

New Life Baptist Church - Part 5

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer emphasizes the importance of biblical manhood and the responsibility of fathers to raise their sons in a culture that often misrepresents masculinity.

Duration: 1:14:29

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:2, Deuteronomy 6:4-7, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 22:37

Topics: "Parenting Faith", "Family Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of parents being creative and intentional in spending time with their children. He shares a personal anecdote about receiving gifts for his children that he usually wouldn't permit. The main message is that parents should focus on leaving a legacy of faith in their children, rather than just providing material possessions. The speaker references Deuteronomy 6:4, highlighting the importance of teaching children that there is one God and He is Lord. He also encourages young men to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Transcript

It's a tremendous privilege to be here this morning, I feel like probably somebody else should be up here, because all of us have so much to learn about everything that has to do with being a man, everything that has to do with raising men. Just for a moment before we get started, we have to realize that we live in a culture that knows absolutely nothing about manhood. Back in the 70's we decided that people like Alan Alda and Phil Donahue would teach us what it meant to be men.

Then there's all these misconceptions about what it means to be a Christian man. For example, if you look at most of the paintings, which in my opinion are an abomination anyway, if you look at most of the paintings of the person of Jesus Christ, what do you see? Do you see any manhood there that you can identify with? Most of it is a very feminine, grotesquely feminine depiction of somebody that they call Jesus. Now what is the reason for that? Well, most ideas of the way Jesus Christ looked comes from medieval, 15th century, 14th century, 13th century art from the Catholic Church, primarily painted by artists who were homosexuals.

And that's why the pictures look the way they do. You see, we live in a culture that knows nothing about manhood. You say, yes, that's right, you know, John Wayne was the last real man.

Well, if you're spirit filled and you go back and you watch a John Wayne movie, you will see that the man was full of self, carnality, self-centered, rude, crude, about everything else. So he's not the picture of manhood either. Jesus Christ is the picture of perfect manhood.

But we have to be very, very careful with the way we look at Jesus Christ. We have to look at Him through biblical eyes and try, even though we'll never be able to do it, try to shed ourselves of looking at the Bible through eyes or glasses that have been remarkably painted by our own culture. We have ways of looking at things because we are humanistic.

We are man-centered. We are many, many things that totally oppose Scripture. And so when we go into Scripture, we begin to interpret it wrongly.

I'll never forget a few years ago, a man by the name of Richard Owen Roberts. He was preaching in a conference where I preached the following year, and that's how I heard this story. Richard Owen Roberts is an old kind of Puritan reformed guy up in Chicago.

And he was teaching up in Canada, and he happened to make the remark that AIDS was the judgment of God. A woman stood up in the middle of the sermon, screamed out, That cannot be true. And he said, Dear Madam, why can it not be true? And she said, God would never kill a bunch of babies.

Babies die of AIDS. God would never kill a bunch of innocent babies. Richard Owen Roberts, an older man, looked over the pulpit and said, Madam, how many babies do you think God killed when He flooded the earth during the time of Noah? The whole point is this, not that I want to portray God as mean or not just, but the point is we have so many concepts of the way we think God ought to be or manhood ought to be, and they're not based on Scripture, they're based on our humanism.

Our humanism. Now, another great problem, one of the greatest problems to becoming a man and raising men in this generation is this. It's the idea of adolescence.

Adolescence is a lie. There is no such thing as adolescence. Adolescence is based upon a false evolutionary formula.

And it is used as a buffer in our culture today. You see, in almost every culture, even in our own, prior to the advent of adolescence, you had simply this. A boy, and I want to say it that way, a boy and a man.

You were either a boy or you were a man. Okay? And that transference, that change, that transformation usually occurred somewhere around 12, 13, 14 years old. Okay? Now, how did a boy become a man? The boy became a man because he stood beside the other men and did what other men do.

He could defend his farm. He could farm his farm. He could manage his farm.

He could even take a wife. Because he was no longer a boy, he was a man. Now, you have the advent of adolescence.

And what happens? He's a boy until he's about 12 or 13. Then he's an adolescent. And adolescence is supposedly a time of finding yourself, of rebelling against authority in order to establish your own, and all these other things that have been brought in.

And they never mature to manhood. Never. Until maybe after college and they get married somewhere around 35 or 40.

They start sort of entering into manhood. Up until that time, they're just a boy. Plays video games.

Walks through malls. I mean, no concept of responsibility. I love to hunt.

And I make bows and things like that. And when my little boy turned about, well, just about when he was born, I made him a bow. And he goes out even today.

When I get home, one of the first things we'll do is we'll go out and shoot. He's four years old. My two-year-old is now starting to learn how to pull back a string.

But he shoots field points. Field points, they're used for targets. I shoot broadheads.

My broadheads are so very, very sharp because wooden bows are not that fast. So the broadheads have to be so extremely sharp that you put them on with a broadhead wrench because you don't even want to touch them. Now, my little boy, he does not use broadheads.

The other day, I was teaching him how to shoot a BB gun, and when I turned my back on him, I was holding this can in my hand. He goes, Daddy, just hold the can in your hand. I'll shoot it.

I said, No, son. The fact of the matter is he cannot have broadheads because he's a boy. One day when he becomes a man, he can use broadheads because until that point, if I give broadheads to a boy, he's going to kill himself.

Now, that's the culture we're in. We're in a culture where boys stay boys until they're in their 30s. And almost never really become men.

