where we could walk with God and we could hear godly preaching, but yet we could also see godly lives being lived out. While our parents sought for a place where we would not have to stand alone every Sunday.

They struggled. They fought for what we now live in. And we now stand upon that foundation.

We are now seeking to live out the same things that they lived out. And we're seeking to continue that growth in grace. But as we do that, we are conscious every day of an overwhelming, overtaking blessing of God upon our lives.

And that blessing is the blessing of our parents. And that blessing is available for your children. God bless you for the struggle that you are fighting for.

You as first generation parents, families and Christians, you are fighting for every foot you gain. Every foot you gain is a struggle. You're clawing.

You're reaching forward for every inch you attain. God is helping you. But it takes a lot of grace.

But your children will run where you crawled. Your children will fly where you walked. Because of the foundation that you are giving to them, they will.

God says they will. And by God's grace, they will. What you are giving to your children, the legacy that you are giving them, of constantly striving to reach forward, to attain more, to know more of God's Word in your heart, lived out practically in your lives, that legacy is a tremendous foundation.

And your children will take that foundation and they will run where you've walked. And that's the words of encouragement that I would like to give you this afternoon. You're struggling, wrestling for every inch you gain.

And you feel like you have to hold on tenaciously to what God is giving you. God bless you. But I wish today to be a voice calling out to you, dear parents, it's worth it.

It's worth it. Your children will have something that you do not have. There's no way that you can fathom the blessing that God is going to pour out upon your children.

God is pouring a blessing out upon you. But I think sometimes, because the first generation is so caught up fighting and struggling to gain every inch they gain, you're not as conscious of God's blessing on your life. Because it's taking so much of God's grace in your life just to grab something new, just to hold on to a loving relationship with your wife, just to find your place as a woman in the home, just to find your place as a father.

It's taking so much of God's grace that you're not conscious of the grace of God. How much it's being poured into you. But your children will inherit what you have fought for.

God's Word promises that. They will stand on the land that you have conquered. And when they stand there and set their own heart and their own soul to follow God and to live out what you have put into them, they will be so conscious of blessing in their lives.

An overwhelming, overtaking blessing will come on them, will tackle them, will take them down and take them captive. God says, you will send a blessing to pursue your children. And I am the second generation and I speak for the second generation.

To you, our parents, keep fighting. God bless you. God give you energy.

God give you strength. What you are fighting for is valuable. What you are fighting for is worth fighting for.

Don't give up. Don't become tired of your whole life being a battle. Your children will be able to run where you have only been able to crawl.

Keep going for the best. You may reach out for something and you may not achieve it. You may reach all your life for God's best and feel like at the end of your life you were not able to achieve all that you would like to achieve.

But guess what? Your children have another chance. And they have a better chance. And they have a better chance because you gave it to them.

They have a better chance because you have given them a legacy of blessing to stand on. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! That is what God is giving to your children through you. And you need to keep that vision in front of your hearts when you are struggling, when you are battling.

You need to remember, I am passing on the legacy of blessing to my children. My children are going to be the second generation. My children are going to be those who take what we have put into them and take it even further.

Our children are going to achieve things that you could hardly dream of. That's God's Word. But it's not only God's Word.

It's my testimony. The testimony of my gratefulness to my parents for what they have done. My testimony of the foundation that they have given us to stand on.

The foundation that has enabled us to live a life in which God's blessings overtake us and overwhelm us at every curve. I would like to give you a couple of examples this afternoon of areas that my parents fought for that we now walk in with God's blessing on our lives. I have about nine areas here that I fought for as I've pondered on specific areas that my parents fought for that we have now inherited.

I have nine areas here that I would just like to go over quickly and mention just a couple of things about each area. The first thing that comes to my mind is courtship. If you're a first generation parent here, good chances are that there's no way for you to experience courtship because you already live that stage of your life.

