

# God's Dwelling Place - 2nd Floor, a Godly Home

by Zac Poonen

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*A godly home is essential for a leader to be successful in the church, as it reflects his character and ability to lead.*

**Duration:** 1:00:05

**Scripture:** Ephesians 5:21-22, Hebrews 12:6

**Topics:** "Godly Home"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of family and its role in building God's house. He criticizes churches that operate like organizations with a CEO, rather than functioning as a family. The speaker highlights the responsibility of parents, particularly fathers, in training and disciplining their children. He emphasizes the need for parents to have fellowship with their children and be examples to them. The sermon also mentions the foundation of God's house as His perfect love and the importance of a clean heart as a channel for God's work. The speaker then moves on to discuss the concept of a godly home as the second floor of God's dwelling place. He references 1 Timothy 3, which outlines the qualifications of an elder and highlights the willingness to take responsibility as a commendable trait.

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## Transcript

Well, let's continue our study on God's dwelling place. We have looked at the foundation of this building, which is the perfect love of God for us. And we've seen the first story of the first floor, which is a clean heart, a clean channel for God to be able to pour and send forth His living waters through.

And now we want to go to the second story, or second floor, and that is a godly home. We read in 1 Timothy, in chapter 3, concerning the qualifications of an elder. In the first verse it says it's a wonderful thing to be willing to take the responsibility of an elder.

It's a very fine work. A lot of people desire to be elders for the sake of honor, position, title. But here it's speaking about the responsibility as a work to be done.

And among the qualifications, number one, he must be above reproach, the husband of one wife. Which means that in those days, as there are today in heathen lands especially, those who have two wives. And we have had situations in India where man has two wives, they are heathen of course, and then all three

are converted.

Husband and both the wives. Well, they are believers, they can be part of the church, he must live with just one of them. But he cannot be an elder in a church because his home situation is not a good testimony.

So, these are, that's the husband-wife relationship comes right at the top in responsibility when it comes to being an elder. A man who is divorced, separated from his wife and married another, he's got two wives. One the first one who is somewhere else and one the second one he is living with.

He cannot be an elder. If only these standards were maintained, think what purity there would have been in the Christian testimony around the earth. But the standards of God's word have been lowered till they are hardly distinguishable from the standards of the world.

Now this is not one of the optional things, it's right put right at the top. Number one thing, the husband of one wife. And then verse 4 it says, he must be one who manages his own household well.

Keeping his children under control with all dignity. This of course refers to the time when a man's children are at home. That his children listen to him.

That means that he is the head of his house. Because it says here, if a man does not know, verse 5, how to manage his own family or household, how in the world will he take care of the church of God? You see the church of God is God's family. And the logic here is very simple.

If a man cannot take care of his own family, how is he going to take care of God's family? Unfortunately, today a lot of churches are not like a family. They are like a big organization, a big set up with a CEO on top, the pastor or whatever he is. And this crowd of people, it may be 4,000, 10,000, who come and watch the performance on the stage on Sunday morning, pay their dues and go home and who are members of an organization.

It's not a family. Well, if a man is running a factory, it doesn't matter what his family life is like. You see, a man can run any secular factory, IBM or anything like that.

He doesn't have to have a good family life, he just got to be a good organizer, a good manager, maybe a good speaker. And since a lot of churches today are run not as families, not the way God intended, all these professional people who can speak well and manage things well, get up and we can say they are actually CEOs of that organization called the church. But that's not the church of Jesus Christ.

Church of Jesus Christ is a family. And one of the primary requirements of a leader is that he should have been able to be a success, he should have been a success in the smaller area of his own family. If he has failed there, he is disqualified in seeking to be a father to a larger family.

I mean, if he can't bring up three or four children, how in the world is he going to bring up a hundred? It's plain simple logic. So, that shows us that before you can build a church, you got to build your home. Unless, of course, you are unmarried like Paul and Barnabas, which was the exception.

1 Corinthians 9 says very clearly that all the apostles were married, except Paul and Barnabas. So, single apostles were an exception even in those days. All the twelve apostles, as far as we know, were married.

Peter was married even when Jesus was around. Because we read that Jesus visited Peter's home and healed his mother-in-law in one situation. So, the home is a very important training ground for ministry in

the church.

