

Biblical Courtship Session #2: The Parent's Responsibility in the Home

by Paul Washer

Parents must strive to know the scriptures, teach their children the scriptures, and live as biblical examples in order to raise their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

Duration: 1:00:20

Scripture: Proverbs 29:18, Hosea 4:6, Matthew 23:2-3

Topics: "Biblical Courtship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that we cannot make ourselves love God more through our own efforts. Just as we do nothing to make a beautiful sunset take our breath away, we cannot force ourselves to love God more. Instead, the key to loving God more is to know more about Him, as He is altogether lovely. The speaker also highlights the importance of seeking God's knowledge in His Word, as a lack of knowledge can hinder our walk with Christ. Additionally, the speaker urges men to prioritize their role as spiritual leaders in their families, teaching their wives and children about God's Word and ensuring their spiritual well-being.

Transcript

Well, it's good to be back again and we're talking about biblical courtship. In our last session, we talked about plowing fertile ground for teaching. There were some things that we needed to address before we could even begin to talk about biblical courtship.

We talked about how we must be aware of our present reality, that we live among a people and we are a people. That many times we do what is right in our own eyes and that we have a great need to understand that apart from the scriptures and the wisdom of the scriptures, we really do not know how we should walk. And so in the fear of the Lord and in the fear of our own error, we should saturate our lives with the scriptures.

Also, we learn that we must be completely convinced that our lives are to abound for the glory and to the glory of God. We were put here on this earth for a purpose and it is in that purpose that we find meaning. And that meaning is this, that I was made, you were made for Christ.

We were made for his glory, his good pleasure to fulfill his will. And when we do that, you and I are most, most happy. Now, today we're going to talk about the context for teaching on biblical courtship.

Now, this is very important. I want to go to a passage that you're probably all familiar with. And it's in Romans 12, where it speaks about if we are verse two, if we are renewing our mind and the idea there from from other places in scripture, we can bring this together if we are renewing our mind in God's word and what he has taught us, then we will know his will.

Now, many people, what they'll do is they'll neglect God's word in their life. They don't have a life discipline of reading God's word or studying the Bible. But when they come to a point in their life when they need to know, you know, what is God's will, they'll start looking frantically throughout the pages of the Bible and even get to the point where they're opening up the Bible or closing their eyes and pointing to a place in scripture in order to try to find God's will.

Well, that's not the way we find God's will. We find God's will in specific cases by living a life saturated in the word of God. Every day we should be studying God's word.

And as we do, his will will become clearer and clearer and clearer. Now, what does that teach us? That you can't just find one area in your life that you need to fix and then just fix it to the exclusion of all the other areas. What you and I need to do rather than think about specifically biblical courtship or some other theme in our life, rather than doing that, what we need to do is just simply grow in godliness.

We need to grow in Christ likeness. And the more we are like Christ, the more it's going to affect every area and every relationship of our life. So even if I teach you some things that the Bible may teach, some wisdom about what the Bible teaches with regard to relationships, it's not going to help you if you're ungodly in all the other areas of your life or your character isn't being developed.

So you see, that's the danger in teaching something like this. We talk about biblical courtship. First of all, the Bible doesn't teach a lot of specific things about how you are to meet your wife or your husband or what kind of relationship you're to have before marriage.

It simply doesn't. But it does give us a lot of great principles. But even these principles will not be very helpful to us if in reality we're just an ungodly person, an immature person who's just looking to do the right thing by learning a few truths.

Now, let me share something with you. And you're going to find this out. You're probably, if you're watching this, maybe you're a young man or a young woman.

You need to understand something. Almost every problem in my life and every problem in my marriage, relationships, ministry comes down to my lack of Christlikeness, my lack of godliness. And so there's something to be learned here.

A godly man or a godly woman with a Christlike character, even though they may not have all the answers, they will do OK. They will make it through. They will be following Christ.

And so what I want you to do, if you're going to study this, I want you to also be reading through the scriptures every day. I want you to be praying every day. I want you to think about everything that God has given us in his word.

And I want you to realize you need that and you need to be changed by that. Now, when we talk about biblical courtship, it's impossible to address this theme without also talking about our parents. Our parents are very, very important in biblical courtship because they're very, very important in our lives.

So I'm going to take a step back. And instead of just jumping right into biblical courtship, I want to talk for a moment about the relationship of parents to their children, the relationship of children to their parents, and how important that is in building a foundation. Now, before I do, let me say this.