And that's what we're up against. And then you throw this in. Just a few generations ago, not even a few generations ago, when a man went out to work, he took his son with him.

I have a rule in my house I told my wife. I said, As long as they can't walk, they're with you. When those boys start walking, they're with me.

You see, there used to be a culture that when the man left the home in the morning to go work, his boys went with him. And they learned to be men. The Mennonites.

I go to several lumber mills looking for good wood to build bows and other things. I build furniture or whatever I'm doing at the time. If it's for me, it's a bow.

If my wife gets a hold of me, it's for furniture. And I go up to the Mennonites and I'll talk to them and witness to them. You know what they say? From the time a child is born, a boy, until he's six years old, he's a drain on the family.

It will cost the family to have him. From the time he is six years old until he is 12 years old, he pays for himself. And after 12, he is a profit to the family.

We're still putting them through college. Do you see what's going on? In the Aguaruna tribe where I worked in Condorcanqui in the northern departamento Amazonas in Peru. It was very common for a man to get married when he was 14.

Because he could go out with the other hunters. He could hunt. He could fight.

He could do all the things he had to do. Our primary responsibility as men is to raise men. To raise men.

That's our primary responsibility. Now if you don't want that to be your primary responsibility, don't have children. You know, some people ought to be neutered.

Really. They ought to be. I don't even know why they have children.

I guess it's just what you're supposed to do. I don't know. But the whole goal of our life, gentlemen, when our sons and daughters are born, is to pour ourselves into them.

Now here's the problem. We're also, those of you who are men here today and have children, we are also products of our culture. We know so very little about being men.

So what are we going to pour into our children? More of the same corruption? There is, I believe, without a shadow of a doubt, persecution. Our national crisis is coming. And I'll tell you why.

Not because I'm a prophet or anything like that. It's because I'm a student of history. Every time that there is coming persecution or national crisis, a reformation occurs prior to that.

It's almost as though God is getting His people ready to go through hell. Now, you might not know this, but I know this. It's a fact.

The universities I go to and teach, the seminaries, the different places where I go, it is astounding. I'm seeing young university guys studying in secular universities. I'll go speak.

Two hundred of them show up and they're all reading Jonathan Edwards and the Puritans. It seems like all the truth that has been lost, historic, biblical Christianity that has been lost, there is a reformation. It's coming back.

And part of that reformation deals with family. Family. Now, most people forty years old and above are not getting it.

Really. Theologically. They're not even understanding what's going on.

Some are. But most my age and up aren't. That there are so many things we have done in Christianity in the last forty years that's no more biblical than a man on the moon.

The way we do church, the way we do our families, just about everything. I mean rotten to the core. But changes are occurring.

And part of those changes are with family. Now, I have two boys. It is my responsibility.

They were given to me that they become men. But I have to be a man. I was raised in a culture that was not Christian.

Yeah, I was in America. Yeah, I went to church as a boy. That doesn't mean anything.

It is my responsibility to go back into the word of God and discover what it means to be a man. So that I can pour that into the life of my son. Much of the activity that used to be so important to me, even ministerial activity, is no longer important to me.

One of the chief things in my mind is this. What does it mean to be a godly man? And how is that supposed to be transferred to my children? To my children. And I want us to open up our Bibles to Deuteronomy 6. A passage that you probably are all familiar with.

Before we get into that, let me say one other thing. We've got some young men in here. Sometimes there will be a young guy in a church or something that maybe his father has passed away or his father is derelict.

And sometimes a mom will say, you know, Brother Paul, would you take them out to your wood shop and beat the living daylights out of them? Would you take them out to your wood shop and build a bow with them or something? And just be around them a bit and say, sure. I'll never forget the last guy, a 14-year-old kid. And I sat him down in my office and he was kind of scared.

And I said, son, look at me. He kind of looked up and I said, no, look at me. There's a proper way to look at someone.

You look me in the eye when I'm talking to you. I said, now, here's the way it's going to be. I am not going to treat you like a boy.

I am going to treat you like a man. Like a man with whom I would jump into a foxhole if there was a war. I am going to treat you like a man and I am going to expect you to act like one.

Guess what? It's never failed. They do. I don't believe in adolescence, so make your choice.

You're either going to be a little boy or you're going to be a man. Now, which do you want to be? Guess what? They start transforming. But let me say something to the young men.

I teach a lot. I'm 44 years old, which isn't old, I mean, compared to your pastor and stuff like that. You know, I'll teach sometimes and I'll have young guys, they'll be sitting in there.

I'll never forget, we were in this town of maybe, I don't know, 10,000 people or something. And there was this one whole section of young people and they just thought they were so cool. I mean, it's unbelievable.

It's like they thought they were living in a ghetto in New York or something. They thought they were so street wise and they knew everything. And I'm 44 years old, you know, and I'm a dumb old man who's never seen anything.

And I'll never forget this one boy. He was just, he was causing so much trouble, trying to distract everyone and everything. And he had his pants, you know how they wear their pants down with their underwear showing type thing and everything.

And I thought, Lord, how can I reach this guy? I mean, he just thinks, I mean, he's from this little podunk town and he thinks he just knows everything that's ever to be known. And so, I saw him over by himself one day and I kind of walked over and I sat down and I said, how's it going? He said, alright. I said, I have a question for you.

He goes, yeah. I go, do your parents know? And he said, know what? I said, come on. I've been around the world several times.

Obviously, you're a guy who knows what's going on. Do your parents know? He goes, know what? I said, look man, I mean, I'm pretty open minded, alright. Don't be embarrassed.