You listen to a message like we heard this morning with longing. Yes, with jealousy like my father said. You listen wishing you could have had that.

You have to listen and when you listen you have to say, okay God, apply your grace over this area of my life because it wasn't like that for me. I don't have happy memories of a godly courtship. But you ask God for grace and in your heart that seed desire says, God, I want that for my children.

I want my children to know what I didn't know. The blessing of a courtship that is number one based on a spiritual attraction long before it's based on an emotional attraction and long before it's based on a physical attraction. You cannot underestimate the beauty of it.

There is no way for you to overestimate the beauty, the holiness, the purity, the blessing of God on that kind of a courtship. Please take it from me. And I'm not boasting.

I'm thankful to God and my parents. But I lived it. And I lived through a courtship.

And now I'm married. And I've lived through four years of marriage. And the blessing that God has put upon our relationship is nothing but supernatural.

It is nothing but the overtaking blessing that has caught up with my father and has now caught up with the second generation. It has now overwhelmed us as the second generation. As my wife and I were courting, we made a commitment for a hands-off courtship. We made a covenant together that in order to keep our hearts in the right place and in order to make sure that our attraction was spiritual first and emotional second and physical waiting until after marriage, we decided to be hands-off.

But you parents, you have no way of knowing how deeply in love a pure young couple can be with no physical contact. You cannot imagine it. Because you didn't have it.

And I'm not slamming you when I say that. I'm rather trying to put a taste of something sweet in your mouth so that you'll push forward and push forward for your children. I remember probably three times in the last two months before I married my wife, my parents would pull me aside and I'm very grateful that they did.

They would pull me aside. How you doing, Daniel? You keeping your heart? Being tempted to break your covenant to be hands-off until marriage? It was hard for my parents to understand how we could possibly be so passionately in love with each other and we'd never held hands. How we could possibly be so crazy about each other and we'd never kissed.

That's the blessing of God on the legacy of purity that our parents gave to us. And God wants that for your children. And it is possible for your children.

God is planning it for your children. And you are planning it for your children. God bless you.

Keep fighting. Keep struggling. Your children will have it.

Your children will walk with the legacy of purity into their courtships and they will come back to thank you. And I have many times back to my parents, thank you for helping me to remain pure. Thank you for putting in place structures that helped me to follow God in my courtship.

Moving on to the next area of marriage relationship. And these two are very tied together. Because a godly courtship that has been built upon principles, standards of purity, principles of how we fall in love, spiritually first, emotionally second, physically third, a marriage that is built upon that foundation is ten miles down the road before it even gets started.

I cannot overestimate to you parents the blessing that it is that my wife and I gave each other our whole self, body, soul and spirit when we got married. That creates a foundation for our marriage that keeps blessing upon us from day one of our relationship. There were certain principles in place in our marriage relationship from day one that we did not have to learn.

Yes, we've had to walk in grace. Yes, we've had to choose to follow God. I know that we as a second generation, we are given a free will.

We can walk away from those principles. But we haven't had to try like you had to try. We have not had to fight like you had to fight.

I imagine, because I heard my father speak many times, I imagine that sometime in the last ten days he's spoken to you couples on your marriages and said, you need to put in place laws, concrete walls in your mind that I will never raise my voice speaking to my wife or my husband. I'm sure he said something like

that in the last ten days. He said something to you about purposing in your heart, making a law in your heart that you will never argue in front of your children.

Those are laws that you as first generation, you are trying to put them in place in your relationship. You are struggling to put them there. But they were there in our relationship from day one because of what our parents gave to us.

We never had to struggle to put them in place. They were just there. And that equals blessing.

Blessing. More blessing. Overtaking blessing.

And it's because of the legacy that our parents have given to us. Yes, it's because we're living out God's principles in our life. But it's largely because our parents have given us a heritage.

The very legacy that you are trying to give to your children. Our parents have given it to us. And it is yielding fruit.