Again, many of you, young men and young women, you're going to say to yourself, well, I didn't have a relationship like that with my mom and my dad. And what you're teaching me is something that did not exist in my young life. Well, there's still a reason to teach it to you.

Why? Because you need to work. If that hasn't occurred up till now, you need to try to work to see that this type of relationship still develops with you and your parents. If your parents are still alive, it's not too late to enter into some sort of biblical relationship with them, to improve biblically in your relationship with your parents.

Also, if you're thinking about biblical courtship, you need to realize that one day you're probably going to be parents. And if you're going to be parents, then you need to learn these truths that are here. So let's just look at some things about parents.

And maybe you are a parent and you're watching this because you've got a young person who, a child in your family who's about of age and about ready to leave the home. Well, let's just look at some things about parents. First of all, parents must strive, strive with all their might to know the scriptures.

Again, I said this, I think maybe in the last session. Dads, it's wonderful that you're dedicated to providing financially for your family. That is admirable and you need to be respected for that.

Applauded, but you're not doing the chief work if that's all you are doing. You must know the scriptures and you must teach your children the scriptures. You must do that.

You cannot say that it's the pastor's job or the youth minister's job. I'm sorry, the Bible will not allow that. Let's look at some passages.

First of all, in Proverbs 29, 18, it says, Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained, but happy is he who keeps the law. Some translations say where there is no vision, the people perish. Now, this Bible verse has been used so often in a wrong way.

You know, pastors or church leaders will get up and say to the congregation, We need to have a vision. We need to go forward with a building program. We need to move on and advance in this church.

If we don't, we'll perish. Well, that's not what this text means at all. I suppose you ought to have a vision and ought to desire to change the world.

But that's not what this text means. If you look closely, it says where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained. But happy is he who keeps the law.

When it talks about vision here, it's talking about revelation. And particularly the revelation of God's law, the revelation of God's will. Where there is no revelation of God's will, then the people, specifically the children, they run unrestrained.

It's difficult enough to follow Christ when you know his will. How much more difficult is it when people are ignorant of his will? And one of the things that we have to realize is that in modern day Christianity, there is a great deal of ignorance. I know there's all kinds of teachings.

People are running to and fro throughout the land to hear a word from God. But very few people are seriously studying the scriptures. Now, Father, you may say that you're not given to that sort of thing.

It really doesn't matter. Now, you may not be the greatest Bible teacher in the world. You may have to rely on a lot of other brothers and helps and commentaries and things like that.

But it doesn't matter. It is your responsibility to lead your family in the word of God. And in order to do that, you must study God's word.

And here's something I want you to realize. Do you think that some people study God's word because it's just easy for them? Well, in most cases, that's not true. Most people who study God's word, it's not easy for them to do it.

They struggle just as much as those who do not study God's word. It's just they're convinced that they need God's word and they fight to study it. Do you think that prayer is just something that's very easy for some people? Well, I suppose it is.

But I'm not one of those people. I must fight to pray because I know that I must pray. I know I must do it.

You know, a friend told me years ago he was a salesman. And he said that 80 percent of the salesmen sell or 20 percent of the salesmen sell 80 percent or make 80 percent of all the sales. And while 80 percent of the salesmen do almost nothing.

And I asked him, I said, why? He said, because the salesmen that are successful have certain things they hate to do. And the salesmen who aren't successful have certain things that they hate to do. And for the most part, they're the same thing.

But the successful salesman does even what is difficult for him. Where the other one says, no, it's too difficult. Well, that illustration helps us to understand something.

It doesn't matter if it's difficult for you. It's an absolute necessity. If you said that you were not going to go to work and you just weren't going to work anymore because it's difficult and you were not going to support your family anymore because it's difficult.

Everyone would just say you're lazy and you're no count. And they'd say all kinds of things about you. Brothers, it applies.

OK, you need to be studying God's word so that you can teach God's word to your wife and to your children so that your family will not perish, that it will not run unrestrained. Now, also a passage that we addressed, I think, a bit yesterday, Hosea 4, 6. My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. Again, it's true, people, the people of God are oftentimes gravely hindered in their walk with Christ because of their lack of God's truth.

And listen to what he says, because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being my priests. Now, to the degree that we seek out God's knowledge in his word, we become useful as ministers. Now, you say to yourself, well, I'm not a minister.

Well, yes, you are. If you are a husband and you are a father, you are a minister. You minister to your children.

You're the primary minister, the most important minister in your family. And so you are. And if you want to be useful, if you want to be beneficial to the kingdom of heaven and beneficial to your children, to your wife, you must study God's word.