Today, a lot of people aspire for ministry in the church, who have not done a good work in their own home. It's like people who want to run in the Olympic Games, who haven't taken part in their school sports as yet, and done well. That's foolish ambition.

And yet, people try to do that. See, we have a lot of visiting American preachers in India, like you have here perhaps as well. And I have trained the people in our church, when they hear about all these visiting preachers from the West who come to India with their names and photographs all advertised everywhere, I said, you need to know first of all what type of family this man has.

We need to find out about that. We need to find out how he's brought up his children, how he lives with his wife. We need to find out what sort of church he's built in his hometown.

Only then would I begin even to listen to such a person. Otherwise, I personally have no interest. There are multitudes of these wandering preachers who have never built a proper home and never built one single church in their whole life.

Then what are they preaching? They are theoreticians, they are like single bachelors going around preaching how to bring up children. How many of you would go and listen to such a young man giving a sermon on how to bring up children, who's never married himself and never brought up any children himself. But what we would never do in that situation, multitudes of Christians are doing in a Christian situation.

They are listening to a man who's never built a church in his whole life, trying to teach people how to build a church. What else are we supposed to do? God has not called us to just be lone single individuals. A major part of our life is spent at home.

You know that. It's not spent in the church. It's not spent in meetings.

Where do you spend 90% of your time? 90% of your time is spent in two places. Your home and your place of work. Jesus spent 90% of his earthly life in his home and his place of work.

30 years out of 33 is 90% of his time. He spent it in his home in Nazareth and his carpenter shop. Because he wanted to be an example for all of us who spend 90% of our time in our home and in our place of work.

And it is after he had proved himself faithful in his home and his place of work, that the father said, This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. I'll anoint him now. Let him go out into a ministry.

Even Jesus had to be proved in his home before God sent him out into a ministry. He had to be proved in his place of work. And it's only after he was proved and found faithful in his home and his place of work, that he was sent out into the ministry.

And today, there are a lot of people who think they are better than Jesus. That they don't need to be proved in their home. They don't need to be proved in their work.

And they are trying to go out and do ministry for the Lord. And by the chaos they have produced, you can see the result. That's not God's work.

Where did that chaos come from? The chaos has come because these are unproven people. They are like surgeons who are operating, who have never studied surgery. I'm amazed that a Christian who would never go and submit himself to a surgeon in a theater, who has not studied surgery properly, submit themselves to all these wandering preachers, and suffer all types of consequences.

I remember meeting a young sister in Australia when I was there some years ago. And she said, Brother Zach, some American preacher came here, some charismatic man, and he had public meetings, and he said, all those who want the baptism of the Holy Spirit, come forward. And he laid hands on everybody, and I also went.

He laid hands on me, and my whole life has been confusion ever since. I said, you should never have allowed any unknown person to lay hands on your head. Never.

That's wrong. You don't know what type of spirit he is transmitting to you. I remember once when without my... I was praying with somebody, and without my even asking, somebody put his hands on my head, and I pulled it off.

I said, no, thank you. I said, you've got to be bold. I don't want anybody laying hands on my head, unless I have confidence in him, I choose to submit to him, otherwise I'm not going to submit to anybody laying hands on my head.

I said, but sister, don't worry. There's nothing that the devil has done which Jesus cannot undo. That's the good news.

So don't worry, we can pray for you, and break the effect of whatever spirit or whatever that person put upon you, in a prayer. And I prayed, and broke that bondage, and I believe she was free. But I just mention this, because this seems to be a phenomenon, with plenty of money available nowadays for Christian preachers, and with worldwide travel so much easier now in the last 50 years, we have this proliferation of preachers, particularly from America, and some European countries, wandering around poorer countries, where they can gather a crowd, and a multitude of gullible people, just sit and listen to these people, not knowing anything about their home life, what they've done in their home, how they live, anything about their home church, and just sit, listening with open mouth, swallowing everything that they say.

But I say, if you don't follow the scriptures, if you don't compare these people with Jesus, and you're just impressed by all those gimmicks, and all those things, then you deserve to be deceived. Like I said, if you don't honor God, you don't honor His word, you deserve to be deceived. And you deserve to suffer.

