

Spirit-Controlled Family Living

by Tim LaHaye

Tim LaHaye's sermon emphasizes the critical role of spirit-controlled living in families and its lasting impact on future generations.

Duration: 37:09

Topics: "Family Living"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. He explains that what we put into our minds is determined by what we see and hear. The speaker also mentions that building a strong relationship with God will result in healthy relationships with others, particularly within the family. The seminar aims to teach the principles of God for happy individual and family living, emphasizing the significance of the home in shaping children's lives and destinies.

Transcript

In Exodus 20, verse 5, it says that the effects of a family are felt under the third and fourth generation. Now there it's talking primarily about sin, but the effects of a father and mother are going to be felt for at least four generations. Not only is that true in the negative, it's also true in the positive, and I'd like to show you how significant the family is in that regard.

Let's make an assumption that the family planners, the little old educators in tennis shoes that run around trying to tell us that the world is overpopulated and that we ought to cut down on the size of our family. Now they've done a good job in our country. They've cut us down from four and five children per family to now this year we expect it will be 1.6 children per family, and I can't think of a greater tragedy than being a 0.6 child.

But let's assume the family planners get to you and they con you into the idea that you should only have two children, and your children have two and they have two and two for four generations. That still means you and your wife will be influential. You'll be the number one influence in 60 individuals.

Now let's assume that you ignore the family planners. You read an idea in the Bible that says something like, children are a heritage of the Lord. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them, and you decide to have three children, and they in turn have three and they in turn have three and three for four generations.

You will have influenced the lives and destinies of 240 individuals. Now let's assume that you step up to what Bev and I consider the ideal family since God gave us two boys and two girls, most of whom are raised now or in college, and let's assume that they in turn have four children and they're working on it. Two of them are married.

We have four and a half grandchildren now, and so it looks like we may make it. Now just assume that these four have four and they have four and four for four generations. That means the little love corporation that we established some 30 years ago will be the profound influence in 680 individuals' lives.

Now let that crank into your brain as I point out that the home is the most influential place on earth in preparing for the next generation. Not even television, not even the public school. The home, the ideals and the standards and the precepts of mom and dad, as lived before the children, are going to be the guiding force in the lives and destinies of these children.

That's why it is so important that we know and live the principles that God has given us in the Bible. That's one of the thrilling things about being a Christian. We're not just down here on earth like a cork bobbing around waiting for something to happen and we're not sure when or where.

We're given a manual, a guide through life and God has filled his book with principles to live by and that's what this seminar is all about. The communication visually and verbally of the principles of God for happy individual and family living. And since we're going to get acquainted in the next few hours, some of you we know and have known for years, others we're just getting acquainted.

But we're going to get acquainted with more of you as we concentrate on you as a person. I realize some of you attending this seminar are not married. Well, if you leave your application at the book table, we'll work on that for you and see if we can help you find the right person.

But let me give you a concept of where we go in this seminar and what we're trying to achieve. We start with you as a person and all the messages, both Bev's message and mine tonight, will be on the basis of you as a person concentrating on what God wants to make of you. Because if you're the right kind of person, then you'll make a good partner.

And if the two of you are good partners, then you'll make good parents. Oh, we will have some time for parent instruction tomorrow afternoon. In fact, Bev will give what I consider the best lecture on raising children I've ever heard anywhere and I've heard some of the experts give them.

And I think you'll find it very meaningful. But we have found that if people are right parents, they're going to make good, right partners, they're going to make good parents. But you can never be a good parent if you're bad partners.

Two jangling, factious, hypocritical, selfish partners will never make good parents. The trouble is, in order to be a good partner, you have to be the right kind of a person. And we're convinced, according to the principles of God, that people that are in right relationship to God are going to be the right kind of persons.

Now, we do have a presupposition, and that is that this book, in addition to many other things, contains the principles for happiness. I've married about 439 couples down through the years. Most of that has been here in San Diego, too, by the way.

