

Raising the Bar Part 1 - Sons (f.b.c. in Killen, AI)

by Paul Washer

A biblical man is one who has taken on the mantle of being a steward of God, focusing on fulfilling God's will and bringing glory to Him.

Duration: 54:05

Scripture: Genesis 1:26, Exodus 20:3, Deuteronomy 6:6

Topics: "Parental Responsibility", "Godly Obedience"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of doing the will of God and advancing His glory in the world. He compares this mindset to that of a slave who only has to focus on his master's will, while the master takes care of his needs. The speaker also highlights the lack of responsibility and accountability in society, particularly in regards to raising children. He warns about the negative influences and teachings that children may encounter in public schools, and encourages parents to be intentional in teaching and guiding their children according to God's commands.

Transcript

It's a great privilege to be here with you, and let's start in the book of Genesis, chapter 1. Before we get started, how many of you have boys at home? Raise your hand. You have boys at home. Okay, great.

Genesis, chapter 1, verse 26. Then God said, Let us make man in our image according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the sky, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. God created man in his own image, and the image of God he created him, male and female, he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. Now, we could go, if we had time, several days, we could go to the book of Ephesians, and we would learn that in chapter 5, the wife is to submit to her husband. She is to honor her husband.

She is to respect her husband. But in what context, what is the husband supposed to be doing? What is a man, and what is the task of a man? And how do we know when a boy becomes a man? Well, if you think about it, most men are not really sure about their place in this world as far as God's will. Even men that are

in the church, sincere men that are genuinely born again, if you were to study simply their life, their daily life, would you be able to see a biblical purpose? If you were to ask them the purpose and meaning of their life, would they be able to go to Scripture and say, This is what I'm about.

This is what it means to be a man. This is what I do. Now, because of that, men kind of wing it quite a bit.

We pray about our lives maybe. We pray about where we should work. We're looking to be maybe successful to care for our families.

We have hobbies. We have things we like to do. We think about retirement.

We think about weekends, getting some time off. And most men kind of nonchalantly go through their life that way. And then they expect, and Scripture does expect, they expect their wives to submit to them.

I'm the leader of this home. We ought to do what I say we ought to do. And we ought to go in the direction that I say we ought to go.

Now most of us, we'll talk to our wives. We'll commune with our wives. We'll ask our wives their opinions.

We'll try to lead and we'll try not to be dictators. And that's good. But I think we're still missing the point.

What are we supposed to be doing? Well here before the fall we see something very important. Man is to be the steward of God. His task on the earth is to subdue the earth according to God's will.

To bring the earth, every creature on earth, to manage the earth and bring everything in subjection to God's will. He's in a sense to rule over, to govern, to manage. His whole purpose is the very purpose we see in the Lord's prayer actually.

That the name of God be hallowed. That it be highly esteemed and separated from everything else. That the kingdom of God would advance and encompass the earth.

That God's will would be done everywhere. I can see that in the words being told to Adam. Even though the world has not fallen, it was still a world to be in a sense dominated, subdued in all the right ways, managed correctly.

That everything be ordered and man govern and man be a steward in such a way that everything on earth be brought into harmony and continue in harmony with the will and the glory of God. Now we see that Adam didn't obey that. We see that he fell.

And so do we believe that because he fell, that this commandment given to him is no longer important for us? I believe this commandment still exists for us. But I do believe that it's been somewhat modified. And that now managing this world, subduing this world, bringing everything in this world into agreement with the person and will of God has now also much to do with what we call the Great Commission.

To go forth into all the world, beginning here in Killen. And not just in Killen, in this church. And not just in this church, in our families.

And not just in our families, starting with us. To go out, to be disciples, to make disciples, to advance the cause of God on this planet. What is your purpose? What is your primary purpose? Your primary objective in life is what? That God's name be hallowed.

That His kingdom come. That His will be done on this earth as it is in heaven. That is your primary job.

That is what you are to be all about. Everything in your life is to be dictated towards that. Now, I have to stop here for a moment because many of you are thinking automatically about maybe the mission field or about places where the gospel hasn't been preached.

Well, that's part of it, but that's not where it starts. It's every aspect of our own personal lives being brought into subjection to the will of God. And as obedient servants of God, then advancing that will of God in our closest relationships, which are our families.

Advancing that will of God in our community of faith, which is our church. And advancing the will of God in this area and beyond. We are to be men on a mission to subdue the earth for the glory of God through the preaching of the gospel, through being salt, through being a light.