But honor God. Put His word first. Be like the Buryans.

So, the home life is very important. Way back in the beginning, when man sinned, do you know what God told Adam? What was Adam's first sin? It was not eating the fruit. It was listening to his wife.

It says in Genesis 3, the Lord told him, because you have listened to the voice of your wife, Genesis 3, 17, number 1. And second, eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, you shall not eat of it. Because one led to the other. But the point there is, what the Lord was stressing, was, if I were to paraphrase God's words, it was this, Adam, I made you the head of your house.

You know very well that I created you first. There was no Eve around when you were created. Don't you know that, Adam? Don't you remember how you and I talked together when there was no Eve around? And then you and I talked together, then I put you to sleep, and I made Eve and I brought her to you, and you were to be her head.

And you did not take your proper place as the head of the home. You just allowed your wife to do what she liked. The most important decision that any human being ever took on this earth was taken by a woman without consulting her husband.

Right? In the Garden of Eden. And that foolish husband just stood there, watching this whole discussion going on between his wife and Satan and said nothing about it. You know, in the early days when I didn't read the Bible very carefully, I used to think that Eve went for a private walk in the garden, and Adam went another way, and that she was alone talking to the devil, and then afterwards she found Adam and gave him the fruit.

But that's not true. When I read carefully, I discovered that it says in Genesis 3, when the woman, verse 6, when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate, and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. The husband was, it says here, with her.

It's written very clearly. He was with her all the time. He was standing right there, and the devil, why didn't the devil talk to Adam? Have you ever thought of that? He knew who'd be deceived.

He spoke to Eve, and Eve replied, and the devil said something else, and Eve said something else, and this discussion is going back and forth, and what's this man doing here, who's supposed to be the head of this woman? He's just standing there with his open mouth and looking this way, that way, as the conversation goes on. And then when he sees her reaching out and taking that fruit, he still watches. You'd think he's a dumb character.

He just watches her eating it, and then after she's eaten it, she says, here darling, you eat something. He just opens his mouth and eats it. What a man.

What an effeminate man the first man was. She was the head of that whole. And that's how chaos came into the world.

And that's how chaos comes into a church, when some woman is allowed to run the show. It could be publicly. The Bible says, God does not allow woman to be an elder in a church, because Eve was deceived, and Adam was made first.

Two reasons. One, Eve was made second after Adam, and second, Eve was deceived. Two reasons.

She's not fit to teach, because she was deceived. She's not fit to be a leader, because Adam was made first. It's so clear.

There's an order in creation, there's an order in the church. But a lot of churches don't follow that. Now, I'm not against women, the Bible is not against women, Paul was not against women.

But it's an order. It's like saying, God has not permitted men to bear children. There are no two ways about it.

No matter how much you try, a man cannot bear children. That's it. That's a function God's given to women.

What are men going to do about it? Complain? No. But praise the Lord, we just accept it. In exactly the same way, God has not appointed a woman to be a leader.

That's it. What should a woman do about it? Just praise the Lord and accept it. That's God's way.

So a man must be the leader in his home, if he's to be a leader in a church. Otherwise he's going to follow the way of Adam and destroy the work of God. There are lots and lots of cases like this, where, you know, a man in an elders meeting can sit with the other elders and take a decision and then he comes home and his wife puts all types of ideas into his head and in the next elders meeting he has to pass on these new ideas.

And the wife knows, I can control this church very well. Very easy. Through my husband, I just manipulate him when he comes home and find out all that happened over there and tell him what he should go back and repeat like a parrot in the next elders meeting and I control the whole church.

There are a lot of women who control churches like this. And you know, it says in Revelation in chapter 2, Revelation chapter 2, the Lord says to the elder, the messenger of the church means the elder of the church in Thyatira, verse 18. One of the complaints the Lord has against this elder in the church in Thyatira is, I have this against you, verse 20, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel and that word in the original could also be translated as your wife Jezebel.

To the elder he says, I have something against you. You are doing a lot of good works, a lot of service and faith and verse 19, your deeds, a lot more deeds now than you did at first, all that is good. But, he says, I have this against you that you allow your woman, your wife Jezebel who calls herself a prophetess to lead my bond servants astray.