And one thing I've never had is a couple come to me and say, Pastor LeHay, we'd like to get married because we think we can make each other miserable. Instead, all of these couples come with stars in their eyes, assuming that marriage is going to solve all their problems. Well, it doesn't take but a few days after the wedding to realize that was not the solution.

But may I suggest marriage is not a guarantee to happiness, nor is singlehood a guarantee to happiness. I'd like to give you the guarantee that comes from the Word of God. Here it is.

There are three verses that I am using. There are others that could be used. Let me just give you three.

Happy are they that hear the Word of God and keep it. Jesus said that in Luke 11, 28. Now, the principle or the formula that we use here is obeying God's principles equals happiness, or happiness is the result of being obedient to God's principles, and the principles are found in the Word of God.

Here's another one. Psalm 119.1 says, Happy are all who perfectly follow the laws of God. Why do we have so many miserable Americans? We have the most educated miserable Americans we've ever had.

Why is it? Because in 1954, we, by the Supreme Court and the intellectuals of our culture, wiped the Bible out of the public school. Now we're educating people, independent of God, with massive doses of humanism, and they're bereft of the principles of happiness. Everything is a grandiose sociological experiment, trying to find some solution to man's dilemma of misery.

The only thing they seem to know is that the Bible doesn't have the answer. And in concluding this, they are keeping themselves from the one source of true happiness. Look at this verse.

In fact, this is one of my favorites that the Lord Jesus gave. He said, If you know these things, the principles of God, happy are you if you do them. If you know these things, happy are you if you do them.

So we're going to concentrate on the principles of God tonight and share with you two messages. Bev's going to give a fundamental message on spirit-controlled family living. We're convinced that God's way of building into the family is going to result in our relationship to him.

If we're in right relationship to God, we're going to be in right relationship to one another. And then I'm going to, after you've had a chance to stand up and let your blood circulate a little bit, then I'm going to come back and share with you an exciting concept of why you act the way you do. I'm sure you're interested, if not in why you act the way you do, I know you're interested in why other people act the way they do.

And so we'll try to give both of them tonight. Let me give you a couple of ideas on how to get the most out of this seminar. Now you're here, you've got nine hours to study, you might just as well make the most of it.

First of all, may I suggest that you concentrate on yourself and your relationship to God. Leave your partner to him. Don't play Holy Spirit for your partner.

Now that means don't elbow jab. You'd be amazed at how we can see up here someone's head jerk. Two, take notes freely.

You've got a little notepad there. They're there to suggest notes. We hope that you'll put down some other things, particularly write down principles of God that you may be violating, and then set new spiritual goals

for yourself.

I hope as you go home that your standards will be enriched and raised and that you'll write them down. It'll be helpful six months from now to evaluate them. And then review those notes.

You may be surprised you'll find some things that you can use in sharing these principles with others. It's always a joy for me to introduce other speakers to share in Family Life seminars. We've conducted 225 seminars.

This is the 226th. We started out, as I mentioned, in southwestern part of the United States. Then I teamed up with Dr. Henry Brandt.

Dr. Brandt, as you know, was here with Ken Poore. And then some years later, I traveled extensively with Dr. Howard Hendricks. And then our baby went off to college as a college freshman, and we were home all alone.

And Bev and I decided that it was about time we quit traveling in opposite directions together and start traveling together. And as I told Dr. Brandt the last time I saw him, I miss him, but she is sure a lot more fun to travel with than he was. During the past 11 years, God has given Bev an increasing ministry of speaking to women.

And it was with a little fear and trepidation that we invited her to share with a mixed audience. And we find that men relate to her very well because she communicates the timeless principles of the word of God. And I think partially because she's so much better to look at than I am.

It is a delight for me to introduce to you my first and only wife of 30 years, Beverly Leahy. May I begin this session here by reading to you a few verses from Ephesians 5. As my husband told you, this lecture here is the foundation. It's just the basic foundation for what we want to build on in the next few hours together.

