

Revival in the Home - Part 1

by Israel Wayne

Israel Wayne emphasizes the importance of the family unit in God's design and the spiritual warfare surrounding the raising of children in faith.

Duration: 45:43

Scripture: Psalm 127:3-5, Proverbs 22:6, Malachi 4:5-6, Luke 1:17, Ephesians 6:4

Topics: "Family Revival", "Fatherhood"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of fathers turning their hearts to their children as a key to societal transformation and spiritual revival. It traces the failure of the nation of Israel to fulfill God's mandate and highlights the critical role of fathers in shaping the next generation. The message underscores the need for fathers to prioritize biblical instruction, cultural influence, and nurturing their children in the fear of the Lord to combat the negative influences of the world. It calls for a return to God's design for families and the raising of godly offspring to impact the culture and prepare a people for the Lord.

Transcript

The first thing I want to do is I want to try to take us back in history to the time of creation. And God made a universe that blows our minds. If you think about the expanse of the universe, the size of the universe, even the size of our galaxy, it's just incomprehensible.

But then you think about the fact that God made this planet called Earth, and that he made it especially conducive to sustain life. And not only does it sustain biological life, but it sustains human life. And God made a garden, and he put a man and a woman in the garden, and he gave them a dominion mandate.

He told them that he wanted them to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the Earth, to rule over the Earth, and to subdue it. And this was the first institution that God formed and placed on the Earth, and that was called the family. And it actually was a form of government, if you can think of it in that way.

We usually think of government as being just the civil magistrate, but it was an agency that had authority, and it had responsibility. So there's this man and this woman, and they were made in the image of God, the scripture tells us. Well, there's this rebellious enemy, Satan, Lucifer, who hates God, and was cast out of heaven, comes to Earth, and he is angry with God, and he wars against God, and he makes this move of, almost like a military move of sabotage against God.

And he seeks to destroy this couple, to destroy this human life, this man and this woman who are made in the image of God. And what he does is he tempts them into rebelling against God. And the man and the woman do this.

And immediately when that happens, death enters into the world. And so, the enemy scores a tremendous victory, and you can almost think of the story of human history as being a lot like a cosmic chess game. There's two opponents, and they're making moves, and so God makes the first move in the act of creation, and then Satan makes his move in bringing death into the world to try to destroy these people who are made in God's image.

And so, what does God do? How does God respond to that? Well, God makes a move of his own. And God's move is to declare war on Satan. And this is what he says in Genesis chapter 3, verse 15.

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Now, we do know and we understand that this passage here is a messianic prophecy.

It's talking about and foretelling the coming of the Messiah, of Jesus, the Messiah. And how through his death and crucifixion and resurrection, he would crush Satan's head, right? We know that. But it's not merely talking about that, it's talking about also the seed of the woman being these young people, these children who are born of the woman, her offspring.

And we'll see how that's confirmed later on in the scripture. And so, there's an enmity between Satan and the descendants, the offspring, the seed of the woman. And again, why does Satan hate these descendants, these offspring? Why does he hate them? He hates them because they're made in God's image.

They reflect God's glory. He hates God, and so he hates anything that looks like God, anything that reflects God's nature and character. In Malachi chapter 2, verse 15, the scripture says this.

Has not the Lord made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So Malachi 2.15 tells us that one of the primary reasons why God has put man and woman together in this one flesh union is for the production of children.

But not just children, it says he was seeking a godly offspring, a godly seed. So this is God's heart, this is God's desire. He wants to have children who are following his ways, who belong to him, who submit to his rule, to his law.

And so what then is the counter move of Satan? So the Lord declares war on Satan. Well, what does Satan do? Satan decides that he will take out the seed of the woman any way that he can. And he's not particular about how he does it, just as long as he does it.

He wants to, what does the scripture tell us that the enemy always comes to do? To kill, to steal, and to destroy, right? So one of the things that we see in the Bible is that the enemy will seek to kill off these children of promise. These children that God has declared are going to be part of his tool, his weapon to crush the head of the serpent. And we see that with Pharaoh, for example.