People should look at our faces and know that we are men of destiny, that we are men with a purpose. In Peru, they often say, *tú vives porque la eres gratis*, which means the only reason you're alive is because air is free. To be honest with you, a lot of people are that way.

Even good people. Even people that are sincere and want to know God and do know God. But in fact, they're just not focused.

Another problem we have is a division between the professional clergy and the layman, which I think is quite artificial and not biblical. The clergy, the pastor, he's supposed to be focused. He's supposed to be a man on a mission.

He is not to be anymore a man on a mission or a man focused for God than anyone else in this room. The only difference between your pastors and your teachers and your layperson, so to speak, in the church, is calling. That's all.

That's why I say about missions. All of us are to be as dedicated to the Great Commission as the missionary who's in the darkest part of Asia right now. Because with the same degree of passion, we're to be praying for them and supporting them.

It's like I always use that illustration. You go down in the well or either you hold the rope for those who go down, but both of you should have marks on your hands, should have scars on your hands. So you see, each one of us must first of all, before everything else, you see, we're always about methods, about five things you can do to be a better man.

No, you've got to begin at the beginning and it's a foundational, why am I alive? I exist to do the will of God. That's it. That's why you're alive.

I exist to advance the will of God and beginning with my own life and then going from there, my wife. And then going from there, my children. And then going from there, my church.

And then going from there, my community and the rest of the world. You should be a man, a marked man. Your wife should be able to look at you and know that her husband is focused on one thing, that the will of God be done.

And for her husband, the will of God is like food. He is not empty because he has food that most men know nothing about. His food is to do the will of his Father.

You see, I think there's so much of a parallel, not just in the book of Romans, but in everything between Adam and Christ. This Christ, the second Adam, look at Him. He really was about this.

What was given to Adam and Adam failed, Christ did not fail. He was totally and completely dedicated to that. Now, let's just stop for a second and ask ourselves a question.

When your wife looks at you, when she thinks about you, does she think this? My husband has a singular loyalty to God. And every decision that he makes, although he may make errors, he may have inconsistencies, he may miss the ball every once in a while, the one thing I know about my husband is everything he's attempting to do, he's attempting to do for the glory of God and the promotion of God's will. Can she look at you and see that in your life? Now, let's get back to submission for a moment.

Do you realize how difficult it is for a wife to submit to a selfish husband? How difficult when he's calling the shots, but the shots he's calling has nothing to do with God being primary in his life and the kingdom of God being advanced through his life. Do you realize how antagonistic that can become? How difficult that can become? We always talk about leaders, politicians and kings and others. The Bible talks about pastors that feed off the sheep, that do everything for their own good.

We talk about politicians who really are not caring about advancing the greater good of the people. They're feeding off the people. We need to realize that all positions of authority have that tendency.

They all have that tendency. Why? Because even though we're Christian, even though we have a new nature, that new nature is housed still in a body of unredeemed flesh which wars against us and causes us. Our primary problem is selfishness, self-centeredness.

The world revolves around me. My wife is an extension of me. My children are an extension of me.

It's all about me. And when that happens, everything in the family breaks down. Breaks down.

I have no problem with my wife realizing, knowing, that I am a fallible man. I have no problem with making mistakes before her. I am going to do that.

But all that is very slight and is not going to do much damage if, because of my life, she is convinced that in spite of wrong decisions and so on and so forth, she knows that my face is set like flint towards doing the will of God. I may make an error. I may misjudge what we should do.

But the inclination of my heart is obeying God and carrying out His will, taking seriously this command. To do what? To be a steward of God. Let's talk about that for a moment.

Do you know that slavery to a perfect master is freedom? It is. It really is. I've got on my computer, I was going through some trials, and I've got a little marquee on my computer and it runs by my computer screen all the time.

And it basically says this. You take care of my business. I'll take care of your needs.

Do you realize how free a slave is? The only thing a slave has to think about is his master's will. He doesn't have to think about how is he going to eat. He doesn't have to think about the clothes.

How is he going to get clothes? He doesn't have to think about being protected. Those are all the responsibilities of the master. The slave only has one responsibility.

Do his will. Do the master's will. Our faces must be set like flint.

Our hearts, our homes, everything about us has to be geared towards doing the will of God and advancing His will throughout this world. His glory throughout this world. His good, His salvation throughout this world beginning with us, extending through our homes and our churches and so on.