I'm here to help you. Do your parents know? And he goes, know what? Do they know about your alternative lifestyle? He goes, what? I said, come on. Do your parents know you're a homosexual? I mean, I have dealt with a lot of guys that are homosexuals and I've really kind of helped them, you know.

Some of them have even been set free through Jesus Christ. Do your parents know you're a homosexual? I'm not a homosexual! I go, look, of course you are. Look, I know, you know, you're a guy of the world.

You know, obviously, you've been around. I'm a guy of the world. We know these things.

You're homosexual. Now look, how can I help you? The guy's head almost exploded. He was so mad.

And he said, why are you saying this? And I said, listen to me, young man. You think you are so wise. You think you are a fool.

You see the way you're wearing your pants? He said, yeah. I go, do you know where that comes from? Obviously you don't because you haven't been around as much as this old preacher who you think is so stupid. That comes from prison, young man.

And when a man in prison who is a homosexual breaks up with his boyfriend and wants everyone else to know in prison that he's available, he drops his pants like that. That's where it comes from. You see, young man, in the name of being cool and following your culture, you think you know what's going on, and you're going straight to hell following the devil there.

Now why did I say that, young man? I'll tell you why. Because most of the things that's going to be thrown on your plate and put in front of you, even by your friends, that they think is so cool and you think is so cool, you don't even know where it comes from. And you look at your father and you think he doesn't understand anything.

Your father has been through things that would terrify you. He knows more than you could ever, ever know. And many of the reasons he will tell you no is because he's been there, done that, got the t-shirt, and he knows how much it hurt him.

Never forget that. That is a lie of the devil to tell you, my father is old and he doesn't understand what's going on. Your father does understand what is going on because he's been through a thousand times more than you've ever dreamed of.

And that's why you listen. And not those stupid little friends of yours. Now let's look at Deuteronomy 6. Now, I have seen a few different things in this return to manhood.

Some several extremes. You have on one side these guys who say, I want my son to be a Christian man. And that Christian man almost looks effeminate.

On the other side, you have these guys who say, I want my son to be a Christian man, but their idea of a Christian man looks something like a carnal bully. The only way we're going to find out what it's like to be a true man is to study God's Word and to seek to be conformed to the image of the only true man who ever walked on the face of the earth. And that's Jesus Christ.

But here in Deuteronomy 6, there's some wonderful things that we can learn. Now, I'd love to go through the whole text, but let's just start in verse 4. Here, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. Now, take that in the context of verse 2, so that you and your sons and your grandsons might fear the Lord your God to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.

Now, look at this, gentlemen, your son and your grandson. There is a sense in which we need to be talking about leaving a legacy. A legacy.

Most men are all about them getting the most out of life. Our goal is to leave a legacy, not just of our own life, but of the lives of our sons and our grandsons. We are thinking about... You know, we always hear back in the 70s and 80s, multiplication of disciples, multiplication of disciples.

Well, this is the real thing. I can leave a legacy. It's like I decided a long time ago, I could go around doing evangelism everywhere, or I could plant churches.

You do evangelism, it's here today, gone tomorrow. You plant a church, it could be there for 150 years. It's the same way.

If I can pour my life into my two boys, and if they are the elect of God, and God has grace, and God regenerates their heart, and calls them to Himself, I have given them a wealth of biblical information, a wealth of biblical experience. I knew one fellow, it's the Dickman family in St. Louis, and it's a man who has done everything that he could to raise his children. One of his boys was not converted until he was like 23.

But I was talking to the boy, a man, and he said, you know what's amazing? I was not converted until I was 23, but the moment I was converted, everything my father had taught me for 23 years, it turned on. And in that moment, I knew more than most pastors. My father, see, here's something gentlemen, even if you cross all the T's, dot all the I's, and raise your children by the book, homeschooling and everything else, it does not mean that child is going to be converted.

But, you're still commanded to do it. And if you do do it, and then they are converted, my goodness, what a jump start they've got. Why? Because, I can go around the world teaching stuff, but, I have the opportunity, for at least 18 years, to not just teach things to my sons, but primarily model them, in every aspect of life.

And the desire is to leave a legacy. You see, I hear men all the time, that are working a lot, and they say, well, I just want to give my children, the things I never had. God never commanded you to give your children, the things you never had.

As a matter of fact, it's the things you never had, that's made you the man you are. Things you don't have, never hurt your character. It's the things you do have.

So my father went off to fight World War II. He would be in his early 80's right now, if he had lived. I want to tell you something.

I'm not sure we could fight World War II again. My father grew up, dirt poor Kentucky, and then streets of Detroit, selling newspapers. Those men, what made them men, was not all the things they had.

They had nothing. It was the things they did not have. Your job is not to give your child, the things you never had.

Your job is to give your child, you, in Christ's name, to leave a legacy. Now, verse 4, let's look at that legacy. Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one.

The one thing I am to transfer to my child, I mean truly transfer to my child, is that there is a God, and He is Lord. Now, here's something that's very, very important. You will hear, you know fathers will hear something like this, and they'll go home, and just start giving lectures, and all these different things, and Bible studies, and pounding it into their kid's head, and that's not what I'm talking about.

My child needs to be able to look at me, and realize, my dad knows there is one God, and He is Lord. I can look at it. In my father's face, I can see it.

He knows it. He lives it. My sons, like sons should when they're little, they think that their dad is Superman.