What does Pharaoh decide to do to cut off this godly seed, the children of Israel? What does he do? He says, we're going to kill the baby boys. We'll kill off all the baby boys. Well, at the time of Jesus' birth, we

see the same thing happen.

King Herod says, we're going to kill all of the boys who are three and under. And that is the heart of Satan. That is his desire.

He wants to cut off and kill these children made in his image. But even more specifically, especially those who belong to God, those who are being raised for the glory of God and for his purposes. There's another way that the enemy will seek to kill and destroy this godly seed.

And that is, if he can't kill them as children, he'll seek to destroy their life before they're even born. And in our country, we have seen since Roe v. Wade in 1973, the murder of somewhere around 50 million unborn children in our land. It's a number that is so staggering, we can't even conceive of it.

50 million children. In fact, no one knows exactly how many. It's estimated that's how many procedural abortions that have been performed in this country.

But now, there are these morning after pills, like the RU-486, and these new pills that are coming out that allow human life to be destroyed privately and very early, within days of conception. And so, there are millions and millions of these children who are being wiped out, who are being killed before they are even born. And of course, this makes the enemy very happy.

I mean, this is all part of his plan. This is all part of his scheme, to declare war against God. Now, we know, as Christians, that Satan cannot be victorious against God, ultimately.

We know that Satan is not more powerful than God. But he is a very powerful enemy, and he's very vicious, and he's very cruel. And so, what he wants to do is he wants to eliminate and annihilate all people, because they're made in the image of God.

But specifically, he wants to take out these children of promise, these children who are being raised for God's glory. He especially wants to find ways to take them out. There's another thing, and we don't think about this much within the Christian evangelical community.

But there's another way that Satan seeks to win in this battle or this contest against God. And that is that if he can't kill the children after they're born, or if he's not able to kill them in the womb, then he's just as happy if he can prevent these children from ever being conceived in the first place. And I do understand that the scripture talks about how God opens the womb, God closes the womb, and God, for his own purposes, sometimes does not allow a couple to be able to conceive children.

I understand that. But within our Christian community, we have basically adopted the same mentality as the world when it comes to population growth. And this year is the 50th anniversary of the birth control pill.

And over the past decades, the last 50 years, there have been millions and millions of children, even, I believe, Christian children who would have been born, but were never born because they were never conceived because parents decided that they did not want to have any more children. And so they've had, you know, vasectomies or surgeries or whatever to limit their family size. Well, when you look at the scripture and what it says about this, it says this in Psalm 127, verses 3 through 5. It says, Lo, children are heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are children of one's youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them. They shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gates.

Do you notice the terminology that's used here in Psalm 127? This is military terminology. This is warfare terminology. Who's using this terminology? Who's speaking here? God.

This is God's worldview. This is God's perspective. And so God says that in this war against the enemy, one of the weapons that he uses against the enemy is what? It says children.

Children are like arrows in the hands of a mighty man. Now, I don't know about you, but I know that if I were going into battle and into a hostile situation where I knew that there was an enemy that wanted to kill me, an enemy that wanted to take me out, I know that I would want, and I had a bow and arrow, I would want to have a quiver absolutely full of arrows. Because I would want to inflict as much damage as I possibly could on the enemy.

I wouldn't want to go into battle with one arrow. I would want to go into battle with a quiver full of arrows. Well, the reason that we don't think about this passage and think, and I believe, think Christianly about it, is that we bought into a lot of the sociological myths of overpopulation and these types of things of, well, there's not enough land, there's not enough food on the earth.

There is enough food grown just in Iowa to feed the entire United States every year. Just in the state of Iowa, there's enough food grown to feed the entire nation. In fact, did you know that if you took every person who is alive today on the planet, and you put them all in the state of Texas, every person on the planet would have an acre to themselves in Texas.