She teaches and leads my bond servants astray. I have seen many, many, many churches where the pastor's wife has tremendous power over other brothers in the church. It should not be so.

Such a man is unfit to be a leader because he is not able to keep his own family under control. He is like Adam who allowed his wife to run his life. So, the going astray of the home started in Eden.

And it started with a man not asserting his authority as the head of the home. Now, if a man cannot run his own home as the head of his home, how in the world is he going to run the church? So, the leadership in the home is essential. A man must be the leader.

And you know what a leader is? A leader is not a pusher. He doesn't get behind his wife and push her and say, why aren't you like this? And why aren't you like that? And why don't you do that? Such a man is not a leader. A leader is one who, like Jesus, goes in front and says, follow my example.

He is not pushing his wife to be spiritual. He is spiritual himself and goes ahead as a leader and his wife follows this godly example. That is the type of person who is fit to go to the next story and build a third story.

One who has built a relationship, been an example in his home. Now, let me clarify this. The Bible never says anywhere that a man must have an excellent marriage or a very harmonious marriage in order to be

an elder.

It doesn't say that and I will not say it. There are many elder brothers, many godly men who have had very difficult wives. One of the most famous of them was John Wesley who had a wife who was like a witch.

Yeah, literally. She used to pull the hairs from his beard and do all types of things in the presence of others but John Wesley preached sanctification and he lived it and he proved that he was sanctified by the type of wife he had and he never spoke a word against her. He was a godly man.

But he was fit to be a leader. So a harmonious marriage is not what I am talking about. I am talking about a godly leader in the home.

If your wife is disobedient, rebellious, what can you do about that? You can't do anything. You are still fit to be an elder in a church. I know one brother in not in one of our churches, in another country I met a brother who was an elder in a church and his wife would not come to his church.

His wife went to some other church and also claimed to be a believer. She went to some Pentecostal church and he was the elder in one of these other churches and she made life hell for him at home. And I asked him, he and I were together sharing a room once in a conference and I asked him, Brother, what exactly does your wife do to you? He said, She flings cups and glasses at me and I have to duck to save myself.

And he said, At the end of it all, I stand in front of my wife and say, You are the queen of my heart. And I said, Brother, you are really fit to be an elder in the church. Definitely.

So what if your wife is like that? You have learnt how to be a godly example and a godly leader. So, we are not talking about a harmonious marriage. That's good.

If you have a harmonious marriage, that's wonderful. That would be ideal. But unfortunately, there are some marriages where an elder brother does not have a wife who is willing to submit to his leadership.

She's got the spirit of Jezebel. Now, what can this elder in Thyatira do if he's got a wife like this? Who wants to create problems? Well, he's just got to make sure that she's not allowed to interfere in matters in the church. I remember once I spoke to a brother before he got married.

And one of our church's young brother was getting married to a very strong sister, young sister. And he asked me for any advice. Before he got married, I said, Brother, be the head of your home.

That's the only advice I have to give you. And then some years after his marriage, he met me again and I said, Do you have any advice for me? I said, Be the head of your home. You must lead your home, not let your wife run your home.

And he said, Well, Brother Isaac, if I try to put my foot down, there'll be war. I said, Let there be war. Win those wars.

Fight the battles of the Lord and be the head of your home. But don't just yield your headship because you're afraid of a little war. I'm not for war.

I'm a man of peace and we should have peace. But if I have to, if we have to have peace and the price for peace is giving up the headship of the home, I say, Sorry. That's too big a price because we have to honor

God.

So, Adam's failure is a big warning. God has created man to be the head of the home because the husband-wife relationship, Ephesians 5, pictures Christ and the church. And where in the world do you see the church taking over the leadership and telling Christ to follow? I mean, that's ridiculous.

And that's what is being pictured where a man meekly follows his wife. Can you picture Christ meekly following the church? That's completely wrong. The husband-wife relationship is supposed to picture Christ and the church.

And that's why it's important that a godly husband will seek to be the leader in his home whether his wife likes it or not. He has to be an example in leadership, in everything. He leads by example.

Patience. Jesus did not catch us by our neck and force us to do things. I remember once a husband asked me, a Christian husband.