You know. Dad, did you go wrestle a bear? I'll come in from hunting, have all my... Dad, did you kill a bear today? No son, not today. But he thinks I can.

He thinks I can. But, it was a few months ago, I was praying, and the Lord really moved upon me, and I started crying, and crying, and crying, because the Lord had showed me, His goodness to me, and my sin. And my little boy walked over to me, and said, Daddy, why are you crying? Why are you afraid? Because of Him, son.

And I began to explain to him, and sat down with him, and he started crying. Not that I pound into his head, there's a Lord, there's a God. No, that he looks at me and goes, Whoa! Dad fears something.

When dad talks, you know, dad laughs, and dad talks about, you know, beating up bears, and everything else, but when dad talks about God, his voice changes. It's really serious. This is not a game.

This is not make-believe. This is not Santa Claus. This is not Easter Bunny.

Whenever dad starts talking about Him, his face changes. The greatest gift you can give your child, is have your child wake up at 3 o'clock in the morning, go downstairs to get a glass of water, and they see you in your study, with the light on, down on your knees, crying out to God. That's the greatest gift you can give your child.

Because I want to tell you something, there's a man, I don't agree with, you know, you never agree with everything every man says, because men are fallible. One of the things that when I had, when my child was born, I was thinking, okay, you know, I'm going to have this regiment of all these different things, and I read a guy down in Tennessee, by the name of Michael Pearl, and he said something that just stunned me. He said that he really didn't have much, you know, like, devotion times with each of his kids every day, or this regimented process, but that all his kids went off by themselves, and studied the Word on their own, and what he said was basically this, that the Word of God was in every aspect of his life, and everything he did, so his kids would watch him, and just see it.

You know, I don't want to just sit there and go, okay, you know, we're having our 20 minutes today in the Word, even though part of that is very important. But it's more of a thing if your child just looks at you and knows, my dad believes there's a God, and believes that He is Sovereign Lord of all things, and my dad

fears Him. This is real.

There should be a sense in which your boy goes, my daddy isn't afraid of anything except God, and that fear is a healthy fear. And he goes on, and he says, Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One. 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. Now look at this.

Look at the context. Even though in the greater context He's talking about teaching your son all the commandments of God, isn't it amazing that He comes to this one command which is the primary command, the great command, Jesus says, and then right after said, that's what you're to teach to your son. You're not to teach your son to be a Pharisee.

You're not to just lay out rules for your son. Do this, do this, do this, do this, do this, do this, and you'll be spiritual. No.

If you're spiritual, you will do this, do this, do this. The rules never make anybody spiritual. You desire to follow the commands because you are spiritual.

And it flows out of a heart that loves Him. What is the primary thing to teach your son? To love the Lord, His God, with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. And how do you do that? Again, by example.

My dad not only fears God, my dad loves God. I say this quite often and it's true. Another gift that I can give my son is for him to look out the window one day and see me out there by the wood shop or standing in a bean roll some day or out there in the cornfield with a pair of bib overalls and dancing with all my might.

Say, Mom, what's Dad doing? Well, son, your dad was a very wicked man. He was going to hell. And the Lord, His God, saved him through the death of His only begotten Son.

And your dad is just happy in the Lord. He just loves Him for what He's done for him. He shed His blood for your dad.

Your dad loves Him. Now sometimes your dad gets a bit carried away and I'm glad we live on a farm. No neighbors can see him.

But that's why. You know, if this Christianity thing just becomes a moral regiment, it's puke. It's horrid.

It's grotesque. Now there is regiment. There are rules.

But that's not the main thing. And here's the thing, you know, it's like Song of Solomon, okay? The king comes and knocks on the door. She's already in bed.

She doesn't want to get out of bed and dirty her feet again. So she says, no, no, I'm not going to answer the door. And so he goes away.

She gets up and decides, well, yeah, I need to answer the door. She goes to the door. He's not there.

So she starts running around in the streets and she finds these other virgins in Israel and she bumps into them and she says, please, help me look for my beloved. Where has he gone? And their attitude is, well,

why should we look for him? He can't be all that special. He came knocking at your door and you wouldn't even open the door, so why should we go look for him? It's the same way, gentlemen.

Tell your sons, you need to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. The child might be looking and saying, they'd probably never say it, but they'd go, well, why? I mean, you don't. He can't be all that great if some golf clubs that aren't even alive mean more to you than that, or fishing or hunting or your job.

I mean, why should I go out of my way to seek this God? He can't be all that great. You know Him and don't even want to seek Him. You see? So it's more than a commandment to, hey, you need to love the Lord your God.

Why? He can't be that big a deal. I look at your life. He really can't be that big a deal.

You see, one of the most dangerous things that can ever happen, pastors, I've heard pastors, I've talked to them about this, and they'll say, you know, someone's not in church anymore, and so you go visit them. And since you're in the Bible belt, you know, you go visit them, you knock on the door, they're very polite to you, come on in, you know, and start talking to them. You say, you know, you need to be in church.

The person puts their head down and goes, you're right, pastor, I need to be in church. I need to get back in church. I need to start reading my Bible.

I need to do this. It's the right thing to do. Whenever I hear that type of language, you know what I know? I know I'm talking to a lost man.

Their Christianity is nothing more than, it's like, yeah, I need to take this really bad medicine so that I don't get sick. Yeah, I need to go back to church because it's the right thing to do so I don't go to hell. Yeah, I need to read the Bible.