And he says, since you have forgotten the law of God, I also will forget your children. Now, how that specifically applies, there's great debate. But I will say this.

It is detrimental to your children if you are not involved in teaching them the scriptures. It will hurt them. It will.

God will honor a man, even though his knowledge is meager. God will honor a man who dedicates himself to the teaching, the instruction of his children in the word of God. And that's something that we need to be doing now.

Also, parents, we must strive to live as biblical examples. And this is the hard part. To teach your children the word of God and then not to live it out before them is extremely dangerous.

And you say, well, well, Brother Paul, you know, we all fail. Yes, we do. And when we fail as living as examples, when we fail, we have the wonderful opportunity to repent and to ask for forgiveness, even from our children.

You know, I teach the Bible. It's kind of what I do. And I teach the Bible a lot to my children.

And that puts a little bit of pressure on me because I'm teaching them a lot. I have to live out what I am teaching them. And many times, brothers and sisters, I fail in that.

I do. But it does not cause my children to think, well, dad's a hypocrite or dad preaches one thing and practices another. No, because when I do fail by the grace of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, I can go to my wife.

I can go to my children. I can be public about my failure and say, this is what the Bible says. I did not do that today.

I was impatient or I was angry or I did not reflect the joy of Christ. And yes, children, many times I'm going to tell you that God has commanded us to do things that I struggle with. But see, as long as you're open and you're transparent before your children and you let them know, listen, I'm not teaching this because I've attained this.

I'm teaching it because it's true. I'm desiring to be more and more like Christ. And when I fail in this matter, I'm going to repent and I'm going to ask you to forgive me.

But I'm also going to be praying for grace, children, that the grace given me will be far greater in you. And that you will go so far beyond me as a Christian, you know, in my childhood, like I said, I wasn't really raised to know the scriptures or anything like that. And but God knew that.

And so when I was 21, I was converted and it's been a long struggle. It really has. And but here's the way I look at it.

I started at a very low place and maybe one of the lowest places you could probably start at. And but my children don't have to start there. I probably won't make it very high up the mountain, but I can carry my children on my back so that when they take off, they start off at a better place.

I can teach them the word of God so that they have even greater opportunity to know him. You know, sometimes I was telling a friend the other day, I said, man, I wish I could live as long as Methuselah. He said, why? And I said, well, maybe I would be able to understand more about God and be more like Christ.

I feel like, you know, 70, 80, 90 years is just not long enough to know him on this earth. And so some men listen to me. I understand your problem.

I have the same one, but it's just no excuse. It's just not you don't have any options. You have to do this for the sake of your children.

Now, we must strive to live as biblical examples. Let's look at First Corinthians for 15 through 17. For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers.

For in Christ Jesus, I became your father through the gospel. Therefore, I exhort you be imitators of me. Now, listen to that.

For this reason, I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere, everywhere in every church. Now, there's two statements here that are very important. The first one is be imitators of me.

And then again, that Timothy would remind them not just of Paul's teachings, but of his ways. Now, those are two things that are very important. First of all, you know, sometimes people will say it's better to ask forgiveness than to ask permission.

And that's not really true. Other people will say, well, you know, they'll just sit there and they'll hear. Well, I'm just not a good example, but I'm very sad about it.

Well, we're glad that you're sad about it, but that doesn't do your children any good. Doesn't do them any good at all. Listen, you and I, again, do not have any choices.

If we are fathers, we must strive to be examples to our children so that we can say, by the grace of God, children imitate me. The children need to be a part of our lives. They need to see us.

We need to be transparent. They need to be able to see when we make tough decisions that are costly for Christ. They need to see us walking with Christ and obeying the law of God.

But they also need to see us broken and humble and asking for forgiveness when we fail. We need to be imitators. Now, they need to be able to imitate us.

Now, here's something, though, that I want you to see. Fathers, be very careful, very careful with regard to this. I would rather present before my children a broken man who is stumbling in many, many ways rather than a man who pretends to be perfect.

Because if I pretend to be perfect, sooner or later, my hypocrisy is going to be exposed. Also, if I pretend to be perfect and my children actually believe it, I will create a standard in them that is wrong. God is not honored by a man who pretends to be super righteous or hides his faults from others.

God is not honored by that. And sooner or later, it will backfire on you. God is honored and God esteems the broken and contrite heart of a man who is seeking hard after Christ, who wants to be an example to others and yet recognizes his failures.