We will be giving you eight lectures. So we'll be spending about eight hours together and we start with the foundation. I'll not develop these points.

We will be developing them as we go along, but it's always good to lay a very solid foundation. So you know where we're going. And then after we get there, you can look back and see what steps were taken to arrive at that spot.

Ephesians 5. May I begin reading in verse 14. For this reason, it says awake sleeper and arise from the dead and Christ will shine on you. Therefore, be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time because the days are evil.

So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And may I stop right there to bring to you our first point to understand God's will for your life. That those two verses to me, as you read that chapter says, don't be a fool, be wise and understand what God's will is for your life.

And so the very first very basic thing would be from second Peter three, nine, that you receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. And this seminar, everything we will share with you will be built on that very basic foundation that we cannot offer you the keys to a happy home life without first of all, receiving Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. That's very basic.

And then when Jesus Christ comes in, then you have access to all the power, all the potential that a family can ever expect to have from the word of God. And so the very basic will that God has for each one of us is that each one of us received Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. It is not God's will that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

And when a family has trouble, when individuals have trouble, when partners have trouble, it is because someone has stepped aside from the will of God. When each one of us as individuals, as persons follow God's will for our life, then you can expect to have harmony. You can expect all the puzzles of life to go together.

And then you have access to all that God has to offer you. Well, let's move on to the next basic principle. It is God's will.

As we read the verse that says, thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. So we're given these four, three parts. And then with all this strength, our entire being, the heart, the will, or the soul, same thing, the mind and our strength.

Now, what determines, how do we put things into our mind? Two ways, through our eyes and through our ears, through your eyes, you read, you see things you observe through your ears, you hear, and all those things that you take into those two, uh, parts of your body will be stored up in your mind. And the very part of you that determines what you will see. And here comes from right here, the will, this very center part of your being.

Now this picture right here has Jesus Christ outside of the life. This individual has not followed the very basic thing that each one of us are told to do to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and savior. And so self the S self is on the throne.

Now when self is in control of the will, then what this person will see with his eyes, what he will hear with his ears and store up in his mind will be very different from the person who has the Lord Jesus Christ sitting on the throne of his life. There should be a great difference there. And you see what you store up in your mind eventually will affect how your heart will cause you to live out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

So what you store up in your mind eventually is going to affect how you're going to live. Is it any wonder today that we have families who are struggling? We have marriages that are falling apart because we've had people who have been storing things up in their mind through what they're seeing, reading, what they're listening to. And it is contrary to what Jesus Christ says, the child of God should put into his mind.

Well, let me show you a diagram of this individual who now has Jesus Christ invited into his life, Lord and savior sitting on the throne of his life. Self is off the throne and now plays the role of the servant. And you see here, we have the new man, the new man has entered the heart, a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Now you can expect there will be a difference. This is where transformation comes in, in the life of an individual, because the Lord Jesus Christ comes in and takes control of this life. And then it also controls what you're going to look at with your eye, what you're going to view on the TV screen, what you're going to read, what magazines you might browse through, what movies you will let your eyes see.

All those things influence us and they will either, either influence you for good or for evil. And as you see those things at the moment, seem harmless. Remember you are storing those things up into your mind

that eventually will be lived out in your life because it comes through the heart and will affect how you're going to live.

Jesus Christ makes a difference in this area by just controlling what your eyes see and read and what your ears are going to hear. No wonder he says, thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind and with all thy strength. Well, let me move on to the next point here that I'm progressing to so that we can spend time developing these points.

Now, may I read verse 18, a familiar verse? I'm sure you know it says, and do not be drunk with wine for in success or one translation says where this is dissipation, but be filled or be controlled by the Holy Spirit to be controlled. That control that we just talked about where the Lord Jesus Christ is on the throne of the life. The Holy Spirit is in control and controls your eyes, your ears, and in effect controls the life that you live.