I mean, I really don't want to, but I know it's good for me, just like taking really bad medicine. That's not what you want to portray to your children, that Christianity is the right thing to do. To hell with religion.

That's where it's going anyway. To hell with morality. And all these guys want to put the Ten Commandments back in schools.

I mean, what's that? Tell me, what is that? The Ten Commandments going to save somebody? I know some of you probably disagree with me, but please understand the point that I'm trying to make. You can put the Ten Commandments, you can wallpaper it all over the room of your son if you want. The question is this, do you love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength? Does He see it in your face? Is your Christianity a wonder? Something they would desire to look at? Let me talk to you about Harry Potter.

Very, very important. You all, I guess, familiar or at least know about the Harry Potter books and how they've, you know, everything. We as Christians rightly point out that it's all wrong and no one should watch it or read it, and that's true.

Let me just tell you something. First of all, it's very interesting that all the witches in Harry Potter are Christian witches. Now, what do I mean by that? Real witches eat babies, okay? But the witches in the Harry Potter books and the Harry Potter movies, you know what's amazing? They all have Christian

virtues.

I find that quite amazing, quite hypocritical, that they're portraying witches, but these witches, I mean, basically bear the fruit of the Spirit, most of them. They're kind, they're loving, all the things Jesus commands us. You see, they hate Jesus, but they cannot deny that what He says is right.

And the things that's attractive to your kids in there are really Christian virtues that they've stolen. But that's not really my point. I mean, I've got a whole thing on just doing Harry Potter, but I want you to think about something for a moment.

A kid gets to look at a Harry Potter movie, which hopefully never will happen, but he gets to look at a Harry Potter movie. What does he see? He sees wildness, wonder, adventure, the miraculous, life, an explosion of excitement. And then what does he see out of your Christianity? Sunday morning.

Sunday morning. Getting to church late. You and your wife have a spat in the car.

You get out of the car. You put your religious mask on. You walk in.

And most of the time Sunday morning is nothing but a long prayer for lunch at some restaurant. Well, we got that over. Well, the sermon's over.

Now let's talk about fishing. Let's talk about the football game. I mean, goodness gracious.

The other day my little boy was looking at something that had a picture of a dragon on it. He goes, Daddy, you ever seen a dragon? I said, yeah. He said, you ever fought a dragon? I said, yeah.

Did you have a sword? Yeah. Was it hard? Yeah. Can you tell me about it? Yeah.

He thinks his daddy fights dragons because his daddy does fight dragons. I do fight dragons. I fight them every night.

I fight them in the morning. I fight them when I preach. I fight them when I fast.

I have armor. It's the most beautiful sort of armor. Strong.

I have a shield. I have a helmet. I'm in a war.

I've got scars. I've got stories. They would make the hair on the neck of a little boy stand up straight.

Christianity is all too tame and civilized. It's very proper. It has no attraction to a boy.

You see? You say, well, no. The way you're saying that, that's not right. I'm saying it just like the Bible says it.

You're not right. Christianity is the wildest thing. It makes a Harry Potter book look like a dull piece of boring literature.

See, the point is, it's like Michael Card said one time, there is a joy in the journey, a light we can follow on the way. There is a wonder and wildness to life and freedom for those who obey. There should be a sense of wildness and wonder to follow Him.

To follow Him. We were out in the woods one time. We live where the sloughs come up off of the Ohio River.

And we're down there. I used to, as a boy, I just basically lived in those swamps catching snakes and about every other thing. Take my boy down there.

We wade through that stuff. I say, son, maybe one day, maybe one day you'll have to wade through the Marañon to preach the Gospel to someone in the jungle. Daddy, have you ever done that? Well, let me tell you about the time I drug a boat through the black water just out of Iquitos in the jungle.

We were trying to make it to a place to preach the Gospel. And your daddy was scared to death because it was midnight and I didn't know what was in that water with me. You see, what we want to portray is, first of all, something we can't portray unless it's a reality to us.

A reality that we are more than what... Let me give you this example. Do you know if you take a baby eagle and it never sees another eagle and you put it with a bunch of turkeys or chickens, it will never fly. Did you know that? It will never fly.

Not only will it never fly, it will begin to eat, walk, and everything just like the chickens or the turkeys it's with. That's true. And that's what's happened to you.

You grew up in all the wrong ways. You became mature. You became adult.

You became boring. The point that I'm trying to make is this. What does the Bible say about you? Not what does culture dictate about you.

The Bible says you are a child of the living God. It does. Like, I'll hear people say, you know, Christians, well, I'm just an old sinner.

And I always say, oh, you're lost then. I thought you were converted. Well, we still sin.

Yes, we still sin, but that does not mean we're sinners. That old nature has been destroyed. It has been crucified through regeneration.

That heart of stone has been removed and a new nature has taken its place. You sin because you live in a body of flesh, but that is not who you are. Do you ever fight any battles, Daddy? Yes, son, on my knees I fight battles.

You see, we ought to be living with this idea that we're children of the King. We ought to be living with this idea that we are behind enemy lines. We ought to be living with this idea that we're fighting in a magnificent war.

We ought to live with this idea that our King is coming and His triumph and will continue to triumph until He consummates all things in the mighty triumph. Be living with this idea that no, it is not our goal to go to college and get a good job and have insurance and benefits. It is our goal to fight in this battle no matter where He places us, whether it's the jungles of India or whether it's the jungles of some research laboratory in Huntsville, that we are following our Master, we're following our King, we're following our God.