The next area I thought of is God's roles in the home. The roles for a husband and wife. We heard teaching on that just yesterday.

And I know that you first generation parents, your daily struggle as a father is to find your place. You know that God has called you to be a godly man. God has called you to take the authority in the home.

But you struggle to find your place. First you're too soft and you're over here and you're just kind of cowering. And then you're over here and you're bold as a lion.

But then there's no grace on your life because you're using your authority without any mercy. You're struggling to find your place. And you dear sisters, you're struggling to find your place under your husband.

How to be a sweet, submissive, supportive wife without threatening your husband. And you're constantly back and forth bouncing between the extremes in these areas. And God bless you for that struggle.

It's better to struggle than to just let it where it is. But as you continue to struggle and as you continue to find God's grace, and continue to find the principles of God and where God's place is for you, your children will grow up. And they will get married.

And they will immediately walk into their marriage relationship and know their roles. Here's the husband. Here's the wife.

Wife in submission to the husband. Husband dwelling with his wife according to knowledge. Equal heirs together of the grace of God.

Your children will plumb depths in their relationships that you can only dream about. And don't be jealous of them. Do all you can so that they can do it.

That's God's heart. But your children will go farther than you've been able to go. Because they walk into their relationship from day one knowing, here's the husband.

Here's his role. Here's the wife. Here's her role.

Now let's walk this out. None of this back and forth trying to find their way. Because they've learned from you.

Because you gave them a legacy that you did not have. Hallelujah. That is God's plan.

No confusion on our places because of what our parents have given to us. Let's move on quickly to the fourth area, parenting. I'm from a large family.

My wife is from an even larger family. She's the oldest of eleven. And I'm second of eight.

And we watched our parents parenting. We're towards the top of our families, which means that we not only watched our parents parenting, we parented with our parents, so to speak. We learned alongside them.

We disciplined beside them. We helped to guide our younger brothers and sisters the way to discipline children and what works and how the relationship works together with the discipline and how it needs to be done and the time it needs to be spent with the family and how to build relationships and how to bring godly order into the lives of our children. All of these things we learned with our parents while we were still children at home.

And now we're married. And now we have our own children. And we're parenting.

But parenting is easy for us. Yes, we need God's grace. We desperately need God's grace.

And we have to find it on a day-by-day basis. But compared to the heroic struggle, the fingernail-clawing struggle that you parents have had to raise godly families, it's easy for us. Because we are dwelling on the foundation that you laid for us.

Thank you. We are dwelling on the foundation that you laid for us. And parenting is natural for us.

We have our new little one. Give birth for the first time. Going up through a couple of weeks, a couple of months of age.

And, hey, you know what? We say to each other, that's the will. That's the first time we've seen the will in this child. We know what we're looking for.

Why? Because we saw it in our parents. We watched it in our brothers and sisters. We often say to each other how grateful we are that we were towards the top of our families because we got to be a part of all that process as our parents learned.

And then helping with our younger brothers and sisters. So now we're disciplining our own children. And, yes, we're learning.

But there's so much that we already know. We're setting godly goals for our own families. And those goals are already a part of us.

That is the second generation and the overtaking blessing. I hope you're following what I'm saying here this afternoon. The next area that comes to my mind is life skills.

And this one is just a little bit more, maybe some would say, less spiritual. But I think that you parents who have wrestled with what you were handed by your parents when it comes to simple life skills would say

that it's not just physical. It is spiritual.

When it comes to raising a godly family and you feel like you started out with all thumbs, you started out not knowing how to do anything, those life skills, you are handing them to your children. Do you realize what a blessing you are handing to your children? You just stop and think about where you were when you got married. You sisters in this room, let's say your daughters are about 13 years of age.

I think every woman in this building would raise her hand and say, my daughter at 13 is better prepared to be a wife and mother than I was at 22 or 25 or 30 when I got married. Isn't that right? They're prepared because they've grown up under you. And you had to learn, and it was tough.