What does it mean to be controlled by the Holy Spirit? My husband flies a plane and we've had some very thrilling experiences in planes, some good and some bad, mostly good. And I feel like some of the most spiritual experiences I have had have been flying in a plane because you just really have to depend and trust. And this one day we were flying to a meeting at Fresno.

The weather report was that it was good flying conditions and everything was just going to be a lovely trip. But after we crossed the range of mountains, north of Los Angeles, we noticed that the air around us was no longer clear. The sky wasn't blue and gradually the desert below us began to just fade from view.

And we were engulfed in a maze of fog and haze and smog. And I'm not sure what you call it, but it was very thick. Outside of the window of our plane, it looked like milk.

Now that's not too bad if you're flying in a plane that has all kinds of instruments. But at this time, the little plane that we were in was a very simple little plane, one engine, very few instruments. And my husband didn't even have his instrument rating at that time.

He senses obtained it. And so we knew that we had to fly VFR, which simply means you fly as you see. For my layman's language, that's exactly what it is.

Where you see is where you go. And when I knew I couldn't see anything looking out that window, I wondered how my husband was able to see anything. And he wasn't seeing much.

But he was very busy there, I noticed, on the panels. And we did have one little instrument that's called a transponder. That transponder puts you in touch with the closest, oh, I can't think what they call it, but it's the closest regional control where they vector you in and give you radar surveillance and so on.

And so this fellow came on our radio and said, in my terms, of course, they speak a language that's very unusual. And so he said something like this. He said, I have you spotted on my radar screen.

Now, if you will follow my directions, I will guide you to the Fresno airport. And I watched very carefully while my husband was busy following every direction that man told him. You know, it was interesting.

Not one time did I hear him say to that radio operator, sir, I think you're mistaken. I think I should be going this way. Not at all.

He followed absolutely to the best of his ability. And moments later, it seemed like hours, but moments later, the voice said, now you should be near the Fresno airport and you should be able to spot the lights.

And sure enough, through that haze, I could see the faint blue lights of the airport beneath us.

We landed safely. And as I recall that experience sometime later, I thought, isn't it interesting that my husband didn't have an independent spirit at that time. He wanted to be a obedient follower of those directions that were given to him with no questions asked, absolute obedience.

And, you know, we didn't know who this man was. We had never seen him. We didn't know his identification, but we trusted that he was a man who knew what he was talking about.

And yet for those few moments, we were willing to let him take full control of our lives. And how we hesitate sometimes to let the Lord Jesus Christ to take control of our life, where we will obediently follow, no questions asked, just obedience. And, you know, the Lord Jesus Christ is not a stranger to us.

We can know him. And yet we want to take the controls ourselves and say, Lord, let me help out. Let me manipulate this situation, or let me control the situation.

Be controlled by the Holy Spirit. And to be controlled requires several things. One thing is requires someone to listen.

First of all, there has to be that listening ear. And then there has to be the willingness to obey. And you cannot be controlled by the Holy spirit unless you are willing to, first of all, listen and then to obey what you have heard the directions that have been given to you.

Or let me move on. There'll be more said about this in the next session. You see, we talk about the Holy spirit.

We talk about being filled with the Holy spirit, but there are some definite results that are given to us. And in the next three verses, it tells us exactly what we can expect. If we are controlled by the Holy spirit, verse 19 says, speaking to one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

So the first result you can expect when you are filled with the Holy spirit is that you will have a singing heart. Now this doesn't mean a beautiful singing voice, or some of us would be left out. It says the heart will be singing.

There will be that attitude of joy and song, a melody in your heart. And that is a result of the Holy spirit's control in your life. I cannot stand here and tell you that I have always had that, uh, attitude where I had a singing heart because there have been times when the song in my heart has faded and it is turned into a complaining, growling heart.

And probably if you were honest, you would say you have experienced something similar. You see, we can be right in the middle of doing something very worthwhile, productive for Jesus Christ. And then that old man that's in the heart will rise up and take control because we look at the circumstances around us.