And we do so not out of drudgery, not because we are compelled by some moral rule, but we do so because we love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. And the reason why we do that is because He loved us first and He shed His own blood for my soul. Do you really want to die pattering around on a golf course while others like yourself are being shot down in a firing squad in North Korea? Do you really want to piddle away your life? Oh, Leonard Ravenhill.

Have any of you ever heard of Leonard Ravenhill? He was an old prophet. I had the privilege of knowing him a little bit. Just one of the old school preachers.

And he used to say, the world is not looking for a new definition of Christianity. It's looking for a new demonstration of Christianity. So is your family.

So are your children. Now, I want us to look at some things here really quick. He says, These words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart, should be into your innermost being, should literally make up part of who you are.

And what are those words primarily? Sir, we need to constantly be bearing in mind, constantly memorizing, constantly thinking about, plastering it, placarding it everywhere. What? That I'm to love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength. That should be everywhere.

It should be everywhere. Because everything is annulled in our life. If that's not the main thing seen, I would much rather have someone talk and see my passion and my love for Jesus Christ than my morality.

I would submit to you that there were priests and all sorts of religious people that were sticklers with regard to the law of God, but God never said of them, there's a man after my own heart. Now, I'm not saying that you can love the Lord without keeping His commands. That's not what I'm saying.

But you know what I'm saying. There are people whose entire Christianity is just doing the right thing, crossing all the T's, dotting all the I's, looking just prim and proper and civilized and precise and clean and everything else. It would be better to be a madman with passion for Christ.

A bull in a china shop. But who is moving around that china shop with zeal and passion? So you keep this in your mind. It's a corrective to everything.

It's a corrective to everything. It's a corrective to an antinomian lifestyle. A lawless lifestyle.

Because if it flashes before you, you are to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, and yet you are not taking seriously the laws and commands of Christ. That will make it evident. It's a corrective to a legalistic lifestyle.

Okay, you're doing all this stuff, but do you love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength? And then he goes on and he says, 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. Now, what is so wonderful about this? Most men who really take seriously the idea that they really need to teach and train their children, they turn it into an academic setting and a thing in which it's almost like always a class. Now, we need to sit down with our children.

We need to teach them the Bible. We need to help them memorize Scripture. All sorts of things.

But that is not all it is. Most men say, Well, I'm discipling my son or I'm doing this, but to them it means I am meeting with him for an hour three times a week and we're going over Scripture together. But look what he says here.

How do you teach them to your children? You talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up. That you communicate truth not just by having some discipleship time with your son. You communicate truth in absolutely everything you are doing.

Everything. Ian and I went rock climbing. There was kind of a warm day a couple of weeks ago so I took him up to a place, have some really good rocks and I was teaching him to go up this little embankment and he got afraid.

Now, think about this. The idea in most men's head is, Son, you need to be courageous and do this. You need to be brave.

No. Son, you need to do this because your father has told you to do it and you need to trust that your father would never tell you to do something that's bad for you and if you do fall, your father will catch you. So I'm not talking about a John Wayne bravery.

I'm talking about an Abraham faith. I don't want him to do it because he's not afraid. I want him to do it because he is afraid but he trusts that what his father tells him to do is right.

You see? And that lesson was greater than if I had just sat down with Bible verses. Now, don't get me wrong. You need to sit down.

You need to teach the Bible. You need to have an academic sort of setting at times. But also, what it's talking about here in communicating these truths is a lifestyle.

Now, here's the kicker that I want you to understand. Have you ever heard somebody say, well, I don't have quantity of time with my children, but I have quality of time. Have you ever heard someone say that? That is the biggest bunch of... I can't even use the word I want to use.

That is the biggest bunch of baloney I have ever heard in my life. As a matter of fact, around the area where I'm at, and I can do this because, well, I'm among my own people. I carry a two before and every time I hear a man say that, I hit him with it.

That is a lie. It's just an out-and-out lie and I'll prove it to you. Have you ever had quality time with the Lord? I mean, a special time when... It's a very special time when you're praying or reading His Word and all of a sudden, He just seems to come and speak to you.

Now, let me ask you something. Isn't it true that quality time with the Lord always comes forth from a quantity of time? You spend a ton of time with the Lord, but in that ton of time that you spend with the Lord, there's a few times when He seems to really show up. And He seems to really show up a lot more the more time you spend with Him.

It's the same way with your son. You're going to spend a ton of time with your son that's really not going to seem like much is going on, but born out of that, every once in a while, a door will open up to teach a spiritual truth, to teach that child something, and it will just be amazing. You need to endeavor to spend a ton of time with your children and you have got to work at it.

It is hard. Why? Why? Unless you're a farmer or Amish or Mennonite or something, and those kids are there with you every day, you're going to be out of that household, sir, for at least 8, 9, 10 hours a day. Five days a week.

So what does it mean? This is what it means. Now listen to me. This is just the way it is.

I'm sorry. I'm really sorry, but there's nothing I can do about it. And I have to go through the same thing.

You go to work, and I know it's hard, especially if you have a job where you have to just deal with problems all the time. It's better if you have a job where you're out there working with your hands. It really is.

Because, I mean, at the end of the day, you're physically tired, but your mind is refreshed. A lot of you, you know, a lot of you are brainiacs, and you work at different places. You're here in Huntsville.

You're always building rockets or something. All right? Your brain is just about, you know, it's scrambled eggs by the time you get home. Okay? At least that's the excuse I use.