They were a Christian couple. He said, Brother Zach, what shall I do if my wife refuses to obey me? The husband and wife were sitting talking to me. Shouldn't she just do what I say even if she doesn't agree with me? I asked him, I said, has the Lord ever forced you to obey Him when you were not yet convinced about some matter? Whether about baptism or anything? No.

The Lord never forces. He loves a cheerful giver. I said, you must give the same freedom to your wife to voluntarily, joyfully, cheerfully follow you.

If she takes a little longer to do it, let her take her time. But you're not supposed to force her in any way. Forcing is not God's way in His kingdom.

You have to lead by example. And how is it Jesus won our hearts? He never forced me. He's never forced me once in all the 43 years I've known Him.

He's always led by example. Sometimes I've taken a long time to take a step which He told me to take. But He's waited.

He's waited until I was convinced. And I did it. And that's how He won my heart.

And that's how a man must be the leader. And if a man is blessed with a wife who understands that God has given her husband a position of leadership and ministry, then such a man is a very blessed man because it makes his life so much smoother and easier. Like the Bible says, two are better than one.

Because even though a woman is not an elder in the church and she's not supposed to influence her husband in any way in church matters, she is an elder in home matters. In the home, there are two elders. The husband and the wife.

And the husband and wife are two. If they are both spiritually minded, they are keeping a good relationship, then they complement one another in understanding God's way for the home. See, the purpose of two elders in a church is to prevent one-man leadership.

In the Old Testament, they had one-man leadership. Moses, Joshua, David, etc. But in the New Testament, you never see one-man leadership.

Nowhere. Jesus always sent out people two by two. Paul went with Barnabas.

Peter went with Mark or John. And they always appointed elders, plural, in every church. That is God's way.

Because the reason is there are dangers in one-man leadership. The best of us is imbalanced by himself. I'm very thankful that right from the beginning of our ministry in Bangalore, God gave me another brother.

He didn't know as much as me and he was not mature as me, but together we sought to lead the church forward. He was completely different from me in every way. But it was a balance.

And the same way in a home. If God's given you a wife who is completely your opposite, you can be pretty sure God led you to her. Because that's how God brings people together.

People who are a balance for the other person. When young couples are planning to get married and they come to me for counseling, I draw a little diagram for them. I first draw a whole egg and then I break it on the paper and I say, see how this broken eggshell is.

All full of jagged edges. The top half has got jagged edges. The bottom half has got jagged edges.

And I say, that's how you are. Two imperfect people with a lot of jagged edges. And now God is trying to make you one.

And do you see how when these two halves are put together, how perfect it is? You don't see any jagged edges, you don't see any gaps. Because wherever there's a projection in the lower half, there's a depression in the upper half. And wherever there's a projection in the upper half, there's a depression in the lower half.

That means wherever there's a strong point in you, there's a weak point in your wife. And where there was a strong point in your wife, there's a weak point in you. And when it's put together, it's perfect.

That's how God meant a husband and wife to be. A complement to one another. And a man who forces his wife to be like him is foolish.

It's like taking that lower half of the eggshell and cutting it and shaping it exactly like the one on top. And then what happens when you put it together? A lot of gaps. And it's foolish.

Or to use another illustration, a husband could be pictured like a person who's taking a photograph of a building from the northern side. And his wife looks at the same building from another perspective, from the southern side. So she takes a photograph from there, and when both the photographs are put together, they look totally different.

But that's the way you get a view of the whole building. So when you come into a particular situation concerning your children, shall we permit our children to do this? Shall we permit them to dress like this? Shall we permit them to go for this school function? Or not? Shall we allow them to indulge in this activity or not? It's good to have two opinions. One from one side, the other from the other side.

When they're put together, we arrive at God's understanding of God's will. That's how a husband-wife team is supposed to function as elders in the home. Whereas a foolish husband who forces his wife to see everything from his viewpoint is like the man who's pulled out his wife from the southern side of the

building, brought her to the northern side of the building, and they've got photographs, and the photographs are identical.

And you've missed out completely on another perspective to that situation. Do you see how foolish a lot of husbands are? Or some wives, who drag the husband down to the south side. No.

Leave them where they are. It's only sin that we need to get rid of. But different perspectives, that's God's way.

For example, God is kind and strict. And our children must see kindness and strictness in us. Because then only can we reflect God properly to our children.