This idea that we're overpopulated, we don't have enough land, and so therefore, we have to restrict our family sizes. This is something that goes back to eugenics, actually. If you study the history of, say, Planned Parenthood, the founder of Planned Parenthood, Margaret Sanger, was a woman who adopted ideas that came out of the eugenics movement of Nazi Germany.

She was a racist. She taught that black children should be killed. I mean, this is the kind of legacy that undergirds Planned Parenthood, and yet Christians have gotten their worldview, as it relates to children, from people like Margaret Sanger.

Instead of looking at the scripture that says that children are a blessing, that they're a reward, they're a heritage, and that they are weapons that are to be used against the enemy. Now, obviously, the scripture doesn't just say have a lot of children. That's not what the scripture says, but it says that we're supposed to train up these children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

That these children are supposed to be trained up in the way that they should go. That's Ephesians 6.4 and Proverbs 22.6. And so God has a plan for families to bring about this godly offspring that God says he wants in Malachi 2.15. Again, he says, why did I make 2.1? Because I'm looking for a godly offspring. So we as parents have a wonderful opportunity to participate with God in this war against the enemy.

Now, let me tell you a people group that understands this dynamic. The people group that understands this dynamic is the Muslim community. The American birth rate is 1.8 children per household.

Economists will tell you that you need to have a birth rate of at least 2.1 in order to have economic sustainability. In other words, if you're having less than 2.1 children per household, then your country is

going to be diminishing every year economically. And that's what's happening in America.

A big part of why our country is suffering economically is that we've not followed God's principles and patterns as it relates to family size. I was just in Japan last year. They are only having 1.3 children per household.

And their economy is on the verge of absolute collapse. Greece is the same way. The former Soviet Union, Russia, is the same way.

The Muslims, however, are the fastest growing people group, if you will, on the planet today. And you know what their family size is? Seven children per family. And why? Because they have this mentality of, we're going to raise our children.

We're going to teach them our beliefs. We're going to teach them our values. And then we're going to put them into places of influence and prominence within society.

They've already taken over France. They've taken over most of Germany. Europe, which used to be Christian, is becoming increasingly dominated by Muslims.

Why is it becoming increasingly dominated by Muslims? Because Muslims have a worldview of advancement. They have a worldview that says that we want to raise children who are going to be world changers, who are going to be influencers. We want to see all of Europe become Muslim, whereas the Christians don't have that mentality.

They don't have that worldview. It says, we want to see the gospel of Jesus Christ taken into all of Europe and then into all the parts of the Earth. Christians don't think that way.

They don't have an advancement mentality. They have a retreatist mentality. And so what's happened is that Christianity and its influence has dwindled within Europe, and it's dwindling within the United States and increasingly, another anti-Christian worldview is taking dominance.

So these are issues that I believe if we were to study the scripture, we would find a very different mentality, a very different mindset as it relates to the family. You know, it's interesting that God talks about in Deuteronomy 28, he talks about how children, or the fruit of the womb, is a blessing. And he talks about how debt is a curse.

To be in debt and to be owing is a sign of being cursed. When you read Deuteronomy 28, it's a parallel between, here's the blessings of God, here's the cursings of God. You look at a nation who experiences these blessings, here's what it looked like.

He says, you'll be blessed in the country. You'll be blessed in the city. Your vineyards will be blessed.

Your crops will be blessed, so on and so forth. But then when a nation disobeys God's law, it says, here's how you'll be cursed. You'll be cursed in the country.

You'll be cursed in the city. Your flocks and your herds and your cattle will be cursed. Have you ever read that, Deuteronomy 28? Okay, so in Deuteronomy 28, it speaks about children as being a blessing and debt being a curse.

But what do evangelical Christians do? We reject blessings and we go and sign up for and apply for curses, right? So what it is, is that we don't think biblically about these issues. We've been informed by a secular culture that hates children. I'm telling you, our culture, our American culture, despises and hates children.