The first time you had to cook a meal for a whole bunch of people, and you just... The only thing I know how to make is spaghetti. Well, I guess it will be spaghetti again. But you are handing those practical life skills to your children, and they will bless you.

And God will bless them because they have those practical skills already in their hands. I know we come from varied backgrounds here, and some of you, though you didn't know Christ, and your parents didn't know Christ, you did know how to bake a dozen loaves of bread. And you can thank your parents that you did because those life skills you didn't have to relearn.

But I think about my dear mother when she gave birth to my older sister Rebecca. Wanted to have a family. God says we should have children, so we're going to start having children.

And Rebecca comes along, and you know, you have a new baby girl, and you know what mothers do, first-time mothers especially. You dress them up. Some pretty little baby girl dress, and you're just enjoying playing doll for the first couple of hours.

And then, as always happens, a baby eats, and when a baby eats, it fills its diaper. And my dear mother had no idea what to do with that. What do you do? The baby filled its diaper.

It's all up the back, all over the dress. What do you do with it? You peel it off, and you throw it in the trash, and you go get another outfit and start over again. You do that a few times, and you realize that, you know what, we're going to have to learn to wash these out.

She didn't know, and you laugh because many of you didn't know. Maybe you didn't have the same thing, but the first time you tried to bake bread, or the first time you decided to put on a meal for some company, you had some flops. You didn't know how to do it.

And you are handing to your children a legacy of life skills that will bless them every step of their way. Those things have not been difficult for us because we learned them from our parents. Think about my father.

We moved to Lancaster County, and he said, my children are going to grow up knowing how to plant something in the ground and harvest it and eat it. It's a part of raising a godly family. Not that you can't raise one without gardening, but it's good for children to know where things come from and the work that goes into the food that we eat, even in this push-button computer age.

So he said, I am going to learn how to garden. I don't know how to garden, but I am going to learn. And he learned.

And he asked questions. And he went up to all these dear plain men in Lancaster County and said, how do you plant peas? And they looked at him and said, how do you plant peas? Well, you just put them, you know, about so much under the ground, just a bit of dirt. Well, like a bit.

Is that like an inch or six inches? No, not six inches. You can't plant peas six inches under the ground. They won't come up.

And he learned those things. Why? Not because he wanted to garden. Because he wanted us to learn those practical life skills.

And I'm thankful for that. And your children will be thankful for that. And that is part of the blessing, that you are passing on to your children.

They will know all of those things that you have struggled to learn. Those things that you've had to groan your way through. You've made lots of mistakes, but you've learned them.

And your children will know those things. The next one. Godly disciplines.

Godly disciplines in our family life, in our personal life. You've wrestled to learn to get up when you turn the alarm clock off, you first generation parents. You've wrestled not to push the snooze more than three times at any given morning.

You've wrestled to put in place those godly disciplines that are not the Christian life, but that aid us in walking with God. You've struggled and you've wrestled for every inch you've gained in this area. Family devotions.

Meals that the family shares. We all gather for meals. Some of you didn't have that.

And you struggled for it. And now you have it. And your children will marry and begin their lives with that legacy.

Church life. Many of you, dear parents, are searching, or you have searched for many years, for a place where you can raise a godly family. A place where your children can have friends who are not always working in the opposite direction of the way that you're going.

And you've waded through a lot of garbage. You've gone to a lot of churches. You've gone to churches where it's godly teaching, but the people weren't living it.

And you've gone to places where it seemed like there were some godly lives, but there was no life. And you've wrestled back and forth. And you've found a place.

Not all of you. Some of you are still looking. But you've found a place.

For us, we the second generation, we have grown up, maybe from our youth, maybe from little children, we've grown up in a church where God's Word is taught, and God's Word is lived. No, things aren't perfect, but it's so much better than what you had, and so much better than what you started out with when you started looking for a place to raise your family. And you've given us a legacy of blessing.