Instead of letting the Holy spirit control, even the circumstances and trusting him for those events around us, we look at those circumstances and complaining begins. For two years, we had the privilege of having a Bible study in our home. That was the professional football team here in our city, the chargers.

I think some of you are familiar with them and these men and their wives were invited to our home once a week to study the word of God. It was a thrilling experience. We saw men and women come into our home

with Bibles that had never been opened.

We would say, turn to a certain book and they would start Genesis, Exodus, and start looking. They were not totally unfamiliar with the word of God. And it was thrilling to watch these thirsty souls coming to study the word and had the privilege of seeing some of these men and women received Jesus Christ as their Lord and savior.

Well, this one night we were getting ready for the Bible study in our home. My job was to get the house ready to make sure that the dinner dishes were put away and to have some refreshments. You had to have many refreshments ready because football players do not eat lightly.

They have to keep their strength up, you know? And so my job was to have that part of the house ready. And then of course there were certain chairs in our home that we had to move. They just couldn't hold up men that were tackles on a football team.

And so those light chairs would go to the back of the house and would bring out those old sturdy ones or let them sit on a cushion on the floor or whatever. My husband prepared the Bible study and would give the spiritual lesson for the evening. This one night as I was getting ready for the Bible study, cooking dinner, hurrying so I could get it cleaned up and the clock was working against me.

I also had my two grandchildren visiting that night. I was babysitting. They were ages one and three at that time.

Now you know what that can involve. That means that every moment is unpredictable. You never know from one moment to the next what might happen.

And so I was rushing and they were sitting on the floor in the kitchen, had a Tupperware door wide open and all the Tupperware out on the floor and they were content. So that was fine. And I just walked around Tupperware and on it and in it and everywhere else.

But they were happy. And then the doorbell rang and I went down to answer the door and it was the newsboy collecting for the newspaper. And so I rushed back to get the change to pay the newsboy and at that moment the one-year-old got his finger caught in the cupboard door and had slammed it and he was screaming like his finger was gone.

So I stopped everything, picked him up and counted his fingers and tried to comfort him and they were all five still there. And at that moment the telephone rang. Now I had a crying baby in my arms.

I had the newspaper boy at the door waiting for his change. The telephone was ringing and my dinner was burning on the stove. And you know what? I didn't have a singing heart.

Not at all because I stopped to look at the circumstances. And when you do that the old nature will take advantage of the situation and start to complain. And I did just that.

I started to remind the Lord about that Bible study we were going to have and all those fine things we were going to do that night as if the Lord needed to be told. And then I was convicted. And I knew at that moment because of Ephesians 5 19 that right that moment the Holy Spirit was not in control of Beverly.

It was Beverly's old nature that was in control because I was looking at the circumstances and did not have a singing heart even in the midst of all that mess. And all you need to do is stop and confess that and

once again ask the Holy Spirit to control to fill your life and to help you face those circumstances trusting that the Holy Spirit is going to work all things out. And he will.

The next verse verse 20 says always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Giving thanks always. Oh I've often thought if only that word weren't in there always.

I could give thanks when things went my way. I can give thanks when my schedule is running smoothly and no one gets in my way and circumstances are going well. It's easy to give thanks then.

But the verse says giving thanks always. And that means even when your schedule is topsy-turvy. When you have interruptions uncountable.

When you have circumstances that are miserable and you have a home to live in that people are cantankerous and irritable. Giving thanks always. If you're controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Several years ago I was invited to Burbank to speak at a mother and daughter banquet. On Friday night after the banquet I was to go home with a pastor and his wife and spend the night. Early the next morning they were going to drive me to the Los Angeles airport where I would catch a plane and fly to Atlanta Georgia and connect to Orlando Florida where I would meet my husband Saturday night for a meeting.

It was a close schedule but it was all worked out and was possible. And so I went to the banquet went home with the pastor and his wife afterwards. We had a great time.

