

(Biblical Manhood) -Evening Banquet

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer's sermon emphasizes the importance of biblical principles in parenting and relationships, advocating for courtship over recreational dating and the necessity of maturity in young adults.

Duration: 1:15:39

Scripture: Genesis 2:17, Deuteronomy 8:3, Hosea 4:6, Matthew 7:13-14, Matthew 22:37, John 14:6, 1 Corinthians 7:25

Topics: "Manhood"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker expresses his deep concern for the upbringing of his young children and acknowledges his own shortcomings. He emphasizes the importance of studying and following the scriptures in order to lead a godly family life. The speaker highlights the need for young men to take on responsibility and imitate godly men, while cautioning against using relationships as a source of entertainment. He also criticizes the modern dating culture, which he believes promotes a consumer mentality and can leave emotional scars. The speaker concludes by humbly acknowledging that he is still learning and growing in his own journey towards godly family life.

Transcript

Well, again, it's a tremendous privilege for me to be here. And I have a great burden on my heart, and that I so want the truth that I'm going to be sharing. Sometimes I just want to grab people, and I just want to tell them, do you think I'm doing this for a living? Do you think I'm reciting poetry? Do you think these are just good things to hear? And they're not.

It's a matter of life and death. A matter of life, a matter of death. These are not vain things, Moses told the people.

This is your life. Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God. Also, I want to make it clear to you that I speak to you as a man who is learning, and not as a man who has arrived.

I have a four-year-old, and I have a two-year-old. My heart is in this, because I know that I have just a few short years with these boys. I also know how far I am from the mark.

I also know how much I need the scriptures. I study the scriptures, it's what I do, it's my job. And yet every day I'm increasingly more aware, with regard to family, how little I know, how pagan I am, how truly

different.

I feel as though God is calling me on a journey. And I feel that he's calling many of us on a journey to leave behind the city of destruction, and to go forth following him to greater things. Things that the mind at this moment can't even comprehend, and the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard.

Things of the way family ought to be, the way marriage ought to be, the way children ought to be raised. And so I'm not someone who's been there, done that, and got the t-shirt. I'm someone that's headed, hopefully, in the right direction.

Someone asked me one time, well, how can you teach on children, having not raised children to adulthood? And I said, well, I've never been crucified either, and I teach on the cross. For so many years, our denomination and our lives have been run by people's experiences. Well, it's not people's experiences, it's thus saith the word of God.

Paul the Apostle, who wrote many of these things, never had children. It comes from the spirit of God, and the word of God, and grappling with what God has said, and applying it in a balanced, biblical way in our lives. But it is serious, it is a serious matter.

Do you realize that there are people here that within 25 years will be in hell? And there are people here that within 25 years will be in glory, looking at the face of God. I can't think of anything more important than the truth. An old preacher told me one time, he said, you can walk a thousand miles that way, and a thousand miles that way, and be in falsehood.

But to walk in the truth is to walk on the edge of a razor blade, and it is hard work. It's a very narrow path. It's a very narrow path.

Now, I spoke primarily today about the responsibility of parents, and the responsibility of children to hearken, to obey, to submit, to honor their parents, and how that is a divine ordination. It is something that God has done, and God has commanded. To obey your parents is to obey God.

Not to obey your parents is to rebel against the throne of God. That there is authority that he has placed, and we are to obey that authority. Tonight I want to talk primarily about the difference between recreational dating, which most of us have done, and the biblical alternative, which is courtship.

Let me just read something I have written here. The practice of recreational dating. Now, what do I mean by that? That's when young people go out with someone for fun.

They have no intention whatsoever of marriage. As a matter of fact, if you were to walk up to them and say, well, I see that both of you are out on a date. They would laugh.

I mean, they would think it was a joke. We have no intention whatsoever of marrying. It's recreational dating.

Getting intimately involved with a person of the opposite sex simply for the fun of it. The practice of recreational dating is so far removed from Scripture that it's not even addressed. It is a recent phenomenon that is not only not found in Scripture, but is hardly found in the annals of human history.

Do you realize that? In the Western culture, and just in the last few decades in the Western culture, do we have the phenomenon of dating? And I might add that in the Western culture and only in the last few

decades have we seen such the rampant destruction of family. The rampant increase of immorality. Pregnancy out of wedlock.

All sorts of vices and ills and sexually transmitted diseases. All the things that springs forth from having fun in relationships with people of the opposite sex. And taking what is one of the most, if not the most, sacred things given to man and turning it in to a playground.

A frolic. A six flags. Now, why do people do this? Well, we are in a godless and lawless culture that is motivated by ignorance and flesh rather than by Scripture and the Spirit of God.

That is true. It is true. We are not a Christian culture, and even if you're in the Bible Belt, the Bible Belt is not a Christian culture.

It is a twisted, superstitious culture that claims to lean towards Scripture. But it is just as much practically atheistic as the North. Because it doesn't matter what you say about God or the Bible.

In your daily, everyday activity, is there the reality of truth? Of truth. A good old boy, Christianity, is just as deadly as a Yankee atheism. Now, why do people date with no intention to marry? One is to satisfy the lust of the flesh.

Simply to satisfy the lust of the flesh. Ask a young person who is 16 years old, why are you going out on a date? It is to satisfy the lust of the flesh. Now, that might be for gross immorality, or it may simply be for entertainment.

But never forget, this is the country that on our tombstone it will be written, they entertained themselves to death. Entertainment. You do not use other individuals as a source of entertainment.

You do not use a sacred relationship as a source of entertainment. Also, sometimes dating comes about to satisfy heartfelt passions that may even be biblical, but to satisfy those heartfelt passions without having to step across and make a commitment. Another reason is a consumer mentality.