Now, is there need for repentance as I speak? Would someone look at you in your job and recognize that the inclination of your life is quite distinct from other men? Would your children look at you and realize, my dad is about one thing. He's not about himself. He'll sacrifice every right and privilege that belongs to a man.

He is about one thing, about the doing of God's will. It is much easier to submit to a husband and submit to a father when you know that the decisions he's making are not about him and not for him, but for God. It is a lot easier for a wife to receive correction when she knows that her husband is correcting her about the commandments of God and not about his own whims.

It is easier for a child to receive correction when that child is convinced that dad is simply enforcing a law that he himself has to submit to because he's not the ultimate authority. Even though he is the ultimate authority in the home, so to speak, or a sub-authority, it would be better to say that, he is also a man under the same authority. And he's not allowed to use his authority for his own good.

As a matter of fact, his authority requires that he be the first to sacrifice. Now, let's stop for a moment and look at something very important. The loss of manhood.

The loss of manhood. Now, for those of you who have boys in the home, I want you to listen very, very carefully. Now, I have two boys.

One is six and one is four. So you can look at me and say, you know, Paul, you're not an expert in this. I've never been crucified either, but I preach on the cross.

This is not about my experience. This is about the Word of God. You see, you can have all the experience all day long, but that's not what it's about.

We don't live based on your experience or my experience. We live based on what God's Word says. We have to be convinced of that.

Like a fighter pilot, I have talked to some of these guys and they say that you can get so turned around in that cockpit, you don't know if you're going up, down, flying sideways or anything. You have to look. You have to turn away from all your senses and you have to follow those gauges.

Even if they go against absolutely everything that your body is feeling, you can get so turned around. So our experience is not the gauge. The Word of God is the gauge.

Now, we have a loss of manhood in this country. Especially after the World War II generation, we began to see a horrifying decline in manhood and the way that young men are treated. Everything seems to have begun to change around that point.

It's the loss of what it means to be a man. Now, I want to bring up some terminology here. Adolescence.

You've all heard of adolescence. Personally, I believe that the whole idea of adolescence is unbiblical. It's not found in Scripture, number one.

Number two, it's not found in cultures. Up until its introduction through psychology and educational theory based upon the false model of evolution. I reject adolescence totally.

Here's what adolescence does. Now look at this. No one wants to be called a... and let me say it this way.

No one wants to be called a boy. Boy? No one wants to be called a boy. But if you're not a man, what are you? A boy.

But wouldn't it be better to be called an adolescent? I'm an adolescent. But what is adolescence? It's this supposed stage in life where a young man and even a young woman, but we're concentrating on young men right now, where a young man begins to kind of feel his own oats and he's kind of coming into manhood. He's 12, 13 years old.

He starts to rebel a little, kick against dad and his authority. And this is natural. No, it's not.

It's nowhere in scripture. It's not true. He starts to want to experiment with some of the things of manhood.

It has to do with making his own decisions, maybe having some relationship with the opposite sex. He begins to see that young girls are no longer ugly, but they're beautiful and something desirable. And so he enters into this so-called period of adolescence.

And basically what adolescence is, is this. It's the opportunity for a young man to participate in all the privileges of manhood without assuming any of the responsibilities. And most young men today stay in that period of adolescence up until they're 30 or 40 years old.

And they never become men. And there is a loss of manhood. I want you to know that you are a boy or you are a man.

There is nothing in between. And to allow a boy to participate in the privileges of manhood without him being taught, willing, or able to assume the responsibilities of manhood is extremely dangerous. It's an excuse.

It's dangerous. But let me just give you an illustration. I really, I like archery.

Longbows and things like that. Because I shoot a longbow, it goes slower than a compound bow. So how do we compensate for that? We use a heavier arrow.

Not only that, we have to give a whole lot more detail to our broadhead. We have to make sure that thing will split a hair. Now my little boy, Ian, is six years old.

He's been shooting since he was about four. And shoots with dad. He doesn't use broadheads.

He doesn't. Those broadheads, if any of you hunt, you know you can't even touch the things. You use a broadhead wrench.

You just touch one and slice your finger open. Alright? He cannot be allowed to participate in the privilege of using such a thing until he is able to assume the responsibility of such a thing. It is so dangerous.