We stand in these churches where you've raised us, blessed of God, in this area of our life, because you have fought for us. Because you have placed us miles ahead of where you were in these areas. We don't

have to wade through the garbage that you had to wade through.

We stand here because of what you've done for us. Thank you, and may God bless you. Two more areas here.

Think of ministry. We know that God calls all of us to minister. We know that God doesn't call any of us just to be a Christian as an end in itself.

We're called to do something. We're called to reach out. We know that.

But you've given us an ability to reach out that far surpasses what you had. You exerted your spiritual energy fighting to give us a place to stand. And we now stand on that ground that you've given us.

And we have both the responsibility and the opportunity and the tremendous blessing that comes from ministering, that comes from being a vessel that God uses to reach out. And I don't just mean across the seas, just because I'm from working in Africa, I don't mean just in Africa. But you, as first generation parents, you are giving your children a platform from which to minister.

Because you are dealing with those basic areas of godliness in our lives, in our marriage, in our families that form a foundation from which we minister. You are giving them that heritage. And they will rise up and stand the place that you've placed them.

And they will minister. You've given us that opportunity. It took all the grace that you could possibly find just to walk with God.

Just to have a godly family and walk in love with your wife. But it won't take that for us. And we'll be able to minister because of the foundation that you've laid for us.

And we are able to minister. I serve in Africa. And I serve in a stressful environment.

And I'm gone a lot from my family. But I have a wife that supports me. And we have a close-knit family.

And we have a godly family. And we don't have any of those pressures and strains tearing at us while we try to minister. Not because of what we've done.

We've only been married four years. There's no way that we could have, in four years, laid the foundation for blessing that we're experiencing. But our parents laid that foundation.

And now we're ministering. And that's a foundation that our parents have laid for us. And it's an opportunity for blessing for us, for your children, for the second generation, for that generation of the overtaking blessing.

Do you get a picture of it? Are you grasping it? You dear first generation parents, reach for it! Your children can live it! Your children can experience God's overwhelming blessing. The last thought I have here, the last area, was just simply the area of walking in grace. Walking with God.

Keeping our hearts pure. Keeping our lives open before each other and before God. You wrestled to do that.

We remember the first time that you fathers confessed something to us. And you struggled to do it. You remember the first time that you opened up in a confession circle.

And it wasn't easy for you. We remember your struggle to walk in grace day by day. You were in grace and then you failed and you walked back out of grace and you said, no, I'm not going to live this way.

We're going to walk in grace in this family. And you pushed it back and started walking in grace again. And you went back out because the patterns of life were not easy to break and you walked back out of grace and you said, no, we're going back.

And you gathered the family together and you said, I'm sorry, let's walk in grace together. Let's walk with God. Let's keep an open heaven.

And you started walking in grace again. We observed that struggle. And out of observing that struggle, we respect you.

We don't look down on you in any way because of that struggle. We respect you. And out of watching that struggle, we have learned how to walk in grace.

And yes, we have to make choices, but honestly, before God and to God's glory, we the second generation, we walk in grace with such ease. It is so natural for us to walk in grace. It is so natural for us to confess when we fail.

It is so natural for us to confess our needs to our family and to our wives. We walk in grace when compared to you, almost effortlessly. And I'm not preaching false doctrine here.

Yes, we strive. Yes, we work. Yes, we must be faithful.

But compared to your struggle, it's almost effortless. And that should motivate you. Dear parents, as you battle forward, we are the generation of the overtaking blessing.

And your children are part of the generation that I'm speaking of. Whether they're older or younger than me, they're part of that generation. Your children are part of that second generation, that generation of the overtaking blessings.

And as your children get older, you young parents, you are going to observe that overtaking blessing in your children's lives. And you're going to wonder. Your mouth is going to be open.