They see children as a nuisance. They see children as a bother, as something to be avoided, as something to be eliminated. God doesn't look at it that way at all.

In fact, when you see Jesus, you remember the disciples, that the children came to Jesus to be blessed and Jesus' disciples said, no, no, he's too busy. Keep the children away from the master. And Jesus said, what? Let the children come unto me.

Receive them. Don't reject them. Don't push them away because the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.

The heart of Jesus is that he's welcoming of children. He embraces children because these children are made in his image and especially when they're being raised for his glory. And there's one final point where I believe the enemy seeks to destroy and that is if he can't kill them when they're alive and he can't kill them when they're in the womb and he can't keep them from being born, then one other tactic that he can use to take out this godly offspring is he'll sabotage their minds.

He will corrupt their minds so that rather than having them grow up in the fear of the Lord, he will have them grow up and embrace the ideology of the heathens. He will have them embrace a anti-Christian worldview. And again, in our culture, there are so many forces acting upon Christian households, Christian families that we're way too passive about.

I mean, honestly, there's television and movies. And I know you're going to say, oh, here he is. He's preaching against television and movies.

I'm telling you, it shapes the way that young people think. Young ladies, who do they want to emulate? Who do they want to be like? They want to be like Britney Spears. They want to be like Miley Cyrus.

Guys, young men, who do they want to be like? They want to be like Eminem, the rap star, these other pop icons. The video games, so many of them are violent and they're corrupt and have immense sexuality, even in the video games, the comic books. I mean, it's rampant.

It's a bombardment. It's a war. I mean, the enemy hates us and he hates our children and he wants to destroy their minds and destroy their hearts and destroy their souls.

Well, he's being effective, really, really effective to the tune of this. Get some of these statistics. Did you know that within the Southern Baptist Convention, that 88% of all Southern Baptist youth leave the faith somewhere around their freshman year of college and never come back? Have you heard that? This was a study that was put out by the Southern Baptist Council on Family Life.

They said that 88% of all of their youth leave the faith around their freshman year of college, leave the faith, and never come back. Now, think about that. That means you're losing almost 9 out of 10 of your children to the world.

And you know what their solution is to this? Their solution is we're going to evangelize in foreign countries and try to replace the fallout. Now, I'm all for evangelism in other countries. That's great.

That's wonderful. Praise God for that. We need to do that.

We need to do that more. But you can't possibly replace a 98% fallout. Now, it's not just the Assemblies of God.

Or the Southern Baptist, you look at like the PCA, Presbyterian Church of America. They're losing somewhere around 60%, 65% of their youth. Assemblies of God's like 65% of their youth.

You just pick a denomination. It's all pretty much the same. Well, why is that? I mean, there's so many reasons.

As I said, the culture, of course, is trying to destroy their trust in the Bible, destroy their trust in the authority of scripture. It's trying to get them to think and live like the world. But it's not just the media.

The biggest promoter of humanism, of homosexuality, of Darwinism, of a belief that we're a primordial accident that has nothing to do with God, the biggest exporter of that ideology in the entire world is the American government school system that we pay for with our tax dollars and that we send our children to. I don't send my children there, but 80% of all evangelical Christians send their children to basically to pharaohs' schools. And they're surprised when their children come out as Egyptians.

And so the fact is this fallout of somewhere between conservative estimates, 60% to 88%, this fallout is not the fault of the youth ministries in the church. It's not the fault of the Sunday school programs. It's not the fault of the media.

It's the fault of parents allowing everybody and everything else to raise their children. Does this make sense? OK. Just want to see if we're on the same page at all.

OK. So what happens here is that God has given a mandate to us. I mean, again, Ephesians 6, 4, it says to us, fathers, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but train them up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord.

Now, when you go into the Greek and you look at those two words, nurture and admonition, what it means literally is it means the word admonition is the word from which we get the term euthetic counseling, biblical counseling. And the word nurture is the Greek word paideia, which means basically culture, the Greek culture. So what he's saying is don't provoke your children to wrath, but train them up in the biblical counseling and the biblical culture of the Lord.