Now we use this common sense idea when it comes to things like bows and guns. But when it comes to things like relationships and decision making and everything, we throw common sense out the window. More importantly, we throw the Bible out the window.

And in the early 70s and the late 60s, we decided that basically feminists and homosexuals knew more about raising boys than we do. And so what do we end up with? A bunch of boys who are 15 years old who like walking through the mall with their pants half down. Boys who demand to be able to make decisions.

They demand to participate in many of the things of manhood, but are not willing nor able to assume any of the responsibilities thereof. And we wonder why there's problems. Now, let's just go back for a moment in history.

A good example of this in cinema would be... What's that movie? Master and Commander. Any of you have seen that movie? It's about Lucky Jack, so-and-so, the great sea captain of England, and he's fighting against pirates. I think Russell Crowe or somebody like that is in there in the movie, and it's just amazing the battles between these ships.

But you know what's so amazing? Some of the guys leading the charges, jumping from one boat to another, leading a battalion of men onto another boat to fight the pirates, some of those boys are 14 years old in the movie. Yeah. The boys who fought in the Revolutionary War.

13, 14. Agua Duna tribe, where I have worked. Nothing uncommon for a boy to be 15 years old, having built his own house, married, farming, and if there's a need to go to battle, he can go to battle.

Today they're playing gameboys. Why? Because we have allowed culture to steal our boys away. We have been convinced by people who don't even believe anything we believe, we've become convinced that they know more about raising young men than we do.

We're more filled with the worldly psychology than we are Scripture and history. When is a boy a man? When has he become something other than a boy? I think there's two things that can help us here understand that. In chapter 2 of Genesis, verse 23, the man said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.

She shall be called woman because she shall be taken out of man. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and they shall become one flesh. Part of it is, he becomes a man when he is able to become independent from his parents.

That doesn't mean he's got a car now, he's 16. It means he stands on his own. He stands on his own physically, emotionally, economically, spiritually.

He stands on his own. He's his own. He makes his living.

He cares for himself and the world. If his parents and everyone else were to totally abandon him, then he will stand. But, when is he not just a man, but a biblical man? When he assumes this mantle of being a steward of God.

When he can come out from under his father and mother and stand on his own to do one thing, to imitate his father in this, to serve the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength. To give himself,

whether he be preacher or carpenter, mechanic, welder, cattleman, doesn't matter. Whatever his vocation, his whole mind is fixed on, I am a servant of the Lord God and I live and breathe to do His will.

That's when he becomes a biblical man. And the job of the father is to do what? From the time that child is born, to prepare him as quickly as possible for manhood. That's very difficult to do.

Why? I believe in a personal devil. I'm sure you do. And I believe he's not just involved in little spiritual things.

I believe he's involved in spiritual things, cultural things, political things. I believe that there's a sense in which he was defeated at the cross. There's a sense in which also this world is in his power.

It's under the sovereignty of God, but nonetheless it's real. He's the prince of the power of the air. And I believe he works in culture to destroy the family.

He does. You have a son. You say, well, he's four years old.

Not a whole lot I can do with him. Can't teach him welding. He's four.

So really you don't do a whole lot. You're working all day. You get home at night.

You're tired. Everything else. The boy grows up.

His first four years he may throw a little ball with dad. Maybe a few things, but not a whole lot. And then after that, where is he? He's off to school.

To public school where for eight, nine hours a day he's being taught many of the things that you not only do not believe, but you hate. And he stays there until he's 17. And the primary influences in his life are other young boys.

We know what Proverbs says. Put young boys with young boys and they become companions of fools. He who walks with wise men will be wise.

And so his peer group are young boys, not men. Not men. Young boys.

And then he goes to college where also socially and culturally he's going to be taught all the things that you believe have destroyed this country. Are you beginning to see the picture? We've allowed our children to be stolen. We've allowed them to be taken from us.

Taught, mentored, and tutored by the very people we disagree with. And then we wonder, what's the problem? Then, also, there's this thing. I know there's many carpenters in our church and they have sons.

They would love to have their sons their summer break. Doing what? Working with them. Government, crack down on you, you do that now.

Shouldn't have these little children working. And so every opportunity that we have to mentor and teach our boys are quietly and quickly being stolen, taken away from us. This has to change.

No matter what you have to do, no matter the cost of it, it has to change. It has to stop. You have to become a godly man with a singular purpose and you have to become the greatest influence in your son's life and your daughter's life, but we're talking about sons today.