You will wonder, how is it possible for them to walk in grace like that? It seems so easy for them. They seem to flow in their marriage relationship. They seem to flow in their family.

It seems like raising their children for them is just like the back of their hand. It's so easy for them. And they will bless you.

Because they will know, as I know, that it is the legacy that has been handed down to us that has made this overwhelming blessing, this overtaking blessing, possible. Just a couple of thoughts in closing here. The legacy that I'm talking about, that you are handing to your children, that you are striving to hand to your children, that has been handed to me, is not a legacy of perfection.

Dear parents, it's not a legacy of perfection. My parents were not perfect. And especially when I was a little boy, they were a whole lot less perfect than they are now.

It wasn't a legacy of perfection. And you don't have to give a legacy of perfection. But your children must know that you are striving to walk with God.

You don't need to be perfect. It's okay for your children to see you struggling. They'll know what you're struggling for.

And they'll one day rise up and say, no, Mom and Dad weren't where they would have liked to be. But they pressed ever forward. They can see the progression.

Your children know. They know your marriage isn't perfect. But they also know that it's better than it was five years ago.

And from that, they will learn we can go forward. We can have more. It will put in them visions of something beyond even where you are.

And when they start their life, God's blessing will come and overtake them. And they will receive more than you've been able to receive. They will fly where you've run.

They will walk where you've crawled. God promises it. They are the generation of the overtaking blessing.

Don't say you're not perfect. I'm not talking about perfection this afternoon. I'm talking about doing exactly what you've been doing the last ten days.

Your children saw you at the altar crying out to God. We want a godly family. I want to take my place in the home as a father.

I want to be a submissive wife. Your children saw you and in their little computers of a mind, all those things are being typed in. Mom and Dad want something.

Mom and Dad want godliness. Mom and Dad want to walk with God. And it will be there.

And it will be a foundation for them when they take their place. And they are the generation taking their family forward. All of those things will be a legacy, an unbelievable blessing, a foundation of overwhelming blessing in their life.

Many times, as I said at the beginning, I look to my wife. Just two days ago in the morning we woke up and we were talking about our marriage as we often do, and we said to each other, you know, we observed our parents fight to have a godly marriage. I don't mean fighting each other.

I hope you understand me. We observed them working to have a godly marriage and failing and confessing and starting over and walking in grace and stumbling and jerking along steadily, so to speak. We observed that.

So when we got ready to get married, we said, yes, this is what marriage is about. If we're going to have a godly marriage, we are going to fight for it. And in our courtship, we agreed we're going to fight for it.

We're going to fight for a godly family. We're going to fight to walk in grace. All of these areas of our life, we are going to have them.

And now we're married. Four years. And we look at each other often and say, where's the fight? Where's the struggle? Where's the difficulty? Hallelujah! That's the overwhelming blessing.

We know that it's God's blessing. We don't think it's anything that we've done. There's no way in four years that we could have built a foundation for the ridiculous, may I say, blessing of God on our marriage.

It's God's blessing on our parents. It's God's blessing on their choices. And now that blessing is on us, on our marriage, on our ministry, on our children.

We know why. We're the generation that God hath blessed. The second generation.

Blessed by God and blessed by you, dear first generation parents. In closing, you dear parents, God bless you. We honor you.

We, the second generation, we honor you. We're thankful for all that you've fought for. We're thankful for all that you've done.

There are areas in which we desire to pass you. But we respect you. We're thankful for what you've given to us.

We're thankful for the legacy of blessing. You have enabled us to run where you crawled and we thank you for that. And to you parents, you first generation parents, think of all the things that you are striving for.

And in your mind's eye, jump forward another generation and see your children living in all that you're dreaming of. No, take it further. Dream about them living far beyond your dreams and you will be in the realm in which they will live.

Because they will be the second generation. The generation that the Lord hath blessed. The generation of the overtaking blessing.

May God fill your hearts with courage, strength and tenacity. Thank you very much and God bless you.

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