And who does he address that to in Ephesians 6, 4? Fathers. He doesn't address it to mothers. He doesn't address it to the church.

He doesn't address it to the public school system. He addresses it to fathers, and he says, fathers, it's your responsibility to make sure that your children are being raised with biblical instruction, biblical counsel, and with a biblical culture. Now, the culture, I think, is all those things that I was talking about earlier with the media, with the music, with television, and the internet, and all of that, that's culture.

We as fathers have been commanded by God to make sure that our children are being raised in a biblical culture. Now, that will not happen by default. It cannot happen by default in this age in which we live.

The only way that that will happen, that children can be raised in a biblical culture, is if we're intentional about it. And then in terms of the biblical instruction of the Lord, that means the things that they're being taught. The scripture says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.

How many parents here want your children to have wisdom, knowledge, and understanding? OK, a few of us. OK, so those of us that want our children to have wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, the only way that they're going to have that is if they are in an environment where the education that they're receiving is undergirded with the foundation of the fear of the Lord. Does that make sense? Now, I'm not making this up.

I'm just telling you what the Bible says. It means it says that that is the foundation point for wisdom, knowledge, understanding. They have to have a foundation of the fear of the Lord.

The scripture tells us this. It says, in Psalm 1, blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly. I want you to think about this in terms of the education that your children are receiving.

OK, think about this in terms of their education. Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly. What kind of counsel are your children receiving in their school? What kind of counsel? Is it godly counsel? What about the sex education program? Are they getting godly counsel in the sex education program? What would godly counsel in that program look like? It would say that sexuality is for one man and one woman who are married in a covenant relationship for life.

That's what godly counsel would look like. Is that the kind of instruction that they get in government schools? No. They say, basically, anything goes.

Just try to be safe. Well, what about instruction on how we all came to be here? Do they give glory to God by saying that we have a divine creator who loves us and who created us in his image for his purpose? Do they say that? No. What do they do? They deny that.

And they say, no, we came about from the result of amino acids and proteins that just happened to formulate biological life by accident. You know what that is? That is denying the creator, who is Jesus. Because in Colossians, it tells us that through Christ, the Father made the world.

In Colossians, it tells us that. So if you deny Jesus as the creator and you say, no, Jesus didn't make it. It came about all by itself, what did Jesus say? He said, if you deny me before men, I will do what? I will deny you before who? My Father in heaven.

That's a pretty important issue, isn't it? So what kind of counsel are your children receiving? And the second one is don't stand in the way of sinners. We have this mentality that, well, we need to have our children in the government school system to be salt and light. They need to be there to be salt and light, to witness to their friends, to witness to all the unsaved children that are there.

And I want to challenge you with this. In 2 Corinthians, it tells us this. It says, do not be deceived.

Bad company corrupts good character. Now, I'll give you a little hermeneutic tip. Hermeneutics is like the context of how you study the Bible and understand what it means.

When the Bible says, do not be deceived, it is at that very point that it's about to talk about that there's a really high likelihood that you might be deceived on that exact point. So when it says, do not be deceived, bad company corrupts good character, we're prone to be deceived on that. We're prone to think that we can put our children in a context with children who have bad character.

And what does the scripture tell us in Proverbs? It says in Proverbs 22, 15, it says, foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, right? Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child. So you take your child who has foolishness bound in their heart, you put them in the context of a group of other children who also have foolishness bound in their heart. And the scripture says that a cord of three strands is not easily broken.

So Ecclesiastes, a cord of three strands is not easily broken. So you take one foolish child, another foolish child, another foolish child, you put them together, and there's a strong bond there. That foolishness is very hard to break.

So when scripture says, avoid the way of sinners, that's talking about the environment that they're in. It's talking about their peer group. And this idea that you can have a barrel of bad apples and you take a good apple and throw the good apple in, it'll make all the bad apples good apples, right? Is that how it works? No, it doesn't work that way.