In your son's life. And you have to work with everything in your being that he become a man as quickly as possible. That he assume the role.

There have been times when I was in Illinois where a mother would bring a young boy to me whose dad either wasn't there or was in the home but wasn't there. I'd sit across from those 13, 14 year old boys and I'd say this, look, I'm going to expect you to act like a man and I'm going to treat you like one. You'd be surprised the change.

Do you know that it's been proven by secular authorities that a boy who hunts and fishes with his dad is like 300% less likely to get involved in drugs and alcohol than a boy who participates in sports. Now is that because sports are necessarily bad? No. Why? Because when he hunts with his dad he's with his dad.

And his dad is usually with other men. So he's hanging around men instead of hanging around boys. You put him around men and they start acting like men.

I'll never forget my four year old. The first time he traveled with me to go preach a revival he was four years old. I drove halfway down to Georgia and I thought, what am I going to do? I'm here all alone with this boy and when I get up there and preach he's going to have to sit on the front row all by himself.

He was with me 24 hours a day. It was his first time of just being alone with dad for almost a week. And it was amazing.

At the end of the revival services I'll never forget, we walked into the church and this four year old walks in the church and I guess he'd been watching me and watching the other men every night because he walked in ahead of me and he walked up to the first guy and he goes, how you doing brother? Hey brother, how you doing? Having a good time brother? He changed. They want to be men. They don't want to be boys.

They want to be men. They want to act like men. They want to be with men.

You don't believe me? Take your little boy to a park during the week if you can where a bunch of other little boys are playing. And after your boy does something on the monkey bars, whatever he does, say, son, that was fantastic. And you watch all those little boys run over to you that have been brought by their mom and they'll say, watch me mister, watch me, I can do it too.

Why? They want to be with men. They want to be affirmed by men. We've got to take our children back.

We've got to take our sons back. We've got to realize that we exist on this planet to raise up a godly heritage unto the Lord. Our wives and our children.

Do you realize how burdened the church is? In a way, the church is a lot like government today. The government is just burdened and big and weighed down because it's assuming a bunch of roles it was never ordained to take. Same way with the church.

The church is having to assume the role. Let me give you an example. Now, before I say this, I want you to know, I'm for Sunday school.

I'm not against Sunday school. But let me just give you an illustration. How much money does a denomination spend on Sunday school? Whoa.

Multi-millions of dollars. How much time does this denomination spend in teaching Sunday school teachers? How much time do we spend on organization? Everything else was Sunday school. And yet, my dear friend, you can't find Sunday school in this scripture right here.

But you can find this. Fathers, teach your children. Now let me ask you a question.

How much time in our denomination is spent on teaching fathers to teach their children? How much money, how many conferences are there on fathers, teach your children, the scriptures? Almost zero. Now again, I think Sunday school is good and it serves a purpose. But God does not have a plan B. God has a plan A. And if you create a Sunday school a plan B, because no one is obeying plan A, God's plan, then it's not going to work.

Sunday school can be a great blessing. But it's only the cream on the top of the substance. But it's the other way around, isn't it? Now, let me just share with you the power of a man in the life of a boy.

I'm 46 or 47. I forgot the other day. Really, I'm not trying to just protect myself.

I'm just not really sure where I'm at right now. But I'll get to that later. I am 46 now that I think about it.

That's good. I'm 46. I'm about the last generation of the old school.

I'll tell you what I mean. Now, very rarely throughout our culture's history have we seen men dedicating themselves to teaching their children, to teaching their sons. But because we were an agricultural society, a colonial society, dads went out to work and their boys followed them.

And their boys worked with them. And even though maybe there wasn't a lot of Scripture being handed down or anything like that, those boys worked with their dad who worked with other men. And those boys, by the time they were 9 years old, they had calluses on their hands.

They could wrangle a calf. They could build a fence. And they started to walk and talk and act like their dads.

After World War II, our society kind of changed. My dad was not a believer. He didn't teach me the Scripture or anything like that.

But he was old school. We did live on a cattle ranch. And so from the time I can remember, it was early in the morning, get up, feeding cattle, building fences, doctoring cattle, taking care of the horses, working, working, working, working.

But with him, we don't see that anymore, do we? Most men have become urban. Most men, they work at a specialized job, which is okay. But we've got to realize that we have got to start making some changes.