Early that morning I was up and had my suitcase packed and sitting by the door and he wasn't quite ready to go. First of all he was down on the floor playing with his little baby and that was very precious to watch for half an hour. And then he was in the kitchen pouring his fifth or sixth cup of coffee and I began to look at my watch and tap my foot and wonder if I was going to miss that plane.

And soon he came and said oh are you really ready to go now Beverly. This dear man very fine man a lovable soul. He was a sanguine temperament.

Now I must tell you that so you can understand this picture. Sanguines have many great strengths. The world could not get by without sanguines.

They keep us laughing and keep us with that happy attitude toward life. But a sanguine can be a source of irritation if you're on your way to the airport. Because they don't always pay close attention to time.

If you've ever seen a watch that has no numbers on it that may be a sanguine watch. They just kind of estimate the time. And this man must have been estimating the time and finally he put my suitcase in the trunk of his car.

We headed off down the freeway toward the airport and he went to talk. And he was driving 40 miles an hour down the Los Angeles freeway just talking and turning his head around. And sanguines like to look at you when they talk.

And that tends to make passengers nervous. And finally the time was going fast and I stopped and said call them by name. And I said don't you think maybe we should hurry a little bit.

I'm going to miss my plane. And I'll never forget what he said to me. He said Beverly why don't you do what you told my ladies to do at the banquet last night.

Why don't you just rest in the Lord. Well I surely needed that. But I'll be honest with you.

I didn't rest in the Lord. I shut my mouth. But inside I wasn't resting.

Inside I wanted him to hurry up and get me there. We arrived at the Los Angeles airport. He pulled up in front of the airlines.

I was flying. He opened the trunk of his car and set my baggage on the curb and so the bag boy could pick them up. Shook my hand.

Thanked me for coming. And he got in his car and drove away. And he never knew that I missed my plane.

And I'll confess. I did not have a thankful heart. I had a complaining heart.

I was looking at the circumstances very definitely. And I went into the airlines. He the agent rescheduled me on a later flight.

Wasn't too long. That I was heading out east. A little different direction.

But I was on my way anyway. When I finally got to Orlando Florida very late. I got the news that the plane I was to be in Los Angeles that morning had been hijacked.

And all the passengers were held captive for 12 hours. Do you know I had a thankful heart then? My first response was thank you Lord. And as soon as I said it my heart was convicted.

I asked God to help me to learn to be thankful. Even back in Los Angeles when my schedule didn't fit into my plans. When circumstances weren't going my way.

Lord help me to be thankful. And let the Holy Spirit take control of my life. You see the Holy Spirit had control all the time.

And I was trying to interfere. Lord help me to be thankful. And let the Holy Spirit have full control of my life.

Well the next verse is 21. It talks about a submissive spirit. Submitting yourselves one to another.

That's so contrary to human nature. Because we want to be first ourselves. We don't want to be one step ahead of someone else.

And this is preferring someone else above ourselves. All these three things have to do with you as a person. You as an individual.

You see Ephesians talks to you as a person. You as a partner. And you as a parent.

Because then the next few verses. Verses 22. Talk to the wives who should submit.

And tomorrow we'll give a whole section of a lecture on that subject. I'll not develop it right now. It talks to husbands who should love their wives.

And we'll have a section on that to husbands. And then chapter 6 goes on to talk to the family. Children first to obey.

To honor the father and the mother. And then the strong admonition to fathers. To bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

And we'll have a whole lecture on the responsibility of parents. In bringing their children up. In disciplining and training.

And then loving their children. The word of God has much to say about these things. There are principles given to us that we cannot overlook.

If you overlook them, you're going to reap the consequences of a miserable life. But if you will look at them and obey them. Obey the principles of God.

Then you're going to reap the consequences that come from a life that is controlled by the Holy Spirit. The singing heart. The thankful heart.

And the submissive spirit.

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