And when he fails, he uses that as an opportunity to be an example to believers, an example of the grace of God, an example of how to humble oneself, an example of how to ask forgiveness from others. And so we don't want to be these self-righteous Pharisees who hide all our faults from our children and pretend to be something we're not. We want to be sincere, godly men who strive with all our heart to please the Lord and to be an example.

And yet when we sin, not if, but when we sin, we go before God with a broken and contrite spirit. And we go before our family, our wife, our children. We humble ourselves and we show them what it means to truly be a man of God.

And we show them the grace of God manifest in our lives. I've lived walking with Christ for many years now, and I know he's used me some. But so many people think, man, God uses that guy because he's got it right or he's reached a certain spiritual level or his prayer time must be absolutely incredible, you know, with angels coming down and all sorts of things.

That's simply not true. We will always be, always be just recipients of grace, needy people who have been blessed by an absolutely spectacular God. Sincere? I hope so.

Broken? I need to be. But those are the qualities that you need to look for in your Christianity. A sincere striving after Christ and a brokenness at times for the times you fail.

Now, remind you of my ways. I've talked to children who are now older, you know, in their 20s and 30s who had very godly fathers that I admired. And when you sit there and talk to those children, they will always just kind of bring up the ways of their father.

They'll mention that a certain thing happened in the home one time and how their father responded. They remember these things. They remember them and they kind of act as standards for the children.

They kind of help them understand what it is to be a godly man, to see it lived out in front of them. Don't you want that for your children? Don't you want that for your own life? That maybe 30 years from now, even when you're in the grave, your children will look back and say, remember what dad did in this specific situation. Do you remember how he chose to honor Christ even though it cost him and even our family? Do you remember that time when we did this and we thought that dad was going to just kill us and he came in there with such mercy and grace? Do you remember that time that we did this other thing that was so bad and when dad got down on his knees and started praying for us that he just wept over our sin? Do you remember how that struck our heart? You see, we want, we have to present before our children a godly man.

And you say, man, Brother Paul, I don't know if I can do this. Well, let me answer that for you. No, you cannot.

But he can. One of the guys who's one of the elders in the church plant where I attend, Anthony Mathenia, he preached the other day just a great message. And the message was this.

He said, everyone's always talking about how weak they are. He said, that's just a given. You are weak.

But in your weakness, you can be faithful. And what he meant by that is, you know how when you sit down and you say, OK, I'm going to know God's word. I'm going to read five chapters a day.

And then you read the first chapter and you can't remember what you read. And you just think to yourself, this is no use. I am so weak of mind and heart.

I'll never get this. Well, you can't do anything about reading a chapter and not really remembering what you read. But you can still continue reading.

You know how you sit down and I do this at times. You know, you're so tired and you realize, man, I need to pray. And you get down beside the bed and you start praying and you fall asleep.

Your wife finds you snoring on your knees. You say, I'm so weak. Yes, you are weak, but you can still get down on your knees.

The outcome is something I no longer worry about. The only thing that I concern myself with is, am I striving to read God's word? Am I striving to pray? We can all strive. We can all fight and let God take care of just how well we do.

All right. In First Corinthians 11:1, he says, be imitators of me just as I also am of Christ. One of the things that my children, I want them to understand, is that the government of our home is not about rules that I've established.

We don't live the way we do because Dad made a decision to live that way. No. I let them know that even though they are under my authority, I am under someone else's authority.

I'm not really the authority in the house. I'm kind of someone under someone else that's of far greater importance. The authority in the home must be Christ.

And so I want them to be imitators of me, but only to the degree that I'm an imitator of Christ. You see, Dad is not the standard. Dad just doesn't determine how the house should be or the way children should act.

Dad must hear from Christ and then relay what Christ has said to my children. And then also encourage my children as they grow older to be able to go to Christ and to discern what he has said. But you see, this is very important.

You know, instead of looking at my children and saying, look, this is what I have decided and this is what we're going to do in this house. OK, instead of doing that, I kind of sit there instead of facing my children, I sit with my children. And it's like instead of me lecturing my children, all of us are sitting there and Christ is lecturing us.

Instead of saying, you know, this is what I've decided. I look at the children and I say, did you just hear what Christ said to us about what we should be doing? Did you just hear that? Did you understand this passage that I just read, which is a direct command of our Savior to us? So this is what I must be doing and this is what you must be doing. I'm going to try to help you do what you should do.

And please help me do what I must do. You see, Christ is the true head, the true leader. And well, let's go on in First Thessalonians 2, 14.