What happens is, what happens to the good apple? You know, what happens if you take a good apple and throw it in a barrel with a bunch of bad apples? What's gonna happen to the good apple? Becomes bad. And that's what the scripture says, is do not be deceived on this point. And then finally it says, blessed is the man who does not sit in the seat of the scornful or the mocker.

And unfortunately what happens in many peer-oriented settings is that children develop a mentality of mocking and scoffing those who are in authority. They mock teachers, they mock their parents, they mock people who are over them in authority, police officers. They don't have a respect for authority.

And the scripture says you're blessed if you avoid the ungodly counsel, the way of sinners, and the seat of scorning and mocking. And then there's a positive note. There's a flip side to it.

It says, but here's what you should do instead of that. You know, avoid all that. But instead of that, your delight should be on the law of the Lord.

And on that law, you should meditate day and night. You know what, that's not just a suggestion, that's a command. Did you know that? It's a command.

On this law, meditate day and night. You can't do that in an environment where God's word is not even allowed. So this aspect of our responsibility as parents to teach them in a biblical context of instruction and in a biblical culture is hard to do in our day and age, but it's not impossible.

It does take sacrifice, and it means we'll have to give up some things. Let me tell you what it looks like for myself and for my wife. It means that we have chosen, because of our desire to obey God at every point in his word and to conform ourselves to the law of God, it means that we live on one income.

I work and my wife is a full-time stay-at-home mom. And she has chosen to do that because we believe that it is so vital and so important for us to train up and raise up these arrows who are going to contend with their enemies at the gates. Where do the gates? Well, the gates in the Old Testament culture, that was the positions of influence within a society.

The gates was where commerce happened. It was where political transactions happened. A lot of times judges would sit out at the gates.

In other words, we're talking about places of influence in society. And it says that these children are supposed to be contending with the enemies of God in the gates. We don't have a generation of young people who can contend with the enemies of God in the gates because they have not been equipped, they've not been prepared.

And so when they grow up, they basically think like the world, they live like the world, they believe like the world, and we're losing an entire generation of young people. George Barna, who's the premier evangelical researcher, said that only 11% of all church evangelical youth have a biblical worldview, or think biblically about life and reality. Only 11%.

That means that you go to your typical church and you look at the youth group, means there's only one out of 10 who really knows how to apply the Bible to all of life. And between the age group of 18 and 25, he says only 4% of young people between the ages of 18 and 25 think according to a biblical worldview. Josh McDowell came out with a book a couple years ago called *The Last Christian Generation*.

And he said, it's not like we have one more generation to go before we become a completely secular culture. This is the last Christian generation statistically. We have entered into an age where our culture among the youth has become almost completely secularized.

When I was in Japan last year, they have only 1% of their population is professing Christian. Can you get that in your head? I mean, 1% of the people in Japan, less than 1% are professing Christians. Well, according to George Barna, less than 4% of church youth in America hold to the Bible as the ultimate standard for all of life and reality.

So we're like, what, three percentile higher in that age range then. Did you know that there are Muslim countries on the planet that have a higher ratio of Christians than America does in the 18 to 25 age range? I mean, are you catching this? So what I'm talking about is not that Christianity has been suppressed here. It's not that we have jihad or Sharia law here that tells everybody you can't be Christian in this country.

It's not as though the communists have taken away our Bibles. It's not as though the anti-God establishment has forced us into hiding. No, this is the land of the free and the home of the brave.

This is America. This wasn't taken from us. We gave it up.

We just gave it up. We gave it away. We failed to do our job.

You know, just within the last three generations, there's just been one generation after another. Ken Ham just came out with a book called *Already Gone*. And what he's saying is it's not a matter of waiting until they get to their freshman year of college.

He's saying at the tweener level, the junior high level, they're already gone. They already believe in evolution. They no longer believe in the authority of Scripture.