I leave the house with scrambled brains, you know, but here's what you're going to have to do. You're going to have to have your little vacation time in that car. The time you pull out of that parking lot, the time you get home, that's your time.

Okay? Because when you hit that door, it's your children. It's your children. I don't care if projects around the house have to not get done as quickly.

I don't care if... I just don't care. Let the house fall to the ground, for all that matters. When you get home, it's your children.

And you've got to invest your life in them. And you're going to be tired. Also, if you have younger children, here's what you also need to realize.

Your wife, especially if she homeschools, she's been with those children all day. She could be voted most likely to become a serial killer at this time. What I mean is that... Alright, she's been doing this all day.

You come home, they're yours now. They're yours. And you've got to be creative.

You can waste so much time with your children. What do you want to do? Watch a video or something? No, think of something. Okay, son, we're going to tear this engine apart and rebuild it.

Or what do you want to do? You like this? Okay, let's go do it. Let's learn something. I'm going to teach you how to do things.

Here's something that I learned this Christmas. It was very, very astounding. I don't know how it happened, but certain people slipped up on us this Christmas and bought our children things that we usually don't permit and got them to our children.

It was my fault. I just wasn't paying any attention. But like grandma and aunt and things like that, and they bought our kids stuff and I went ahead and let them.

And you know what? My son got more whippings Christmas Day than just about the entire year because he got a whole bunch of stuff. And the more stuff he got, the more selfish he became. But you know what

was amazing? I was sitting there and told my wife, I said, I've really dropped the ball.

Because what I usually say is his mom and I, we can give him one gift that he might like as a boy to play with, and then everyone else, just give him clothes or something that he needs if you want to get our son something. And I didn't do it this time. And I just saw a selfishness take over that was just astounding.

And I'm just sitting there going, Lord, what do I do? What do I do? And then I thought, I know what I'll do. I took him out and we built something. We built something with his hands.

I said, son, you're going to make something. I didn't forget what it was. We went out to the shop, did some things, cut some boards.

And I got my son back. He forgot about his toys. He made something.

Look, Mom! Look what I did. And I told my wife, I said, you know, wife, this is what we're going to do. He wants something.

If he's 14 and he wants a boat to go out in the slough fishing, I'm going to buy a catalog or whatever it is, a manual, and he's going to build a boat for himself. He wants it, he can have it. He's just going to have to build it.

Because all it was when he got a whole bunch of stuff was just, okay, what else? Okay, what else? But when he went out there and built some little puny thing that wasn't worth five cents of lumber, he was like forgetting about everything else and reveling in what he had made, what he had done, what he had accomplished. Your child is like a sponge in the beginning. If you don't feed that thing, pretty soon that sponge is just going to dry up.

It's amazing. And I know I'm rambling, but I just have a few more minutes here. I go to the park with my son.

And I saw this. It's one of the things that most shocked me. I go to the park with him, and he was probably about two and a half or three years old, and he did something.

I don't know what it was. He killed a squirrel with his bare hands. Something, I don't know, something really incredible.

And I said, Son, that is... Man, that is... All of a sudden, every young boy that was in that place, in that park, that heard me. I mean, there were several of them. And we're all there with their mothers.

Come running up to me and said, Look at me, mister. I can do it too. What did that tell me? A boy wants the affirmation of a man.

He wants the affirmation of his father. He wants that affirmation. Look, mister.

I can do it too. Until finally, what happens is, dad keeps ignoring that desire, keeps ignoring that, keeps ignoring that, doesn't pay any attention to that, doesn't care about that, isn't applauding, isn't affirming, until finally the kid's like, What the hell with you? I don't want it anyways from you. I'll go get it somewhere else.

Oh, and there's a lot of places he can get it. And it's all bad. He's going to get the affirmation of some man.

And usually it's going to be a boy, his own age, who's just as much a fool as he is. And he's going to become a companion of fools, as Proverbs says. But he's going to want somebody's affirmation, some male affirmation.

He is. You see. Now guess what? You feel like you've failed in a lot of these areas.

So have I. That's not what this is about. This is about, okay, start now. You know the passage, Raise up a child? No? In the way that he's bent, literally in Hebrew.

When he's old, he'll not depart from it. Most people today take that as a promise. The old scholars never took it as a promise.

They took it as a warning. You realize that? J.C. Ryle has a good thing on that. It's not a promise.

It's a warning. You raise up a child and let him go in the way that he's bent since birth. And you let him go in that direction.

When he's old, he'll never depart from it. So what is it? From the very beginning. They say the personality of a child is formed by the time he's six years old.

I believe that. Most guys are saying, oh, he's a little boy, and well, you know, when he gets old enough, then daddy will take over. Really? After he's already formed? After who he is has already been established? Or should daddy take over now? Because here's something.

It doesn't matter how good your wife is at being a mother. She's not a dad. She's not a man.

And at the same time, my wife has gone through the Amazon with me. She and I together wrestled down one time a 14 foot anaconda. I've got it on film.

Thing come up three feet off the ground. Almost took her hand off. She's a tough lady.

But you know what? My sons, both of them, break out in the awfulest wrestling match you've ever seen in your life. And she tries to put a stop to it because she's a woman. And she's not supposed to put a stop to it.

Because sometimes they just need to flat out wrestle. She doesn't understand that because she's a lady. Sometimes they need to get in the awfulest pillow fight you've ever seen in your life.