To test drive several models before you make a purchase. A consumer mentality. You've got to kiss a lot of frogs before you find your prince.

The only problem in this day and age, all those other frogs you kiss may leave you with many, many scars. A consumer mentality. And there are probably people here who have counseled their own children, well, you know, you've got to look around.

You've got to test the waters. Never make any mistake about it, you're speaking the words of the devil. We teach our children to live and learn.

God told Adam and Eve to learn and live. That you don't have to experience evil, and you don't have to experience relationships with other people in order to have a viable relationship with the person you finally settle with. But I think one of the greatest reasons among the true people of God for dating is just the ignorance of Scripture.

And it goes back to my people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. My people are destroyed. A man who disciples me has told me so many times one thing.

Paul, the truth is the only thing we have. We have nothing else to save us but the truth. Nothing else.

Now, I'm going to begin with the time for courtship. And if you can grasp a hold of this one truth, it'll save you so much harm. And some of the things I'm going to say are going to anger you, particularly the young men here are going to maybe be quite angry.

But I just want you to think about things. First of all, when young people are awakened to the opposite sex, it is not a sign to begin to participate because that's basically what the world teaches or at least what the world allows. When a young girl is awakened to the fact that there are boys or a boy is awakened to the fact that there are girls, we seem to think that it is then okay for them to begin to participate.

And what you don't realize is that when someone is awakened to the fact that there is the opposite sex out there, it is a sign from God not to participate but to prepare, to spend the next several years growing to be either a man or a woman of God, not to participate, but to prepare. Another thing, parents, I want to tell you something. You listen to me, it's true.

All of these lies that try to convince you that you are not to protect the innocence of your child. How many times do I hear that? No, you know, you don't want your child just to be an innocent idiot out there and not know what's going on, it's dangerous. That's not what the Bible teaches.

The Bible teaches just the opposite. To guard the heart of your child for it's the very wellspring of life. It is my obligation as I shared this morning, even from the Greek text we understand, that I am to be a guardian of my children.

I don't want to be rude, but I want to tell you something. Anybody walks up to my four year old, or walks up to my nine year old, or walks up to my twelve year old and says, well you're a fine looking young man, do you have a girlfriend? Sir, I am going to grab you and I'm going to take you down the hall and I'm going to make sure you never say a thing like that again to my child. My child is to think about Tonka trucks and hunting and tree forts.

It is my job to protect his heart. I see little girls sending love letters and things. They're six and seven years old and their parents are helping them write the things.

It's disgusting. It's wrong. Do not awaken love before it's time.

There is a beautiful time that is coming, when my children will be awakened to the fact that there is love and there is the opposite sex and that is a wonderful, beautiful thing. But it is not to be awakened until it's time. There's a time for childhood.

There is a time for innocence. There is a time for them to play without ever thinking about these things. Because if they begin to think about these things too early, spiritually and emotionally and everything else, they're not developed and the only thing it's going to do is run them down a ragged road.

Also, in all the things that they ought to be thinking about as children, that will be stolen away from them, their childhood. They will be violated and no longer able to think about the things that children ought to think about. Oh, we ought to protect our children.

We ought to protect them. It's a lie that tells you any other thing. It is not cute.

It is not cute. It is not. Sometimes I go into people's houses and I see a very prominent photograph of two little children.

They look to be about five or six years old and they're in a lip lock, kissing. Well, look, it's so cute. No, it's not.

It's a violation of innocence is what it is. There's a time for things. But let me tell you something.

You know, this is true. Sex is a gift from God, but sex can become one of the most perverted, filthy things if it is out of time and not in the proper place. Do you see that? Everything God has given us is good, but we have this phenomenal capacity to twist it into something horrid.

Men, rise up, protect your children. Rise up and protect them. Because the greatest problem for your children and their innocence is not someone coming from outside your home, but the thing that's found in your home, which preaches more than any pastor could ever preach, which is your television.

Protect the innocence of your child and do not allow love to be awakened until it's time. Now, we go on. I want to speak to you this evening about the lie of adolescence.

When young people, well, adolescence is usually defined as the stage between childhood and adulthood when a young person is discovering his or her identity and asserting his or her independence. But you need to understand that adolescence is nothing more than an invention of false evolutionary thinking. That's all it is.

It has not existed in our history. It has not existed in our prior culture. It has not existed in other places outside of the West.

It is a fable that has done more to destroy maturity in young people than any other thing. Let me give you an example. As a result of adolescence, here's what we have.

A youth passes to adolescence where he or she is allowed to participate in the privileges of adulthood without being required to assume the responsibility of adulthood. Now, let me put it this way. Now, I don't want you to raise your hand.

I'm going to talk to all the young men in here, 18 years and down. Now, don't raise your hand, but I just want you to answer this in your own heart. How many of you would be bold enough to raise your hand and say, You are a man.

You are a man. Now, let me ask you this question. How many of you would like for me to refer to you as a boy? A boy.

A little boy. I doubt if there's very many young men who would stand up in the presence of their own father. The people know him, know them.

I doubt there'd be very many who would stand up and say, Yes, I am a man. I meet the requirements of a man. And I'm also very sure that there are very few young men here who would like being called a boy.

But you see, when you remove adolescence, you only have two options. You're either a man or you're a boy. When adolescence is brought into play, what do you have? I'm not a boy, but I don't have to be a man.

And basically, I'm given all the privileges of manhood without having to assume the responsibility of manhood. This is one of the greatest problems in our culture. You go to the Agwaduna tribe in South

America, of course, it's quite different.

Rule, agricultural. You go to the Aguaduna tribe, it is not uncommon for a young man to marry when he's 14 years old because he's already built his house. He knows how to plow a field.