For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God and Christ Jesus that are in Judea. You see, we see this almost as a constant theme, don't we? Throughout the scriptures, this need to imitate. Now, we need to be very careful of being super spiritual here.

God has given leaders. Now, leaders can be extremely abusive and self-centered and self-promoting and all kinds of things. There are pastors that are that way.

There's fathers that's that way. And we all need to guard against that. But the fact of the matter is God has set up human leadership in the church.

There's leadership in the home. And I've heard fathers say, man, I don't want anybody imitating me. Well, that's just not biblical thinking.

You should desire to imitate Christ and to have your children and your wife be able to see what it's like in your life to be a godly person. Now, I want to give us a warning here in Matthew 23, 2 through 3. The scribes and Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses. Therefore, all that they tell you do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds, for they say things and do not do them.

Now, I put a little note here. This is a warning to parents to practice what they preach. And a warning to children not to use their parents disobedience as an excuse for their own.

Now, let's look at that. You know, when we look at Jesus, he was very, very righteous, very holy, perfectly holy, perfectly righteous. And we see him that he truly did receive sinners that were broken and contrite of spirit.

We also see that he came down like an iron hammer upon religious hypocrisy. Now, to teach one thing to your children and not seek to live it out and not be broken when you fail is very, very dangerous, not only for you, but also for your children. It's extremely dangerous.

You don't want to do that. Remember, God does not esteem, doesn't say he esteems those who attain perfection. He esteems those who have a broken and contrite spirit.

God can do anything with humility. He can bless your family with your humility, even though you don't have the mind of Charles Spurgeon or the teaching ability of a John MacArthur. God can use you tremendously if you will just be broken.

Contrite, humble before him, striving. But if you're like these Pharisees here, just full of hypocrisy, teaching your children and demanding from your children things that you can't even carry. You know, that was another thing that we see about religious hypocrisy, that the scribes and the Pharisees would put rules and burdens upon other people that they themselves could not even begin to pick up.

Don't do that with your children. Your household and the teaching of Scripture and you're dealing with your children and your own example before them should be marked by grace. It should be marked by humility, the greatest of all humility.

You know, if you're humble before your children and before your wife, they will not become bitter over your failures. If you will love, a man told me one time when I was first realized I was going to have a child, he said, if you will love that child unconditionally and that child will forgive many of the errors that you commit in raising him. Let's be a people of grace.

Let's not put upon our children burdens we cannot carry. Let's not demand from our children the things that we can't even fulfill or be coarse or hard with our children when they fail, because Jesus warns that he'll do the same with us. He will now, but for the children, they need to realize this, that the disobedience of their parents is not an excuse for their own disobedience.

You never have an excuse for not following Christ. You know, I've counseled with so many people, so many young people that tell me who are in sin and in rebellion and they'll sit there and use as an excuse for their sin and their rebellion, all the errors, failures of their parents. And I always look at them and I say, well, do you claim to be a follower of Christ? And they say, yes, yes, I am.

And I say, well, can you explain to me the times that he failed you, that he lied to you, that he did not do what he promised? And they said they would always say, well, no. I said, well, then you have no excuse for your disobedience and your sin. Parents can fail you.

Children can fail you. The whole world will fail you. The pastor will fail you.

Brothers in Christ, sisters in Christ, missionaries, they will all fail you. But that's not an excuse for disobeying Christ because he never fails you. Never, never.

The testimony of all the saints that have been true saints, the testimony has been this. Not one of all his good words have fallen to the ground undone. He is not a man.

He does not lie. He is faithful and true. So there you have it.

No excuses were called to obedience. Now, parents must strive to live as biblical examples. Parents must strive to love, teach and govern biblically.

Now, sometimes I want to ask fathers. Sometimes I do it even at the risk of getting punched in the nose for doing so. I asked him, I said, let me ask you a personal question.

Whatever motivated you to have children? And they'll say, well, what do you mean? I said, well, your children are totally neglected by you. You have farmed out their raising to everyone else. Their schooling you've given to another.

The character building you've given to their coach. Their religious instruction, you've given it to the youth minister and the pastor. Why did you have children? Did you bring children in the world just to make your economic difficulties greater? Why did you do it? Because you were supposed to.

Was it an accident? Why do you have children? And I would ask you that even now. And for you young men, I want you to think about this. When one day you are married, why do you have children? To neglect them? To have other men and women play a greater role in their life? That's absolutely absurd.

You have children because it is the will of God. And you have them in order to raise them for the glory of God. That by the grace of God, they might become Christian.