And it's a very rare person who's perfect in kindness and perfect in strictness. Usually we are a little imbalanced one way or the other. And if you have a God-given partner, she will be imbalanced the other way.

So between both of you, there'll be a perfect balance of kindness and strictness. And that's right. Never should be allowed children to come between father and mother to try and play daddy against mommy.

And try and come in between. And you know the chaos that came into the family of Isaac. Because his wife had favorites.

And he had favorites. He favored Esau. And Rebecca, his wife, favored Jacob.

And the end result was lifelong enmity between the children. But who fed that? Father and mother. Who had favorites.

It's a very dangerous thing to have favorites in a home. Father and mother must always be united. They may be different in their perspective.

And I always say to husbands and wives, if you have your differences, don't ever ever discuss it in the presence of your children. Always discuss it privately. There can be differences.

Differences in outlook or perspective need not mean that we are disunited. Disagreement is not the same as disunity. Two people can be disagreed on something and yet be perfectly one in spirit.

Even though they don't see two things in exactly the same way. I mean, I find that in Christian fellowship too. I can disagree with a brother on a particular doctrine or it's a peripheral doctrine or some matter which is not central to the Christian life.

And I can be perfectly one with him in spirit. And so can we be with our wives. It's very important to safeguard that unity of spirit with our wives if we are to build a godly home.

Because we have to keep the devil out of our home. And how are you going to keep the devil out of the home? By unity between husband and wife. I want to show you this verse which you may not have seen in relation to husband-wife relationships.

Matthew chapter 18. Matthew 18 verse 18. It's talking here about binding satanic forces that operate from the heavenly realm.

You know the Bible says that we wrestle with spirit forces in the heavenlies. And these satanic forces work down on earth from the heavenly realm in a home, in a church, anywhere. And we have to bind those satanic activities and lose.

Sometimes our children are affected by those satanic forces. How to lose them? We have to bind those satanic forces. It's not enough just to pray to God.

We also have to bind satanic forces because God has given us that authority. That's spiritual warfare. And it says here, whatever you bind on earth verse 18 of Matthew 18 will be bound in heaven.

In heaven means not the third heaven where God is. There's nothing else to be bound there. It's in the second heaven where the devil is.

And whatever you lose on earth here is this person, maybe your son or daughter bound by the devil in some way. We lose that person and that second heaven where the devil has had a control over your son or daughter has to release that grip because you released that person in Jesus' name. But how is this binding and losing going to be done? Listen.

Two of you. And as soon as you read two of you think of husband and wife. Two of you.

This cannot be done by one person. Minimum two. And those two people must be completely agreed.

Not agreed concerning everything they read in the newspapers or everything that is under the sun but agreed in spirit to fight against the devil agreed in their love and devotion to Christ if they are agreed in spirit and they ask anything from my father in my name it will be done. It's an amazing promise. It's the only place in the gospels where you find it.

In fact it's almost the only place in the bible where you find it. There are lots of promises which say if you ask anything in my name it will be done. If you ask anything in my name it will be done.

But there is one place where it says if two of you agree concerning anything and ask the father it will be done. This is something that my wife and I have frequently claimed and practiced through the years. As children grow up they face various problems physical sicknesses satanic attacks particularly if you are in leadership in Christian work your family becomes the target of satan's attacks in one way or the other.

Don't easily criticize the families of Christian leaders they are facing attacks which your children may never face if you are not in Christian leadership. They face attacks from satan and the only way to keep satan away is by husband and wife united kneeling down praying binding those satanic powers in the name of Jesus and releasing our children from the bondage of satan. For that two are to be united and it is in this context that it says in the next verse where two are gathered together in my name there I am in the midst so that you can exercise my authority and bind that satanic force.

So how does the devil get into a home then? The devil gets into a home by separating this unity between husband and wife. If he can make this husband and wife who are so wonderfully one have a little tension or little unforgiving attitude towards each other some misunderstanding he whispers something in his ear and goes and whispers something in her ear there are demons all around whispering things some of those things those voices you hear by the way are from demons especially if they are trying to sow misunderstanding between you and another brother or between you and your wife or you and your husband the suspicion the purpose of the devil the devil is to separate you so that there is a gap and when

there is a gap he can walk through and you know who he is going to attack?