And if there is a tribal war, he knows how to pick up a lance and go stand on the front line. You go back to the colonial period of our own country, you see basically the same thing. But with the advent of adolescence, what we have is a young boy at the age of 12 or so becomes adolescence and remains in that adolescent state until he's 35 years old.

This is very important when we get to the rest of our teaching, very important. Now, the dangers of adolescence is the immature youth is allowed to participate in activities that require adult maturity in order to avoid serious harm. Probably the only hobby I have is archery.

I love archery. I love to make bows and things like that. As soon as I knew Chato was pregnant, I was ready to go out and buy my son a bow.

And he's had two or three bows already and he's been shooting for about two years with me. And he's four years old. Now, when I get ready to go hunting, I use a double bladed broadhead.

It has to be very, very sharp because my equipment's traditional and the arrow doesn't fly that fast. It has to be extremely sharp. And we use what's called a broadhead wrench because you do not want to touch that broadhead, even if you're a man.

I mean, it can cut you. When my little boy goes out shooting with me, he uses very dull field points. They're rounded.

They have no blade whatsoever. It would be a grotesque immorality for me to allow my little four year old boy to handle broadheads that are even dangerous for me. He is going to use field points.

He will continue using field points until he comes to the point where I see he has the maturity and the strength and the wisdom to handle a broadhead. Then he can get a hold of one and he can put one on. After his father has painstakingly taught him many, many times how to do it.

Let me ask you, what's more dangerous? A little boy in a broadhead or a little boy entering into an intimate emotional relationship with a little girl where sexual activity will occur? You see, we're letting children play with things that are dangerous even for adults. Now, also, because of adolescence, there is little or no motivation for the youth to mature to adulthood. There's almost no motivation.

You hear stories, just read classical literature, just look back in your own culture. What do you see? You see these stories of little boys who are constantly wanting to go out with the hunters, are constantly wanting to go to war, are constantly wanting to go out and work in the fields. They want to be included with the men.

They want to become men because they know that adulthood and manhood opens the door to many, many privileges they cannot experience until they become a man. But now that's no longer required. They can remain as boys.

And yet we ignorantly open the door to all the privileges. It's extremely, extremely dangerous. When that love is awakened in the heart of a little boy, the heart of a girl about the opposite sex, the idea that, wow,

that's something marvelous.

It ought to be set before them that, yes, it is a wonderful thing. But there is no participation in such a thing until someone arrives to adulthood, manhood, womanhood. And therefore, the next several years will be years of careful preparation so that they can dance in the dance without harm.

And it motivates a young man to want to do something other than play video games and watch SpongeBob. If there is any young man that's in the area of 13, 14 years old, if I have anything to do with him, I sit him across the table. I've done this a couple of times at my church back home.

I sit him across the table and I say, listen to me, you're 14 years old. I will not treat you like a boy and I expect you not to act like a boy. And guess what? They rise to the occasion.

Young boys want to be men. Tell them that they must be. Now, the when of courtship.

When? When can you, young man? When can you, young woman, begin thinking about participating in a relationship with the opposite sex? The biblical principle is simple and challenging. One may pursue a relationship with the opposite sex only after one has embraced adulthood and its responsibilities. That would put an end to a whole lot of stuff going on, wouldn't it? Think about that.

Genesis 2, 24. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife and they shall become one flesh. A young man may pursue a relationship with a young woman only when he is willing and able to separate from father and mother and stand independently.

Spiritually, that he walks with God. Morally, he's developed a godly character. And materially, he is able to provide for self and family.

You should not be thinking about having a relationship with the opposite sex while dad is still paying for your car insurance. You see, you must be a man. That would put an end to how many struggles.

You allow a 14-year-old girl go out in a relationship with a 14-year-old guy and then you bang your head and wonder at why there are problems. It's like putting a stick of dynamite in the hands of a babe. Now, I'm always asked this question.

Well, Brother Paul, what about, you know, we go off to college now. We have to go to college and it's very hard, you know. I mean, sometimes you need help from your parents and things like that.

Are you saying that, you know, even to your college years, you can forget about a relationship with the opposite sex until you get out of college and you get a job? Well, I will tell you this. Until you arrive at a point in college where you demonstrate the right road to adulthood and independence and walking in a godly way and assuming responsibility like a man, the answer is yes. I'm telling you, you can't get involved in anything.

I'm telling you that I am sorry if someone has to tell you that you can't have your cake and eat it too. If you're going to remain a boy, you must only be allowed to do the things a boy does. And if you want to do the things that belong to a man, you must begin now, young man, to become a man.

It should be the hope of every father to have his son was into manhood at 18. I see nothing wrong with a young man marrying at the age of 18 if he is a man. And I see everything wrong with some men marrying at the age of 35 because they're still boys.

People always ask me, what's the problem with the world today in this area? And when I begin to explain to them, they say that's too hard. Who can listen to it? But it's true. It's true.

And it's so exciting. There are some families here that know exactly what I'm talking about. It is so excited when you see a 13 year old boy who talks about and thinks about being a man.

And to watch that young boy start imitating men, start trying to walk like a man and talk like a man and do the things. It is so exciting. It is so exciting.

But if we allow them to participate in all these things without demanding that they assume the responsibility, we are going to continue in this travesty that we now know. Now, principles of courtship, principles of courtship. Well, let me say something before we get there, because I've been talking primarily about young men.

Let me say something about young women. I've asked the young men, are you a man? I asked the young women, are you women? Are you women? There is such an honor. There is such an honor in becoming a virtuous woman of God.