And as they become Christian, then they might grow to a mature man or woman in Christ. And that they might be part of the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world. Don't think you've done your job because you simply provide.

Or you take them out on vacations every once in a while. Or put them in a fishing boat and take them fishing. Are you instructing them in the word of God? Are you teaching them to pray? Are you being an example before them? Are you governing your home under the commands of Christ and for the glory of Christ? That's the question.

Why do you have children? Listen to what God says to Abraham. Genesis 18-19 For I have chosen him so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice so that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what he has spoken about him. Now look at this.

He's chosen Abraham so that he might command his children and his household. You say, well, I don't know if I'm chosen. I'm not Abraham.

Are you married? Then you have been chosen to do exactly what Abraham was chosen to do. If you are married, it is to command your children and your household. Command them with love.

Command them with mercy. Command them with grace. But to lead them, to teach them, to instruct them that they might obey Christ and believing in him and loving him and loving others and that it might be well with them.

I've lived and worked in missions most of my Christian life. And I have probably a lot of hang-ups and a lot of problems, but I really don't care a whole lot about money. And I really don't care a whole lot about leaving my children a great inheritance of money or anything else.

I want to provide for my family. I want them to be able to live with dignity. But I have a greater gift to give my children.

Because money in the hands of the godless and the ungodly only leads to judgment. The gift I can give my children is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gift I can give my children is a father who seeks to live out the commands of Christ, which are all summed up in this, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and to love your neighbor as yourself.

That is something I can give my children. No matter how poor I am or how rich I am, that is the greatest gift. Men, that's what you're to be about.

Your heart is to beat with that type of mentality, that passion. You know, I care about the world. I mean, I have meetings every day discussing how we can enter into places that are closed and all sorts of things and trying to pray down walls that are keeping the gospel out, all sorts of things.

But that cannot be to the neglect of my children, to the neglect of my wife. And I know that you have all kinds of work to do. Maybe you work in a factory or you have a very difficult boss, all these different things.

Maybe you're out of work at this moment. But just remember this, you must focus on the first things. And that is you have been chosen to command your children, that they might walk in the fear of the Lord and it might be well with them.

Do you love your children? I know you do. Do you want it to be well with them? What does well mean? It doesn't mean a lot of money because a lot of people with a lot of money commit suicide. It doesn't mean fame or power or the respect of the community.

Do you want it to be well with your children? Then think eternally well that they might know God and His Christ and they might dwell in fellowship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit throughout all of eternity. That's the goal of a father. Now, let's look at Deuteronomy 6, 5 through 9. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

These words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.

You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Now, that's pretty extreme. It's true and it needs to be done.

Now, listen, if you want to go out and you want to buy a bunch of cheap posters and you want to write Bible verses and put them all over the walls of your house, you go to it. I like that kind of thing. Have the Word of God in front of your children all the time.

But it means more than that. It means more than that. First of all, I see people use this text as a need to instruct their children in the law and wisdom and principles and all these sorts of things.

And that's good. The law is advantageous. It teaches us many things.

The wisdom of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes is absolutely excellent. And there are all kinds of life principles in the Bible. But that's not the point of this text.

The knowledge of the Scriptures are a means to an end. They are not an end in themselves. And that end is not simply a moral life.

It's not. Or living biblically or like a Victorian person or a Puritan. That's not what the goal is here.

Do you want to know what the goal of all this extreme stuff is about? Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. That's what you want to teach your children. That's why, listen, you need to have an orderly house, I guess.

And everybody needs to be following a lot of biblical principles. And that's true. We do.

But I would rather see a house that's something of a mess, but filled with the joy of the Lord and people loving the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. Honestly, I mean, honestly, I don't want to take anything away from all these things of just defining exactly what is the will of God and how do we do this and how do we do that and how should we practice courtship and what should marriage be like and how should you discipline children and all of that is very, very good. But if you get all that kind of stuff without the big thing, you've missed the whole picture and you've just become a bunch of sad Pharisees.

You don't want that. The goal is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. And you know where that, you know, people always ask me, well, people always say they'll go, you know, I just don't love God like I ought to.

And that's a burden that all of us have. We don't love the Lord our God as we should. But I always ask them, well, how do you intend to change that? And they'll say, well, I don't know.

I said, well, it's a difficult question, isn't it? It's kind of like trying to pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. How do you make yourself love God more? Well, I'm going to tell you how. When you walk outside and you see the most beautiful sunset you've ever seen in your life and it just takes your breath away.

