

Set Thine House in Order

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[0 : 00] 2 Kings 20 verse 1 Set thine house in order was the message from the prophet.

Set thine house in order. God is known for his decency and his order. And God wants our lives, our churches, our homes ordered and orderly.

It's pleasing to him when that's the case. And the question is how can our homes be ordered as would please God, as would please him? Our homes, our marriages, our families.

He says to us set thine house in order. I'm not going to go into the particulars of that reference there. But it's just a lead into the word of God which tells us much about love, marriage and family. About homes. About the home life. And there's much said about a setting of our houses in order as would please him.

[1 : 34] And I want to look at some references to that. Some of the kind of hallmarks you could say. Of what is a house that is in order. A home that is set in order. I'll put it to you.

It's marked by godly order. Godly order. It's God's will. It's God's plan for our house to be set in order. For it to be ordered and orderly. A house set in order is a home that we build and are building according to God's plan.

According to God's plan. In Proverbs 14 verse 1 we read of a godly woman. A wise woman. Proverbs 14 verse 1.

It says of the wise woman. Every wise woman buildeth her house. But the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.

Every wise woman buildeth her house. There's a building program as it were. In the home it's brick by brick. It's every component of a household being brought together according to God's planning.

[2 : 39] According to his blueprint that we ought to build. As we see the word. It says much about home and family life. For example in Ephesians 5 and in Colossians. There's references there to how a home should be established in a biblical pattern.

And we know for some reason. Sometimes quite out of our control. We see sadly where homes are adversely affected. As we know is the case often.

And it's very sad at times to see such things. And yet as God helping us we can. We can see some of the patterns that we can follow. Some of the blueprint that God gives to us.

To guide us. How we can build a home that is according to his plan. According to his authoritative directions. Because the Bible is the only reliable source of information.

About the home. About life in general. The Bible is the authority. We trust the King James Bible. We trust the Bible. To be that authority.

[3 : 40] That we can stake our life out. Eternity upon. And it's truth. And it's according to his plan. The Bible sets out. The godly plan. The godly order. The god given roles for a man.

For a woman. For parents. For children. The pattern. The model. By which and to which we ought to build. And our motive must be like the wise woman. To build up the house.

To build it up. Not to pluck it down. And it's to his plan. That we must be true. A house set in order. Is one. Where the man rules well. And the woman looks well.

We see a couple of references to that. For example. 1 Timothy 3 verse 4. Speaking to the man it says. In the context of church leadership. That he should be one that ruleth well.

His own house. The man should rule well. Rule well. His own house. Having his children in subjection. With all gravity. The man has a place to occupy.

[4 : 41] And that place is one to rule. The woman is spoken of. As you could read the whole chapter. Of Proverbs 31. In verse 27.

Of the woman. It says. She looketh well. She looketh well. To the ways of her household. And eateth not the bread of idleness. So. The woman has a place here. In Proverbs 31.

The woman's role. Is to look well. To the ways of her household. To care for her house. To be the home manager. As it were. To be the one who keeps the home.

And so we see. A house set in order. It's where the man rules well. And where the woman looks well. Now you could. Infer from that. As the word ruling.

Some would think. Well it's the man with his thumb. On top of the woman. It's not that at all. It's not that kind of rulership. But it's a rulership. Where there's a respectfulness.

[5 : 34] And where there's a godly leadership. That the woman can follow his example. The children can follow his example. The house set in order. Is one that is built in accord. With biblical principles.

That is lived out. In godly stewardship. And faithfulness. The godly home. It's something we can aspire to. It's one that is esteemed. By the word of God.

In Deuteronomy 6 we read of, again, the godly home environment. As God would have it as he was speaking to the children of Israel in this time. In Deuteronomy 6, the Lord instructs, These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart.

He's talking about the Bible, the word of God. As a church we seek and endeavor individually and corporately to learn the word and meditate and memorize it. God says, These words which I command thee shall be in thine heart.

And then he goes on, verse 7, And thou shalt teach them, teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

[6 : 45] In other words, all the time. We ought to be talking about the word of God, applying it, teaching it to our children. When we're sitting at home, when we're going about our every day.

The house set in order is one in which the word of God is centered. Stage. Where the word of God is esteemed. It's treasured. It's valued. It's upheld.

It's obeying. It's his plan to be followed, to be heard, and to be obeyed. Another hallmark of a house set in order is that a home set in order will have not only godly order, but godly fear.

Godly fear. It's something we don't often hear about these days. The fear of God. The fear of God. It's something almost archaic, isn't it? That's something that's not relevant today, surely.

The fear of God is something old-fashioned. But no, it's something very much needful. Very much needful today. The fear of God.

[7 : 44] The fear of the Lord. It's not something that we should mock and scorn and disregard. It's a holy reverence for the things of God. For the person of God.

For our dealings with him. And we ought to teach our children the same. It says in Psalm 34, 11. Come ye children, hearken unto me. I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

The psalmist said, children listen to me. I will teach you the fear of the Lord. It's something vitally important for the children, for the parents to be instructing the children in the fear of the Lord.

You know, I think that tract that I talked of earlier put the fear of God into that man. I hope it did. When he opened it up and it said, what you missed by being a Christian? Hell. You know, the fear of God.

It should put a fear into us. That we are in danger of his judgment. In danger of hellfire. If we're not in right standing with him. If we're not saved. If we haven't trusted him.

[8 : 44] If he hasn't forgiven us of our sin. It's a terrible place to be in. You know, there's people on death's door, even in our church, as we heard this morning. It could be that time is shorter than we think to get right with God.

It says that in the word of God, boast not thyself of tomorrow. You know, some people are thinking, oh, next week I'm going to do this. Or next month we're going off to do that and this.