And I will not stand in agreement with the feminists and all the other rabble who try to literally... Do you know that most women who teach on these things, the feminists and everything, they just hate women. They don't love women. They hate women and want to be like men.

But the fact of the matter is, you were born to be a woman, a godly woman. And to take comfort and to take joy and to find glory in the full manifestations of womanhood. And when you are awakened to love, it is to set yourself by the side of your mother, by the side of godly women in the church, and to discover what it means to be a woman.

The strength of it, the femininity of it, the nobility of it, everything about being a woman. Do you realize that because we allow our little girls to get involved at 14, 13, the number just keeps decreasing. We allow them to get involved in relationships.

And what are we doing? We keep them from ever learning the tools of womanhood. It could be so beautiful. It doesn't have to be so dark.

Turn to the scriptures. Turn to the scriptures. We go on.

The principles of courtship. I just want to give you a few, several sound principles of courtship that are often practiced by people who've had a measure of success in this area. First of all, when a young man, and we'll start there, has grown to a fine man, grown to a fine man.

Or is clearly on his way to being a fine man so that his father can validate him. Or if his father drops the ball, the elders of the church or the godly men in the church can validate him as someone on their way. First of all, relationships between the opposite sex are always initiated by the man in scripture.

They are initiated by the man. And I have found that women and girls have become so bold and brazen, shameless in this area. But in the scriptures, and it's not a cultural thing, it's a biblical thing.

The relationship is always initiated by the young man. It says for this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother. It does not say for this reason, a woman shall leave her father or her mother.

But a man, not a boy, a man shall leave her father and mother. Furthermore, in the scripture, every time a woman in scripture pursues a man, she's considered immoral. Every time.

Every time. You say, well, this totally goes against our culture. Wouldn't you expect it to? If our culture is God hating and truth hating, wouldn't you expect it to? And women, look at this.

The feminist will tell you that you ought to have the privilege of this. Do you realize, why would you want to have to assume the task of the man? You're the queen sitting there on a throne. He's the one who has to come crawling to you.

He's the one who has to seek you out, find you. Why do you want to be running around the streets doing the same thing? There's a nobility in this. But the enemies of scripture would seek to take something like this and twist it and convince you.

It's treating women as something of a lesser quality. No, it's treating women as something of more noble quality. Now, let's say that a young man is beginning to be attracted to someone.

Begins to start thinking about someone as possibly a partner for life. The first thing he should do is prayerfully evaluate his own motives as to why he is attracted to a certain young lady. Lamentations 340 says, let's let us examine and probe our ways and let us return to the Lord.

Now, this is very important. Most people put a lot of emphasis on let us examine and probe our ways. But one of the most important things said here, and let us return to the Lord.

You see, whenever you're attracted to something and it begins to be something you think about. Oftentimes, is it not true, it begins to consume your thoughts. You begin looking at a young lady, you begin thinking about a young lady, pretty soon what happens? It begins to consume your thoughts.

And I can assure you that if anything other than Jesus Christ consumes your thoughts, you've walked away from the Lord. And so what it's saying is when you are attracted to a certain young lady and you begin to think of her as a possible wife. And she begins to consume your thoughts.

What do you need to do? You need to step back and you need to obey the scripture. Let me examine and probe my ways. And let me return to the Lord.

As a matter of fact, one of the ways in which you will know whether or not this person is the person that God has for you is this. They will promote your spiritual walk, not take away from it. Here are some very important questions that I always ask young men.

Number one, are you attracted to her biblical beauty or are you attracted to her sensuality? Sensuality proceeds from a wicked heart in Mark 7, 21 through 23. For from within, out of the heart of men proceed the evil thoughts, fornication, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, evil, slander, pride and foolishness. Also, sensuality is a deed of the flesh in Galatians 5, 19.

Now, the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, impurity, sensuality. A woman can probably properly be called beautiful. A woman can properly be called elegant.

But a woman who is sensual has an evil heart. Has an evil heart. I know personally, my wife and I have discussed this a lot because she talks to young women and things.

I know many, many women who, when you look at them, you would think to yourself, what a beautiful, elegant lady. And honestly, as a man of God, that's all you would think. A beautiful, elegant, refined.

And there are other women, young men, that do not carry half the physical beauty that if you're a man of God, you look up and the moment you see them walking into the church, you have to put your head down because of the sensuality coming out of their heart. Now, folks, this is truth. This is just raw bone the way it is.

Young men, you run from sensuality. You run from sensuality. Because sensuality is just a public advertisement for the condition of the heart.

You run from it. And young women run from sensuality. Run from sensuality found in young men because it's there, too.

If anyone dresses or acts in any way so as to promote the frame of their body, it's sensuality. It is. Beauty, yes, we should be a beautiful people.

The Proverbs 31 woman, all indication is that she had a royal nobility to her. Beauty in Scripture, many of the patriarch's wives were considered beautiful and it was considered a virtue even. But sensuality, if you're attracted to that young man, it's also an indication of your own heart.

And you're biting on a fruit that is forbidden to you and will end up turning to gravel in your gut. Now, also, I said, now, are you attracted to her because of her biblical beauty or her sensuality? Secondly, are you attracted to her virtue or are you attracted to her personality? Even good personalities can be misleading. You say very misleading.

You're not looking for personality. You are looking for virtue, for virtue. The Bible says in Proverbs 31 10, who can find a virtuous woman for her price is far above Ruby's virtue.

As the years go by, young men, I want to tell you something. Listen to me carefully. It will not be the physical that will endear you to your wife.

It will be virtue. It will be virtue. When you see, if indeed Christ dwells in your heart, young man, then you will be attracted to the Christ that is manifested in her life.