They already believe in an evolutionary worldview and everything that that entails. They already believe in a secular view of sexuality and so on and so forth. By sixth, seventh, eighth grade, they're already gone, he says.

Yeah, they're still here physically in our churches because up to a certain age, they have to be. But as soon as they have the opportunity, what are they doing? Walking out the door and leaving. So what I want to do is in my next session, I want to talk with you about some things that we can do to help to turn this around.

I'm going to try to close this section with something that God says that's really interesting. The nation of Israel was supposed to be God's light. They were supposed to be a city set on a hill, if you will.

God promised to Abraham in Genesis 12. He says, I will bless you. I will bless your offspring.

I will make you a blessing. And through you and through your descendants, all the nations of the world will be blessed. That was a covenant God made to Abraham.

And so what God was looking for is he was looking for this nation, this people who would be set apart for himself. They wouldn't be like all the heathen nations. They wouldn't be like all the idolatrous nations.

They would be a holy nation. They'd be a royal priesthood. They would be a group of people who really followed him, really followed his ways.

That was what God was looking for. He promised that to Abraham. Through you and your descendants, this is going to happen.

Well, what ended up happening with the nation of Israel? Did they go out and become a blessing to all the nations of the world? What do you think? Yes or no? No, they did not. Instead, what happened to them? What do you think? It's okay, you can talk. Apostasy.

Syncretism. Syncretism is a big word. It means basically to put two things together that don't belong together.

Worship of Yahweh, the true God, and a little worship of Baal, a little worship of Moloch, a little worship of Asherah. It's okay, we can do a little bit of both. We can have the influence of the secular culture around us and their values and their worldview.

We can merge that in with the worship of Yahweh. We can still go to the temple. We can still call ourselves God's people, but we can have all the perks of these other cultures as well.

And they embraced syncretism and compromise. And so what happened was they failed to fill that commission of being a light to all the nations, to be a blessing of all the nations of the world. The good news is when you get over into Galatians 3, God says, if you belong to Christ, then you are spiritual descendants of Abraham.

And you are heirs of the promise given to Abraham. So here's how this works out. You have a great uncle Abraham who is really rich and has a will and you're in it.

Okay, so this is really exciting. You wanna know what the will says? You wanna know what you inherited? What do you get? His great uncle Abraham died. You're in the will.

What do you get? Well, you get the promise that God made to Abraham that now God is going, He says, I will bless you, I will make you a blessing, and that through you and your descendants, your offspring, all the nations of the world will be blessed. That's still God's heart. The question is what are we doing in the

church? Are we fulfilling God's heart and doing what the nation of Israel didn't do? Or are we doing exactly what the nation of Israel did and allowing the world to come into the church? Is the church changing the culture or is the culture changing the church? May I tell you that if we're losing 70 to 90% of our youth, I would say the culture is changing the church.

So what does God say is the solution? What did he say to the nation of Israel? The very end of the Old Testament, Malachi chapter four, verses five and six. He speaks this about the nation of Israel. He says, behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse. So he's saying this has not happened. This covenant that I gave to Abraham, this promise that I gave him, this potential that I've given him, his descendants have failed to do it.

So God says, here's my game plan. I'm gonna turn the hearts of fathers to their children. And when that happens, then the children's hearts are gonna turn back to the fathers.

But if that doesn't happen, I will strike the earth with a curse. And I believe that in our land, we are seeing the results of our land being smitten with a curse, not a blessing. We're not prospering.

We're not blessing all the nations of the world. We are to a limited extent, not nearly, not nearly to the capacity that we could. And so God says his methodology for revival, his methodology for change is gonna happen at the most fundamental foundational level of fathers turning their hearts to their children, completely, not just turning on the television, not just turning on the Super Bowl, not just playing golf, not just being all caught up in hobbies of hunting or working on their car or whatever, no, turning their hearts to their children.

God says this is the way out. There is a roadmap. There's a way out of this curse, out of this culture of despair.