Your children.

Many children in Christian homes have been exposed to the attacks of the devil please listen carefully because husband and wife have a misunderstanding husband and wife will not quickly resolve a dispute each is standing on their own ground refusing to as they say, compromise and as long as they stay like that the gap is wide open and the devil says well, the longer that gap is open the better for me and those poor children the number of children that have suffered because of the disunity of husband and wife arguing over some silly trivial usually some earthly thing which has no value in eternity and ultimately some of them even lose their children permanently to the world and the devil how can such a man build the third floor the house of God not possible because in the house of God he

is going to deal with many more children here he is dealing with only one or two in his home now he is going to deal with a hundred unless he is a professional preacher who is not bothered about the church as a family and unfortunately that's how it is with a lot of people then of course he is not bothered but the church is meant to be a family I remember once when some of the young teenage girls in our church were doing not evil things but some things which were not wise among each other passing notes and things like that I felt the need one day to get up and correct them publicly and I was planning to come down very hard on them in the desire to preserve the church of God in purity and as I was about to get up to speak the Lord said to me one word he said remember they are your

daughters in my own home I don't have any daughters I've only got four sons he said they are your daughters and all of a sudden I realized I was a father in the church just like I was at home and these were not some strangers these were my own daughters who were misbehaving and that made me speak in an altogether different tone true eldership is where you recognize everybody in the church as your son and daughter it's not somebody else's son or somebody else's daughter it's yours but the training for that comes in your own home training to work together with another elder in a local church comes through your learning to work together with your wife at home of course if she is not cooperative you can't do much about it but from your side you must be willing see God has put two people

together so that the rough edges in each can be smoothed out through friction through we may disagree you know that verse I'm not even sure if I'll be able to find it in Proverbs there is a verse in chapter 27 which says iron sharpens iron yeah 27.17 iron sharpens iron so one man sharpens another so it's good for a man with strong convictions to marry a woman with strong convictions if they can work together they will sharpen one another one is iron and the other is iron but if you are like a dictator like some husbands are like dictators they have reduced their wife to clay and here is the strong impression made upon the clay no resistance it's not unity it's dictatorship it's one man's opinion being imposed on the other and there is no sharpening clay cannot sharpen iron and the man

is lost out whereas if you could retain the headship of your home without destroying the individuality of your wife you are really a wise husband retain the headship of your home without destroying the individuality and personality of your wife you are really a wise husband God has made her to be herself she can sharpen you if you reduce her to a lump of clay you are going to be the loser it means learning how to give and take it means learning how to stay within your circle these are important lessons we got to learn at home before we can build the third floor the whole third floor is to rest on the second floor don't forget that how many of you know the verse which says wives be subject to your own husbands as unto

the Lord I am sure every husband knows that verse I want to ask you

husbands who know that verse do you know the verse that comes before that do you know the verse that comes before that it's in Ephesians 5 verse 21 verse 22 is wives be subject to your own husbands as to the Lord what is verse 21 I have many answers I don't know if anyone said the right one but do you know what the verse before that is husbands and wives be subject to one another so before it tells the wives to be subject to the husbands it tells the husband to be subject to the wife did you know that aren't you all excited that there is a verse that balances it out scripture is full of balanced teaching there is no imbalanced teaching in scripture now what does it mean when it says be subject to one another in the fear of Christ see God has drawn a circle, a boundary around all of us a

wife has got her personality her individuality her sphere of influence in a home you know particularly in the kitchen and home matters and the husband has got his circle in relation to his work and business and handling of finances and things like that and what to be subject to one another is the Lord saying don't go treading into her circle and trying to impose your laws over there I mean be the head of your home but recognize that there is a circle around her too I remember a story, I heard a true story of a godly man which illustrates this he had a very orderly mind he was, everything was neat and tidy you know the orderly mind the perfectionist, everything must be done in a bookshelf, the books must all be kept in descending order of size you know this is, it's good it looks neat and