Now, am I attracted to biblical beauty or sensuality? Am I attracted to virtue or personality? Now, on we go. When a young man is attracted to a certain young girl, what should he do? Well, after examining his own heart, he should go to the authorities that are over him. And that main authority over him would be his father, his father.

Now, the young man should seek out godly counsel from the biblical authorities that are over him first, starting with his father. Proverbs 4 1, hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, and give attention that you may gain understanding. Now, for you fathers, there's a word here.

When he comes to you, will you be able to open up your mouth and pour forth scripture? Do you have a discerning heart, trained by years of being in the scriptures? It's a sword that cuts both ways. The father, go to the father. If the father has dropped the ball, if he is an unbeliever and does not care, still you should honor your father and you should go to him.

But if he basically just gives you a license to do whatever you want, do not take that as a word from God. Go to the next in line. Go to the elders of your church.

Go to the men of God in the church. Because the Bible says in 1 Peter 5 5, You younger men likewise be subject to your elders. And all of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another.

Go to your elders and put this before them. And if the elders drop the ball, find yourself another church. You need that authority in your life.

Find a godly man. If every authority that has been ordained by God has been dropped, then do it. Find yourself a man who you can see loves his children.

And go to him. Ask his help. And if the spirit of God abides upon him, he will help you.

And the first thing that will probably come out of his mouth is, I do not know you well enough, young man, to help you. So abide with us for a while. Let's wait upon the Lord together.

Allow me to help you. But if you're looking for a quick answer, then you weren't looking for counseling in the first place. Because most people that go for counseling, they're not looking for counseling.

They just want the preacher to affirm what they've already decided to do. And if he doesn't affirm it, they'll just go find another preacher who will. And they're out there.

But let's say in a perfect case scenario, you go to your father. And your father says, son, you know, all these years we've been in scripture together. We've walked together.

I still think that you lack the necessary things to be walking in this direction. And I would ask you as your father to wait. Young man, you only have one correct biblical response.

And that's wait. And that's wait. Honor your father and wait.

But put it before your father. Father, what am I lacking? Help me. I want to be the man.

And father, help him. You are not a father because you put a roof over his head. The government can do that.

You are not a father because you buy him all the things that you never had. You are a father because you raise him to manhood. But let's say that the father looks at the boy and says, son, you've grown to be a fine man.

I'd jump in a foxhole with you. You've grown to be a fine man. Then what should happen from there? Well, there's some things that should go on.

First of all, the father should sit down and if he knows the girl, if he knows the girl, if the father is aware of who she is, he ought to pray much and think about this. Because the father may know the girl well enough to know that she is not ready. That she is not ready.

And young person, listen to me. When someone comes into my office and they say that they want to be married, and I tell them that it is not the will of God, at least where I can see it, their life, and I'm not saying that I've prayed and not had a vision about it. What I'm saying is, I've simply listened to them, compared what they've said to Scripture, and it doesn't add up.

I'm not talking about something mystical. I'm not talking about becoming the prophet over other people's lives. I'm just telling you that as a man of God, some young man comes in, says they want to get married, and I take his life and compare it to what the Scriptures say about adulthood, and he isn't even close, I cannot tell him with all the authority of Scripture, it's not God's will.

But I don't mean it's never God's will. I mean it's not God's will at this moment. That's something, young man, young woman, that would greatly help you.

Just because it is not God's will at this moment, doesn't mean it's not God's will. It was not God's will for Moses to deliver his people as a prince of Egypt, or through his own might and by the strong arm of his flesh, but it was God's will for him to deliver Israel from Egypt. It was just 40 years later.

And one of the greatest tests of true Christian discipleship is the ability to submit to authority, number one, and number two, the ability to wait upon God. To wait upon God. But let's say that all things considered, she seems to be a very godly young woman, he's a very godly young man, then what should happen? Well, I'll tell you what should not happen.

If that young man sends his best friend to go talk to her best friend, he is not a man. He is a coward to the nth degree. Some of you guys are laughing because you've done that very thing.

That's pitiful. I mean pitiful. I ought to wrap you in diapers and leave you out there in that snowstorm.

But then again, we've all done it. We've all done it. But it doesn't make it right.

Everybody in hell is going to say we all did it. But it doesn't matter how many people are in there, it's still not going to make it right. One of the things of being a man is to be able to stand your ground and accept rejection, accept humiliation.

It's part of being a man. To go ahead and lay your cards on the table knowing that they could be wiped away. Another thing you don't do, young man, is you do not walk up to that girl.

You do not walk up to that girl and ask her. You have no right. In the same way, young man, that you are to honor your father and your mother, you are to honor her father and her mother.

Let me give you an illustration. Let's say it's October 1st in Illinois. That is a very holy day in Illinois.

It's the beginning of bow season. And so my wife has already had enough of me, so I'm sitting outside in the frost at three in the morning because she's already kicked me out of the house. And I'm sitting there and I can't wait until it gets even close to daylight because I'm going straight up a tree.

I've been looking forward to this ever since the season was over, the 18th of January. There are only two seasons, hunting season and waiting for hunting season. Can I get an amen, David Young? And it's just about time.

I'm standing there and it's light enough so the game warden isn't going to get me. And I go over there and get in that old truck of mine and it's gone. It's gone.

Now that truck doesn't mean anything to me, but I'm not going to get to where I need to go to make blood be spilt on the field because that truck is gone. And I'm pacing around until 10.30 in the morning. I am so fuming.

My wife has boarded up all the windows. No one's going outside. I'm so angry.

And all of a sudden you, 16 year old, snotty nose you, come pulling up in my truck. And you jump out. You throw me the key.