There's a way out, and it's fathers turning their hearts to their children. I'll read you one more passage, and then we'll wrap up. We'll come back to this in the second session.

And I'll give you some practical application. In the New Testament, okay, we looked at the beginning of the Old Testament, and we saw that God declared war on the enemy. He gave man and woman a demanding mandate to reproduce, to be fruitful, to multiply, to fill the earth, and to subdue it.

And so he spoke that, and then he said I'm gonna put an enmity between you and the serpent, and the serpent will strike at your heel, but you'll crush his head. And then at the end of the Old Testament, he says, so that's the beginning of the Old Testament, and then at the end of the Old Testament, he says, I'm gonna turn father's hearts to the children, children's hearts to the fathers, lest I strike the earth with a curse. In Luke 117, the beginning of the New Testament, he reiterates it.

He says the same thing again. You look in Luke 117, you're gonna notice the similarity here. It says, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children.

Does that sound familiar? So here we are. And you know how many years were there between what he said there in Malachi and what he says in Luke 1? You know, it's the end of the Old Testament, the beginning of the New Testament. How many years lapsed there? Yeah, about 500, something, 400, 500

years had lapsed between those two statements.

But as soon as the New Testament is starting to be written, Luke 1, the very beginning of the New Testament, what happens? God picks up right where he left off. 400, 500 year gap, no big deal. Game plan's still on.

I still have the same move plan that I had planned back then, same thing. I'm gonna turn father's hearts to the children. But instead of the negative aspect of I'll strike the earth with a curse, instead of that, there's a positive statement.

Two positive things that will come about if this happens. So we know we'll avoid the negative thing of our land being struck with a curse and two wonderful positive things are about to happen. It says this, I'll turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.

That's the first thing. The disobedient will be turned to the wisdom of the righteous. The disobedient will be turned to the wisdom of the righteous.

If what? If fathers turn their hearts to their children. Wow, that's a pretty big if-then condition and that's a pretty big benefit. That's some pretty exciting fruit.

Here's the second thing. To make ready a people prepared for the Lord. That's number two.

To make ready a people prepared for the Lord. We have an entire generation of people in our society, in our culture, who are disobedient to the law of God. They're disobedient.

They're what's called antinomian. They're against the law of God. They hate God's law.

They hate his rules. They hate his principles. They hate his statutes and his judgments.

If they were to read Psalm 119 where he talks about grace, I love your law, I love your statutes, I love your judgments, your commands. They would hate every bit of that. There's a whole generation of people in our culture that are disobedient.

And what do we want to see? Do we want to see them be disobedient their whole lives and go to hell? No. We want to see them turn from their foolishness, from their carnal thinking, to embrace the wisdom of righteousness, the wisdom of the just. How are we gonna do that? How are we gonna win a lost society? Maybe that's a more plain way to put it.

How are we gonna win a lost society to Christ? Luke 117 says, father's hearts have got to be turned to their children. Now you go, well now what's the connection there? How's that gonna happen? Why would fathers turning their hearts to the children bring about disobedient people in the culture wanting to know about God and his ways and conforming themselves to the wisdom of the righteous? What's the connection there? Can I honestly tell you? I don't know. I don't know why God set it up that way, but it's what his word says.

Therefore I believe it. He says, if this happens, then this'll happen. And then the second thing is to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

That's always been God's plan. It's always been his goal. A people set apart for himself, holy, sanctified, not like all the other nations of the world, not like all the other people groups, but set apart for him, living to

give him glory and to make his glory known.

And so the scripture tells us that the way to have both of those things happen, the change in the culture that we all desperately want to see, let me tell you something, folks, it's not gonna happen through the election. If that's where your hope is, you're just gonna be more and more depressed. Our hope is in obeying God's word, fathers, turn your hearts to your children.

We're gonna see the disobedient turn to the wisdom of the just, and we're gonna see a people prepared for the Lord.

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