all that type of stuff that was his way of thinking and he had a wife who was absolutely the opposite obviously united by God for each other's sanctification as iron sharpens iron but completely slipshod who couldn't bother to waste time over all these things ok now it was alright, he was keeping his books in that order but when he went into the kitchen he'd go into the kitchen to help wash up you know very good thing to do help his wife washing up the dishes and now it came to putting away the dishes his wife would just keep it here and there no question of order or any such thing spoons and forks and everything here and there and he would sometimes wash up there alone and now he would think his tendency was to keep it all in order but here's the wisdom of that man he kept it in disorder

you know why? because he felt if I keep it in such perfect order my wife will come here and be so discouraged that she can't do it like that that'll make her miserable so in order to make her happy he kept it in this confused state even though his mind didn't agree with that that is wisdom that is recognizing her circle this is not sin there's no law in the bible which says the big plates must be on the left and the small plates must be on the right who said that? fellowship is more important than where the plates are to have confusion at home and fight at home just over where you put the shoes and where you put the plates is foolish fellowship is far more important than even neatness and tidiness in your house let me tell you that don't forget that fellowship between husband and wife

because if you don't learn to build fellowship there with someone who's different from you you will not be able to build the third floor because the most important thing in the church is fellowship and if you're not able to build it down with your own wife how in the world are you going to build it up there in the church? you'll never be able to do it so that's why it's so important and one word about bringing up children God is kind and strict the bible says in Romans 11.22 behold the kindness and the severity of God our children must see our kindness and our severity and there also we are trained to be kind and strict in the church as elders and the training ground is the home where our children must see our kindness and our severity when they are young there's no law on this but the

bible says don't spare the rod it says use the rod on your children there are a number of verses in Proverbs 22 and others which speaks about using the rod and not to spare him for his crying because God uses the rod on us let me show you Hebrews chapter 12 Hebrews chapter 12 is a New Testament verse it says here verse 6 those whom the Lord loves he disciplines he scourges every son whom he receives and if you get disciplined then God is dealing with you as with sons verse 7 what son is there whom his father does not discipline it says in verse 6 the Lord scourges scourges the use of a leather whip it says the Lord uses a leather whip like a belt on his children disciplining them it's a New Testament verse and it says which father is there who doesn't do that for his own children

unfortunately there are fathers today who follow the principles of modern psychology then the word of God and they suffer the consequences of that in their own home and it says here about our fathers disciplining us in verse 10 as seemed best to them and such discipline is sorrowful and it says there is an example of how we must submit to the fathers our heavenly fathers discipline so a loving father will discipline his children but not discouraging them not provoking them to anger by being unreasonable and that's where we learn the balance of kindness and strictness our children must grow up recognizing in us what God is like that God is infinitely kind and at the same time strict concerning standards and if our children can see that we have reflected God aright to our children and

that's a very very important thing and as they grow up into their teenage years it becomes too late to discipline them physically after that then we must win their hearts it's very important that as our children grow up that parents, fathers have fellowship with their sons and daughters not that they are distant a lot of parents are distant from their children how can such a man build the house of God so we could take many examples like this where the training at home is the preparation for building God's house so what I want to say is God has a responsibility for all of us in His house even if we are not elders we have to be examples everybody has to be an example even if he is not an elder and the training for that begins in our home the way you bring up your family is a pretty good

test of your genuineness as a Christian how do I know that Noah was an upright man a genuine man who was concerned about God's work because his children followed him joined him in the work of the ark how do I know that Abraham was a godly man his son Isaac submitted you know it says they went up Mount Moriah Isaac carried the wood he must have been a strapping 25 year old young man and his father was a 125 year old man and his father said Isaac lie down on that altar I'm going to kill you now he lies down can you imagine how Abraham brought up his son Isaac which 25 year old would do that there you see why God was so happy with Abraham he brought up his son to obey God to honor God and in contrast to that you see men like Eli claiming to be great leaders whose children were wayward and

God says I remove the responsibility from you Eli because you did not bring up your children right so it's there in the Old Testament and it's there in the New Testament and we see plenty of examples of that today if a man does not have a good family relationship if he's not the husband of one wife if he's not brought up his children properly he cannot build the house of God our subject is building the dwelling place of God we've got to do it in our heart first and then in our home let's pray Heavenly Father we pray that you will apply the truths of what we've heard to our lives that we can walk in the light of it and do your work on earth in the short time that's left before Jesus comes again we pray in Jesus name Amen

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