What did you do in order to appreciate that sunset? What did you do in order to get it to take your breath away? Well, you did absolutely nothing. It did all the work. All you had to do was see it.

And it was so spectacular that it took your breath away. Well, that's how you learn to love God more. You see, you can't just get a whole bunch of principles teaching you about the love of God and then somehow memorize all of them and get them to make you love God more.

You love God more by knowing more about God. You see, God is altogether lovely. He is.

Now, if your heart has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, that heart will appreciate the loveliness of God. So all you need to do is show it more of God's loveliness. You see, in order to get this type of just love and joy and everything in the house with regard to God, you teach them about God.

And not just things about His righteousness and His justice and His wrath, even though those are very important. Have you ever taught your children on the beauty of God, the joy of God? Well, let me ask you this, and this might bother some of you, but that's okay. Have you, as a father, ever been so just happy in the Lord that you just came through the living room singing and dancing, grabbing your children and spinning around and throwing them on the couch? Do you see what I'm saying? It's something they need to see who God is in the Scriptures.

They need to see His beauty, His excellence. Let me put those in plural, His beauties and His excellencies. Everything about Him, they need to see it.

And if God has regenerated their heart, they'll grow to love Him more and more and more. I would like to see your house being very biblical, my house being very biblical. But I would also like to see a bit of wildness in your house, a bit of that joy and that love that just kind of breaks out in song and dance and life.

So, yes, we need to have all these verses on the walls of our home, and we need to teach our children all sorts of principles, but we don't need to miss the big picture. And what is the big picture? Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind. Now, Joshua 4, 5-7, And Joshua said to them, Cross again to the ark of the Lord your God and to the middle of the Jordan, and each of you take up a stone on his shoulder.

According to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel, let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, What do these stones mean to you? Then you shall say to them, Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, when it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall become a memorial to the sons of Israel forever. Now, listen to this first question, though.

The children do not ask, What do these stones mean? That's not all the point. It says, What do these stones mean to you? You see, there's a difference in telling someone what Jesus means, or what the cross means, explaining the cross. An unconverted theologian who's got a few truths right could explain to them the cross.

But what your children need to see is not just what does the cross mean, what does Christ mean, but what does Christ mean to you, Dad? What does the cross mean to you, Father? What is this? When you make a decision in your household and your child says, What does this mean to you? Why do you do this? Then you're able to explain to them what Jesus and the cross means to you. And then possibly it'll become a memorial to them. It'll mean something to them.

You know, guys, here's something that's real important. Man, you can have a lot of knowledge in your head and all kinds of stuff, but you just can't fake a relationship. You can't fake a relationship with Christ.

You can't. Strive to know Him, that you might glow with Him before your children. Also, here's the thing that's very, very important.

To be able, with your children, to hand down history to them. Important history. Things that have to do in your life with Christ.

Things that happened at certain times in your life. Your conversion. Or maybe God teaching you different things.

Or challenges and trials that you went through. And being able to share those with your children, so that they understand that those same stories that they read in the Bible, those kind of stories are in their father's life. They can see the same workings in the life of their father.

It says, Ephesians 6, 4, Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. This is very important, guys. Notice it doesn't say moms.

It says fathers. Now, mothers, according to the book of Proverbs, and throughout other portions of Scripture, mothers have a tremendous role to play. But this idea of the hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world.

There's some truth in that. But it also burdens me, that statement. Because the greatest influence in the family, should be the father.

But many times the fathers are the most neglectful in this area. Thinking that religious instruction and other things pertains to the mother. And for you guys that are homeschool dads, I like to do this, because maybe there's just a little bit of a mean spirit in me.

I like to do this at times. When I'm preaching, I'll say, OK, in the congregation today, how many homeschool fathers are there? Man, you will see guys raise their hand, and they're so proud. You know, I'm a homeschool dad.

And then I ask them, well, how many of you really aren't homeschool fathers? You're just married to a homeschool mom. And you just see everybody kind of grumble, and put their hands down. You see, we need to be very, very careful.

Now, we do have to work, and we have to make money, and we have to provide for our families. And it means, for the most of us, that we can't be at home all the time. But realize, fathers, that it's difficult to be a husband and a dad.

Very difficult. And don't think that when you come home from work at five, or whenever you come home, that, oh, it's rest time now. No, rest time is when you go to bed.

You've got a lot of work to do. And I can say that, because the same thing applies to me. I get home, got a lot of work to do.

I heard from a wise man one time. He said, when I'm at work, the children belong to their mother. When I come home, they belong to me, until I put them to bed.