You say, Thank you, Mr. Washer. Good time in your truck. I got a place behind the barn where I bury people like you.

And I don't kill them first. I let the ground handle that. Would you do that? You might do it, but you'd only do it once.

I don't think you would do that. Then how dare you do the same thing with my daughter? The most precious person in the world, my wife, risked her life to bring that girl into the world. I've worked very, very hard to put clothing on her back, food in front of her, a house over her head.

I have been with her at nights when she was terrified because of the storm. When her little heart was broken into a million pieces. I've been there.

You were nowhere. Who do you think you are? I'll never forget one time, two young ladies in our church, their grandparents, who are very godly, their grandfather died and I went to the funeral. And the girls came out.

They came out of the church and they were weeping, of course, understandably fine young girls. And all the young youth guys were standing there like this. You know, kind of just standing around all of them.

Like this. And they saw the young girls coming out weeping. Of course, the girls' friends were weeping.

And they all kind of stuck their chest out there and walked over there and they put their arm around the girls and were trying to comfort them and everything. When those girls walked away, I walked over there and I said, you ever do that again, I'll rip off your arm and beat you with the bloody end of it. And they said, what? I said, who do you think you are? God has not ordained that comfort come from you, young man.

As a matter of fact, you're not giving comfort, you're receiving something. You're taking something. It's not your place.

You see, to some of you, I am saying things that are so radical you think I'm out of my mind, but if you'll sit down and think about it for a while, it is not the place of that young man to come over there and put his arm around a girl that he has nothing to do with, no commitment to, nothing. It is not his place. It is the place of her father and her father's father.

It is the place of her brother who ought to beat the living daylights out of you if you ever try that again. But it is not your place. It simply is not.

You can walk up and say you are praying for that person, but that is not your place. That young lady is under the watch care and the authority of her father. You extend your arm and touch her.

You've touched him and you've dishonored him. You say, well, this is absolutely... well, then go back to the way you've been practicing and get the same results you've been getting. Or learn that this is true.

And even secular, unbelieving people knew this 70 years ago. It is not your place. You honor her not by going over there and wrapping your arm around her.

You honor her by abstaining from doing that. Because she is something very, very valuable and especially something very, very valuable to another man. And that man is not you.

That is her father. And so what does the young man do when he thinks that he has attracted this person, his father? And maybe even he's gone to his elders because his father wanted him to and he's spoken with them. Maybe he's gone to other godly Christians and they have done the same thing.

And it seems to be affirmed that he should go. What should he do? He should go to her father. Now, let me tell you something, young man.

When you go to her father, don't walk up there and say, you know, I've been looking at your daughter and she is fine. Just a little hint. I just kind of want to fill you in there.

You need to say something like this. I have been praying about your daughter and she is a very virtuous woman. But you walk up to him and you say, sir, I want to speak with you.

Now, here's the problem again. Many fathers would think you were out of your mind. Even men who attend church regularly would think you were out of your mind.

They wouldn't even understand. And maybe if that's the case and it is a church going man, you could call on your father for a second visit to accompany you and maybe your father could explain to this man what it means to be a father. But you go to him and you honor him.

And if he drops the ball and doesn't care, if he just says, what do you mean? Do whatever she wants. Then go to her elders. Again, go down that line of authority.

Go as far as you can to honor God and to honor her. Even if her parents drop the ball, go ahead and do everything in your power to honor her. But let's say that the father is a godly man and he is aware of these things.

Then you go to him. Now, fathers, let me share some things with you. Some things that are extremely, extremely important.

That father, immediately, can take one look at you and can deny you any privilege to have anything to do with his daughter. And he doesn't have to ask his daughter. He can take one look at you and he can say no.

And there are passages that back that up in Exodus 22, 16, and 17, Numbers 30, verses 3 and 5. Cases where a young woman has made a vow and the father can come and just put an end to that vow, just like that. Or because of something that's happened, a young man asked to marry a young lady and the Scriptures say that the father just simply says no. He has that right.

And young man, if he does do that without any explanation, the most godly, biblical thing you can do, the most God-honoring thing you can do is say, thank you, sir. Although I would ask him after saying, thank you, sir, I would say, sir, would you please pray about it and could I come back and ask you in a few months? But no more. No more.

I was 30 years old when I wanted to marry my wife. Her father is an unbeliever. He lived thousands of miles away.

He did not want me to marry her because he did not want her to be a missionary. He said no. We honored his no.

We honored his no. And a few months later, I don't know how long it was, four or six months later, he said, Marian. I mean, no one could believe.

The grandparents, the father, the mother, no one could believe. Even people who should have known better were telling us, what are you doing? Marry her. No.

I love her too much to marry her. And I can remember going there. I was a single missionary and I can remember going up to the third floor and crying out to God and I can remember God impressing upon my heart because the relationship I have with Him happens to be supernatural, impressing upon my heart, Son, I will fight for you.

I will fight for you. I remember having such a time of praise and worship because God was going to fight for me. He's never lost a battle.

If God's in it, young man, a king can't keep you away from her. You talk about a radical Christianity. My radical Christianity says I can swing out into eternity on a scarlet thread and be as safe as a baby in a cradle.

The providence of God. If it is God's will for you to marry her, you will marry her. If He has to take out half the world, you will marry her if it's His will.

You don't have to worry about that. It is such a wonderful thing to have a sovereign God. He can turn the heart of a father.

He can do anything He wants. So if the father says no, then bless the Lord, because maybe through the father's authority, God has kept you from entering into a relationship you should not have been in, but you didn't have the sense to know it. Or maybe His no is going to give you the opportunity to see the glory of God in turning His heart.

if the father approves, if you see this young man coming and you're like, oh yeah, this is good. He is a godly young man. Everything else.