Now, we can't quit our jobs. And I don't think it's God's will for us to do that. But we have to start realizing we have got to become creative.

And we have got to find a way to bring our boys back into our lives. And that the most important people in our boys' lives cannot be their friends. And it cannot be their teachers.

It must be their father. Now, there are greater men than me. There are greater fathers than me.

And God could have given my three children to a better man than me. But the fact is, he did give those children to me. And I will be called on the carpet to raise those children.

Now, here's something about manhood that we really need to come to grips with. We have become a culture of entitlement. The old men I knew when I was a boy, they didn't think about retiring.

They work until they die. Men work. It's what they do.

You work. You just work. I mean, you just work.

That's what men do. They work. And that's even been proven in our culture because most men, three years after retirement, die.

If they don't get involved in some serious task, they die. We're made to work. And work can be mundane, and it can be boring, it can be horrible, unless it is done for the glory of God.

Because if work is done for the glory of God, even if we're working in a factory just screwing tops on bottles, if we're doing it for the glory of God, it's filled up with meaning and has eternal significance. So we are to be men who glory in God-ordained work. And we work for the glory of God.

Votie Bauckham, who I can highly recommend. I was in a conference with him a while back, and just the things I learned from him was just amazing. He said the first thing that he looks for, he says if a young suitor comes looking for his daughter, the first thing he wants to know, does that young man glory in labor? Does he glory in God-ordained labor? Because if he doesn't, he is a boy.

We've been taught our boys shouldn't work. Our boys should work. They should learn to work.

They should love work. They should have the right purpose for work. I do this unto the glory of God.

Slothfulness is one of the seven deadly sins. Laziness. It abounds in our culture.

We are to work. And we are to enjoy our work and love our work. But men, I want you to know something.

I know when you come home from work you are tired. But that doesn't matter. I'm sorry.

If you want out of this, then I don't know. Go... I don't know what you should do. Go maybe, you know, read some Vogue magazines and move to California.

I don't know. But if you're going to be a man, if you're going to be a man, you've got to realize something. You are called to work.

You are called to give. You are called to sacrifice. And you are called to love it because you're doing it for all the right reasons.

And when you come home, your work doesn't stop. But the primary work begins. And what is that primary work? First of all, your wife.

Then your children. When do I rest? When you sleep. When do I get time off? You don't get a whole lot.

But then again, that doesn't bother you because your heart is set right and your food is to do the will of Him who sent you. But I can assure you this. You give yourself.

After your work is done, during the day, you come home and give yourself for the edification and spiritual development of your family. And you will find that God will honor that and you will find your spouse will honor that. There have been times when my wife has said, you come home today, don't you stay in this house.

You get your bow, go hunt, go do something. You need to rest. You need to be away.

Instead of those battles where you're always gone and leaving me here with the children. We are called to service. To service.

And that service begins in the family. And we are to learn, guys, the will of God is not a burden. It's not a burden.

It's a joy. Most men are burdened because they're trying to find their joy outside of God's parameters. They're trying to find joy in four wheelers, in hunting, in golf, in fishing, in boats, in this and that.

And all those things can have their place. They can be good. But that's not why you live.

You don't work so you can escape. You don't do God's will for a little while so you can run over and do yours for a little while. You live for Him.

And that means you work to provide for your family. And then you come home to care for your family. And you go to bed when you can.

That's your job. You see, we just got it all wrong. You know how people... It's amazing how I have seen people's lives change.

People who literally will come to me and they just be miserable. And I start looking at them in counseling wondering why are they so miserable? And come to find out they're miserable because they don't think their life is turning out right. And then when you begin to investigate a little more is they think that their life is supposed to be like some character on a television show.

I mean, that's how much television is actually, you know, it's grabbed ahold of us and molded us. We get mad because my life's not like that. That's not real.

I don't know if anybody's told you this, but you need to put a sign on your television that says this is not real. This is make-believe. This is Wizard of Oz stuff.

But we get these projections of my life is supposed to be a certain way and because it's not that way I'm miserable. I'm not fulfilled. It's like every once in a while I watch a, you know, a bass tournament or something on television and those guys just travel around all over bass fishing, which, that's fine, I guess, if they can balance their family and everything, but some guys will look at that and go, man, they've just got it, man, they've just got it, don't they? They just go around fishing all over the world and they think that life's supposed to be like that.

It's not. Your only satisfaction is going to come from dedicating yourself to God's will. It's going to come from there.