And if you can hold that as a rule. Now, we can't do that every day. But if you can make that a rule or a standard, that's a very, very good practice.

It's a very wise thing to do. And, yeah, you'll grow old a little bit faster, probably. And you'll be tired.

It'll be worth it. It'll be worth it. Now, it says, Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Man, this is so important. I remember one time doing a math problem with my son Ian. Word problems.

And we went over the same word problem, I bet you 20 times. And then I started rewriting and making up new word problems that were exactly the same. And over and over, my son couldn't get it.

I got so frustrated with him. And finally I said, what is wrong with you? Aren't you thinking, look, it's as clear as day. And the moment I said that, it was one of those times where, no, I didn't hear the voice of God or see an angel or anything like that.

But I knew the Holy Spirit had convicted me. And it was like the Lord was looking at me and just saying, you know, how many years have we known each other? Over 25 years. And there are some truths that I have taught you every day that you still do not get, that you fail at tremendously.

Have I ever scorned you? Have I ever been anything but patient with you? And I had to dismiss myself from the table. I went to my bedroom. I cried for a while.

I asked the Lord to forgive me. I came back. Got down on one knee.

My little boy sitting there in his chair. And I said, Son, forgive me. Please forgive me.

What did you do, Dad? Well, I was impatient with you. And then I didn't leave it at that. You don't want to leave it there.

I said, Son, let me just tell you. I have walked with Christ for over 25 years. He has tried to teach me the same word problem every day for the last 25 years and I still don't get it.

That's what kind of mercy God the Father and His Son has towards His people. And I did not show you that today. I showed you just the opposite.

So forgive me. Do not provoke your children to wrath and bitterness, but raise them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, teaching them the word of God, disciplining them when it is necessary, but always in love and always with joy. Always.

Now, 1st Timothy 3.4 He must be one who manages. That means to superintend, preside over or be a protector or guardian of his own household. He's talking about a pastor and says he must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity.

Now, you cannot be a pastor if this isn't happening in your home. But here's what I want you to see. This qualification, which is found in 1st Timothy 3, is, you know, we have all these qualifications for what it means, what you have to be to be an elder.

And people think, oh, those qualifications, that's just for an elder. Well, no, the qualifications really aren't for an elder. The qualifications are just a reflection of what it means to be a godly man, what it means to be a mature man in Christ.

And to be an elder, you must be a mature man in Christ. So I don't want you fathers to think, wow, you know, I don't have to worry about that because that's just for preachers. No.

What we have there is a reflection of what is a mature and godly man. And all of us should use 1st Timothy 3 and Titus 1 as a standard, as something that we ought to strive for. Now, we ought to manage our own household well.

We shouldn't leave the management of our household to our wives, even though she can do many, many wonderful things, things better than we can do. And she can do those things. But we cannot neglect our family nor neglect the government of our family.

Now, I'm going to end there on this session. And a lot of you are thinking, wow, that was some good stuff. But what did it have to do with biblical courtship? Well, when we began to talk about biblical courtship, those children who have been raised in the way that I have set before you today, it will be a lot easier for them to enter into a relationship with the opposite sex and marry and to form a household if they themselves have been raised biblically.

Also, for those of you who are young men who sit there and go, I want to get married, I want you to see it's a big responsibility, a tremendous responsibility, far more difficult than anything you could imagine right now. And yet, far more wonderful. Far more wonderful.

Guys, when you're thinking about getting married, just don't look at or just don't think about the girl that you've set your sights on. Think about the children that will come forth from that. You're making a commitment to a girl.

No, you're making commitment to much more. You're making a commitment to a girl and to the children that are going to come forth from that relationship. And so, you know, here's the thing.

I know that many of you were not raised this way. But don't use that as an excuse in your own life. The Reformation has to begin somewhere.

Let it begin with your generation. Let it begin on your watch. If for many, many generations, even in the church, these types of things have been neglected, okay, I understand that.

But they need to be reinstated in our Christianity. Let them be reinstated through you. You can be the first generation that starts doing these things in your family line.

You say, well, throughout my family, it's just a history of sinners and thieves and murderers and all sorts of delinquents. Okay, that's fine. Yes.

So, let it start with you to raise up a family that honors and blesses the Lord. Alright, well, God bless you. And in the next session, we'll talk about this some more.

Bye-bye. There you will find information about the ministry, our purpose, beliefs and methodologies and extensive information about the missionaries we are privileged to serve.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/23/SID23112.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paul-washer/biblical-courtship-session-2-the-parents-responsibility-in-the-home/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net