Father, you do not look at him and say, man, you have my blessing. Go for it. You don't say that.

Why? Because although you do have the scriptural authority to say no to him, you do not have the scriptural authority to put your daughter in a relationship with a man that she hasn't spoken about, that she has no care for. And so what you do is you say, young man, thank you very, very much. I'm going to retire and pray, and I'll get back with you.

And then you go to your daughter. If you've prayed, sir, and you feel that, yes, this is a fine young man. He's grown to be.

You go to your daughter and you tell her. Now she throws up on your shoes. The answer is probably no.

If she says no, you say, daughter, would you take a couple of weeks and pray about it? And she should submit to her father. Yes, dad, I will. Because God can change your heart.

God can begin showing you things. But if she comes back and says, daddy, no, no. Then dad goes to her.

Now it goes to the young man. I want you to listen to this, father. It's very, very important.

He goes to that young man and he does not say, listen, I've talked to my daughter, and she said no. He doesn't do that. Fathers and husbands, listen to me.

Your wife and your daughter should never be confronted by any other man. Should never have to deal with any other man in a confrontational situation. It is your job, sir, to protect them both.

And so you do not go back and say, my daughter said no. You go back and say, I say no. I say no.

Because it is your job to stand between any man and your daughter. You are her protector. You are her guardian.

You care for her. Do you see how precious daughters are and yet how we've treated them like they were old rubber buckets? Just let them go anywhere. Let them do anything.

Do you see how wrong that is? Do you see the nobility in this? My daughter is so precious. I protect her. She never has to answer a young man and say no.

Because her father stands in the middle. And he takes all that has to be taken. Any storm that comes from any man, he takes it.

He stands as guard over her until the day the father, by his own volition, takes the hand of his daughter and places that hand in the hand of her husband. Until that moment happens, he is her authority and protecting her. It's very important to guard her.

And that's why, young man, you never walk up to a girl and say, will you go out with me? Because not only have you stepped over her father, but you're forcing her to be confronted by a man. That's not her father. And she has to address him with a difficult issue.

And that is not her place. She's to be protected. She's a finer stock.

Do you see the nobility in what we're talking about here? There's such nobility. Now, let's say that the father says yes, goes and talks to her daughter. She starts saying hallelujah and running around the house kind of like Chato did when she first found out, my wife.

No, actually, I called my wife on the phone when it finally all came to pass. I called her up on the phone. I was in Peru and she was in the United States studying.

Her father had already said, but then, you know, we had separated for a long, several months and everything. And she had gone her way. And I was sitting in my office one day and I was reading a track by Swindoll, Chuck Swindoll on benefits of being single.

And I was looking at that and I said, man, there isn't a thing in this thing that applies to me. So I called her on the phone. I said, Chato, is this you? She said, yes, it's me.

I said, I have a question for you. She said, what? I said, would you marry me? She said, you're kidding. I said, no, I'm not kidding.

Would you marry me? And she said, well, yeah, I'll marry you. That's how it happened. But now, if the girl says, yes, dad, yes.

Then what should happen? Then the person's most involved, which would be the parents should come together if at all possible. Now, again, I realize I'm talking about a perfect case scenario. But let me also say this, and I'm becoming more and more believing in this.

Folks, this is one of the reasons why there is a sense in which your family life should stand on its own and the father is the priest of his family. There's a real sense of that. But especially as darkness surrounds the Christians in this country, this is all the more reason to have a strong church.

And in that church, your society be in that church. Because it is there that relationships are going to occur. God does that.

In churches like this and then with sister churches that are like-minded, there's nothing wrong with this. This is the way it should be more and more. That life evolves around the family.

That we have families and strong families, but that we have this society, this fellowship, this church life in which godly relationships can spring forth from it. And when they occur in the body with families together that have known one another for years and years and years, there's such a strength in that. There's such a strength in that.

For getting in a church, making that church your family home. You know, this whole idea, I heard a testimony a while back about a man who was offered a phenomenal job. Twice the pay and everything else.

He turned the whole thing down. Why? He did not want to leave the community of his church. Because I believe that we should live in such a way, and if we live in that way, that we will see relationships springing forth from the godly families in our church.

It's a wonderful thing to happen. But if at all possible, the parents should come together. They should come together.

Now, for what purpose? To build a relationship in Christ. To build a relationship. To get to know one another.

To be united in purpose. What is their purpose? Man, this is my daughter. And this is my son.

To be united in purpose of making their time of courtship a wonderful, beautiful, godly experience. And to do that, they must build parameters of protection. That's one of the main reasons they come together.

To build parameters of protection. To take what the Scripture says seriously so that this young couple does not enter into immorality. We'll be talking about that in a moment.

And to provide accountability. To provide accountability. Now, I want to speak to you.

We're going to come to an end here. Against sexual immorality in courtship. And I want you to listen to me.

This is the most dangerous aspect of any relationship between two people of the opposite sex. This is the most dangerous thing. Now, let me just say something to you.

And I've had so many people disagree with me. But I just want to say something to you. I submit to you from Scripture that it is absolutely impossible to be alone with someone of the opposite sex for any extended period of time without falling into some form of sexual immorality.

And you're dreaming if you think differently. It is impossible for two people of the opposite sex to spend any extended period of time alone together in an emotional relationship without something physically happening. It is impossible.

The fierce nature of sexual immorality is portrayed throughout Scripture. Listen to this. We are told to wrestle with the devil in Ephesians 6, 12, and 13.

We are told to wrestle in hand-to-hand combat, face-to-face wrestling with the devil. We are told to resist him and we are told he will flee from us in James 4, verse 7. We are told that. We're not told to run from the devil.