All these other things are little blessings that God will give you and your wife will give you if you dedicate yourself to God's will, first of all, in the context of your family, in the context of your family. Now, I've got

just a few more minutes here. Men, I personally believe, now this is just my observation, but I personally believe that we have also been influenced so much by a Catholic idea of Christianity, an idea that Christianity is somehow wrapped around a building, that it's wrapped around even a fellowship, and that it has so little to do with the family.

But Christianity has to start with the family. You fix families and you'll have fellowships that are quite amazing. You see, we have this cosmetic idea of church today.

Someone says, well, how did church go? That's going good. What does that mean? By and large, it means this. Sunday morning services have been really joyful.

There's been some power in the preaching. Worship's been good and a lot of people are coming. Does anyone have a problem with that? That does not tell us that church is good.

What will tell you if church is good is Monday. And isn't this amazing? People hear that and they go, amen. They go, yeah, Monday, when you're at your job and everything, when you're out there in the world, that's where you show whether or not you're a really Christian.

No! See, we've missed it again. In the family, your treatment of your wife, your love for her, her respect for you, the peace in the home, the children walking in submission, that is going to be the test. You see, that, that, and the church can't fix that.

And if the church tries to, I think God will judge the church, discipline the church, because it's your job, sir. It's your job and my job. God has given authorities in the church.

He's given pastor-elders. A church is a congregational government. We're Baptists.

Congregational government. But at the same time, there is an elder-pastor leadership. Men who are praying to make decisions and submit them before the body and things like that.

But that is in the context of this fellowship. The authority in the home, sir, it's you. I have authority in my home.

I'm the leader. And it's my responsibility to lead that part. So many men say, you know, I just want to be a leader in the church.

And everyone overlooks my leadership gifts and skills. No one asks me to lead in the church. Are you leading in your home? Well, you know, I just got the gift of teaching and no one lets me.

Are you teaching your wife? Are you teaching your children? Isn't it amazing? We will go across the sea to teach an unreached people group when we have a ten-year-old son and if you added up the amount of Bible time we've had with that son altogether, it would probably add up to less than the journey it took to get to that overseas place. Have you ever looked at Israel and think, what were they thinking about? They go into the temple, they worship God, then they come out and they worship Baal. I mean, can't they see that there's a problem there? I mean, anybody could see that.

But isn't it true that all of us are blind to the particular sins that have the most to do with us? We will go across and evangelize and try to reach Killen and the county and everything else, and yet, we do not have Bible study with our wives. We do not have Bible study with our children. Because we expect the minister to do that.

That's not his job. It's not his job. It's not his job.

Do you know that Sunday school, and again, I'm for Sunday school, but I just want to lay some groundwork for you to show you how off balance we've gotten. Sunday school, when it started in Europe, it was during the Industrial Revolution, all the machines that started up, well, they had children working those machines because their little hands could get in all the nooks and crannies of the machine, and if a child lost his hand, it wasn't any big deal. And so you had basically slave labor of children in the Industrial Revolution.

And so some churches got together and they said, these children can't even go to church. Let's have Sunday school. And Sunday school was not to teach children, initially, necessarily just the Bible.

It was to teach them to read. It was to give them school. Because they couldn't go to school because they were working all the time.

And do you know that many of the churches objected to Sunday school? Viminently opposed Sunday school. And do you want to know why? Listen. They said, if we start this practice of teaching children on Sunday, we fear that in time the church will take over the role of the father and it will put an end to family devotions.

Has that happened? Yes. Now again, can Sunday school serve a great purpose? It sure can. But it is not a substitute for Plan A. It is not.

Now, in the next hour, we're going to get together and we're going to just talk for a moment about what are we to be communicating as leaders to our wives and to our children. And this next thing is going to be so simple, but if you'll just grab a hold of it and you'll keep it and you'll hold each other accountable, that's one of the purposes of church. Do you realize that? Church is not necessarily the place where you do everything.

Church is the place where you learn to do things and where you are held accountable for doing the things you're supposed to be doing. But this one truth that we're going to learn will add such clarity if you'll just hang on to it, if you just write it on the walls of your house, write it on your computer screen, write it everywhere, hold each other accountable to it. So let's pray and thank the Lord for what He's given us so far and then come back in a half hour.

Father, I thank You and I praise You and I ask You, God, to help us, to help us become very simple men who simply obey Your simple commands. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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