And sometimes they need to bungee jump from the bunk bed. She doesn't understand all those things. And I tell her, I said, there's been a few times, and she knows I'm going to share this, there's been a few times when I said, Charo, this is not your place.

You don't know what's going on here. I do. And she says, well, whatever's going on in here, it better go out in the barn and not in my house.

She doesn't understand. It's like when I come in from hunting. It's two feet of snow.

It's two degrees below zero. And I walk back in with frostbite. She stands there at the door and goes, boys just want to have fun.

She goes, so this is how men enjoy themselves. Yes, this is how men enjoy themselves. This is what we do.

We're brain damaged. This is what we do. Now, someone asked me the question, well, what about you're not an outdoorsman, you're not this, you're not that.

Well, first of all, understand this. That's not the point. Because it seems like my older boy is given more towards reading and he loves art.

And it seems like he's going to be maybe gifted in music. He likes music. So, you know, the thing is you're not trying to turn them into John Waynes.

You're trying to turn them into godly men like Jesus Christ. Now, you might not have the gift of giving, but you're commanded to tithe, right? Sir, you might not be an outdoorsman, but you are commanded to take the boy out and do things with him outside. It might not be the bent of his life.

It might not be who he is. But he does need to have a taste of that. You might not work with your hands, but do something with your hands with that boy.

And sir, you might not be given to drawing or music or writing. If that's what your boy likes, then get into it. You see what I'm saying? Just try to be balanced.

And also realize that God made you a certain way. God made you a certain way and He gave you specific children in His providence. Maybe He's going to direct you and your child down a different road.

So don't get into this thing. Because I read a lot about these guys who are specialized in raising their sons and all this stuff, and it's like I always want to go to them and ask them a question. Okay, I see what you're doing.

You've got this huge garden and you're growing your own wool for sweaters and your little daughters are out there stomping grapes with their feet. How do you do this in New Jersey? You know, not everybody lives on a 300-acre farm, so how do you really do this kind of stuff? So be careful because a lot of the stuff on raising boys, there's a bit too much John Wayneism in it. Look at who you are as a man and seek to be balanced.

Realize that God made you a special way in His providence and in His providence He gave you... You know, if He wanted your son to be with Jeremiah Johnson somewhere out in Montana, He would have gave him to Jeremiah Johnson somewhere out in Montana. The fact is God gave your child to you. You see? And so don't get caught up in that.

We have to close and I apologize because one of the biggest problems when I only have like one time or a few times to share with people, I try to cram in a gazillion things. But some of these things that I've said hopefully will help you. You men know better than I do.

Those boys are only going to be with you about this long. About this long. That's it.

And you just can't... I've never, never heard an older man say, Man, if I could just turn back the clock. I just spent too much time with my wife and my boys when they were around. If I could just turn back the clock and have worked more at the office.

I've never heard a man say that. I wish I'd have spent less time with my boys, you know, because I could be driving a lot better car and my retirement would be a lot... I've never heard a man say that. But I've heard countless men say, I'd give anything to turn back the clock and invest.

I said, my son... One last thing. Gentlemen, God is more likely to use a bumbling half pagan father to give the world a great preacher. If that man acknowledges he doesn't know what he's doing and is totally dependent upon the grace of God, then he will use an expert homeschooler who has all the answers and believes that if he passes his child through this excellent program of homeschooling and follows everything some great teacher says about how to do a family, that in the end, he's going to produce a godly offspring.

God hates that type of mentality. Hates it. I don't care how great a homeschooler, how great a dad, I don't care what institute, what program, what plan, or what man you follow like he was God Himself.

I want to tell you something. If the grace of God doesn't work in the heart of that child, that child is going to hell. Because I have seen the best of missionaries come out of the greatest pile of garbage you've ever seen.

And I have seen just moral filth come out of the best families. It is the grace of God. And if you ever take pride in the way that you did it and how you produced a godly offspring, you've done a terrible, terrible thing.

There are, and I'm going to say this, but there are groups and there are people that have literally taken the Bible and they will tell you biblically what side of your scalp you should part your hair on. And I want to tell you something. There is a great difference between living based upon the commands of God and living based upon the inferences that some man has made from Scripture.

And you need to be very careful. Because God doesn't give you all the answers. And there isn't a biblical way of how you part your hair.

Don't part your hair. There are just a few basic biblical principles laid down with regard to how to raise children. And if you try to split hairs and do everything just perfect, that's never what's taught in the Bible.

It's just not. Recognize the difference between a biblical principle that is a sound truth that is what is written in Scripture and some inference. Because those inferences are from men.

They're not from God. Let's pray. Father, thank You for Your kindness to us and thank You for Your Word.

And Father, as I teach this, I look at my own life and I think I only have authority to say this because it's true. But I myself have failed in so many ways. I am so sorry for all my failure, but I will not be discouraged because I know that You who began a good work in me will finish it.

Yes, I have failed in many ways. Where sin abounds, grace abounds. And I know, Lord, I do not trust in my ability to hear, but I do trust in Your ability to speak to me.

I do not trust in my ability to follow, but I do trust in Your ability to lead. And I do pray for Your own glory. Oh God, You would regenerate the hearts of my sons and bring them into Your kingdom and give them to Your Son.

Lord, I don't ask for gifts for my sons. I don't ask for ministries. I don't even ask that they become preachers or missionaries.

But I ask that their heart would be devoted to Your Son, that they would love Your Son with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and that they would honor Him, that they would desire to be with Him more than do things in His name, that they would be infinitely more than their father. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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