We're told to fight him. But when it comes to youthful lust in 2 Timothy 2, 22, we are told to run as though a wild beast were behind us. That tells me that whatever's inside of you is worse than the devil himself.

Now, let me give you a few illustrations to explain this. A few years ago, a very godly young man who's now in seminary came to my office and he's crying. He was a man's man.

He was crying. I said, Son, what is wrong? He said, I just can't take it anymore. He said, I don't know what to do.

He goes, I pray, I fast. My fiancée, she prays, she fasts. We're in the Word.

We have a quiet time together. But there are times where we haven't committed sexual immorality. We haven't gone all the way.

But we have done things and those things have made us feel so miserable and dirty and confused that sometimes we even want to break off the relationship. I feel ashamed. She thinks that I'm ashamed of her.

I mean, we just go through this. We struggle and sometimes we just don't know what we're going to do. And I said, well, what do your counselors at college tell you? And the young man said, well, they told us, you know, this is a difficult time and you need to be praying and fasting, reading the Word and everything to overcome these temptations.

And I said, you go back. You tell your counselors and I want you to use my name. You tell them that I said they need to stop counseling young people with their foolishness.

What would you think of me if I told you that I was fasting and praying for seven days in order to have the power of the Holy Spirit so that I could go in and rob a bank? You would say, brother Paul, you don't pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to do something outside of the will of God. In the same way, you do not pray for the power of the Holy Spirit in order to resist temptation when you're alone with someone of the opposite sex because you're commanded not to be alone with someone of the opposite sex. What would you think about me if a few years ago when I came here to preach and I had a wonderful little apartment that I was staying in over there, what would you think? What would the pastor and the elders think if they

came up there one day up the stairs and they hear something going on in the room, had a little kitchenette in it, and I'm there with a little apron on and a beautiful single young woman in the church and we're making cookies.

And they said, what's going on? I said, what do you mean what's going on? I got an apron on, we're making cookies. What's the problem? You know as well as I do the revival would be canceled. It would be immediately.

I mean, let's just say, let's just play this on. And I said, I don't understand, men. Did you come up here, am I committing immorality? We're making cookies.

We're having a good time. We're talking about the Lord. We're making cookies.

What is the problem? And they would look at me and go, are you out of your mind? What do you mean what's the problem? This is insane. How can you do this? All right, now look at something. I'm 44 years old.

I'm not a 16 year old kid with raging hormones. Number one. Number two.

If I ever fall into immorality, I got a lot more to lose than a 16 year old boy. I could lose my wife. I could lose my children forever.

I could definitely lose the ministry. I also will hurt countless missionaries around the country and around the world who depend upon heart cry. Also, the testimony.

I've got more to lose than a 16 year old. So don't you think if anyone could be alone with a woman for any period of time, it would be me because I have everything to lose. And you say, well, of course not.

You still should not be with a woman. It's too dangerous. Then why do you let your 16 year old do it and then wonder why he fell? Or you don't think he fell when he has.

Because I can tell you this. You can mark it down. I'm not a prophet or the son of a prophet.

You let your young children be in an emotional relationship with someone of the opposite sex long enough. They've done things that would make you turn inside out. And it's not their fault necessarily as much as it is yours.

If I as an older man should never be thrust into a situation like that, then why do you think that a 15 year old and a 16 year old and a 17 year old and an 18 year old can get into that type of thing and not be soiled? Young person, listen to me. Sex is a wonderful gift of God in its proper context. The average so-called Christian in America has five major relationships before they're ever married.

Do you know what that means? That means when they go to the altar to be married, they're not complete. They've left five pieces of themselves somewhere else. It also means that that night of their honeymoon, you're not alone because those five people have come with them.

It's just true. And then you wonder why there's so much confusion and so many problems. Young person, you know this.

You know it's true. Some of you have already fallen. You know it's true.

You cannot be alone. And this young couple I was talking about, it wasn't like he was going over to her apartment every night. I'm talking about him driving her home from church.

Sitting in the parking lot, talking. Maybe even have a Bible open to start off with. It's just that powerful.

That is the reason why old buildings, old houses had parlors. It is a room. Where what? Where two young people can sit there and talk and share and get to know one another.

But it has a great big door that has no door on it. It's just a big opening. Where dad, every so often, walks by with his old World War II or Vietnam rifle.

And everybody's happy. Except the devil. Let me tell you something.

This idea that you must have some sort of physical relationship to get to know the person. If that is true, then Jesus wasn't the Messiah. And the Bible is a joke.

If you want to say that, say that. But know that you are saying that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God and the Bible is nothing more than a book of myths. But don't hold on to both things.

Young person, listen to me. A physical relationship, the only thing it does outside of wedlock is confuse. That's all it does is confuse.

And then make you feel dirty. The young man is ashamed. If he is truly a Christian, he's ashamed.

Why? He's going, what kind of spiritual leader am I? The girl is ashamed. What does he think, I'm a tramp? I mean, look what I did. It just confuses everything.

And there's no need for it. It's a lie. Straight out of the pit of hell.

It is a lie of our culture and our age. But it's not true. It's not true.

And so what happens? Again, the parents, elders, the church community, they realize, look, we've got young people who are interested in one another, maybe have made commitments of courtship. Here's what we're going to do. We're going to be a church to them.

We're going to find ways that they can get to know one another. We're going to find ways that this can happen. But we're going to make sure that those ways never allow them to be alone.

And I put it this way. I write it this way. The only way to avoid sexual immorality is to avoid being alone in secret places, unshaperoned, where any form of unbiblical behavior can go unseen.

And if you take that principle and say, OK, this is not a suggestion.

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