Boast not thyself of tomorrow. You don't know whether you're even going to see tomorrow. And friends, it's a reality. So we should be fearful if we're not in right standing with God.

And even as believers, as God's people, we ought to be fearing God. Now that's not meaning we're walking about like we're under a cloud all the time.

And we're nervous and scared. But we ought to have a godly fear that we regard him. We esteem him.

[9 : 44] We're in awe of him. Of who he is and of the wonder of Calvary that he's given for us. And we take it seriously. And we see a home set in order. In Acts 10 verse 2.

Cornelius' household. Even before he was a Christian, as it were, in Acts 10 verse 2. He was commended for his house being set in order. It says of Cornelius in Acts 10 verse 2.

He was a devout man. And one that feared God with all his house. Which gave much arms to the people and prayed to God always.

A devout man who feared God. Always. With all his household. What a wonder. Wouldn't that be good to be said of our house, of our homes, of our families.

That we feared God with all of our house. The fear of God is something critical. It's important. Just to elaborate about the fear of God.

[10:43] Solomon said, The fear of God is the whole duty of man. Ecclesiastes 12 verse 13. You know, you're missing the point. If you're missing this, you're missing the whole point of life itself.

The whole duty of man is the fear of God. That's Ecclesiastes 12 verse 13. So think of it. As you go about you every day.

How do we put this into practice? What is the preacher on about tonight? The fear of God. How can we make that live? How can we make that real? How can we make that happen? In our shoes.

In our homes. It's about thinking about things in relationship to Him. And what would He be pleased with? The decisions, the choices we make.

Sometimes we glibly do that, don't we? Without any consideration. Does it please Him? Does it praise Him? That how we live will be to His glory?

[11:38] Isaiah 66 too. It says that the Lord says, To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

That's the man He's going to look at. Friends, today, if you've got the opposite of a poor and a contrite spirit, you might think you've got it all together. But you don't need to repent.

You haven't got a contrite spirit. You just think, Oh, she'll be right, Jack. Rather tremble at His word. Tremble at it. Take it seriously. Now, this is not something to trivialise or to handle carelessly, but to take very, very seriously.

And sometimes we can, as an old-time writer said, we fear men so much because we fear God so little. You know, the street preachers here today, there's people who go out there in the thick of the fight, you know, standing up on a box, on a soapbox in front of a mocking crowd, people laughing and scorning, throwing things at them.

You know, I've seen some of that. We fear God so little. And we fear man so much. John Wesley said, Either we don't fear God and find fears without number filling us, or we do fear God and find we have nothing else, no one else to fear.

[13:06] If you're standing with God, you don't have to be afraid. Chaps here today, ladies, in the workplace, when you stand for God, I've had it. I'm in the secular workplace, and, you know, I've had my supervisor question my Christian walk, and say, What do you believe about abortion and same-sex marriage?

I mean, I don't know what, it's any business of hers to ask such things. I was a subordinate, even in the secular workplace, but I wasn't afraid to say what I believed, because, and they're just side issues in effect, because the ultimate is, it's Christ and Him crucified.

That's who we want to proclaim and stand for, and even if we aren't mocked, as I know others have mocked me, and scorned, when one of my workmates saw something that was on the internet, about our church, where I made some comments about some issues, that she mocked me.

And friends, this can happen, and it does happen, but we don't fear men, we fear God. It's to Him we're going to give account, ultimate account, you know, let's stand with the right, stand with God, stand strong, be a man, be a woman of God, fear the Lord.

Fear the Lord, you'll be healthier for it. Here's a quote, approximately 60% of human illnesses can be traced directly, or indirectly, to fear, sorrow, envy, resentment, guilt, hatred, any number of emotional stresses, adds to that, the awful pain caused by alcohol, cirrhosis of the liver, tobacco, emphysema, cancer, heart disease, and immorality, venereal diseases, and AIDS.

[14:40] We can see that a life lived, in the fear of the Lord, with obedience to His Word, will result, in a much healthier existence. Now, some of that is just, probably common sense stuff, but it's about the fear of the Lord, isn't it?

It's about, are we living in right standing with Him? Is our family, living in the fear of God? There's much more we could say. The fear of God, it's simply something that, we take stock of, in every decision of life, and of our family.

That there's a respect for Him, our Saviour. Are we taking Him seriously? We take what He says seriously. This is not just some, uh, light and breezy novel, or some, uh, something, some token

thing, that we can trivialise, paraphrase to, to the nth degree, that it doesn't make sense anymore. Friends, we need to take God's Word, as it stands, take it seriously, and obey it, and, uh, weigh every motive, every thought, in relationship to that. To love what He loves, and to hate what He hates.

The fear of the Lord. Think of it. Here's another quote, what it means, the fear of the Lord, what it means to you and to me. When we live in infidelity, there is no fear of the Lord.

[15:59] When we hate others, or live in worldliness, we are not in the fear of the Lord. When we live in hypocrisy, we are not in the fear of the Lord.

When we neglect our responsibility, towards our children, our duty, we are not in the fear of the Lord. When we neglect the mission of the church, we are not in the fear of the Lord.

When the church fails to identify sin, and, and deal with it, in the church members, it does not live in the fear of the Lord. These are serious things, you know, as a church, we want to stand for purity and truth.

You know, and sometimes it's confronting. I was seeking to witness to someone who is in affiliation with our church, and, they haven't attended, but someone has, who comes with them, I gave them a simple gospel presentation along the lines of the good person text.

And they found it too confronting. It was too confronting, they said. But it was really just simple gospel truth. And friends, this is something we need to be alerted about, confronted about, offended about if it must be.

[17:17] The cross is an offence. It's an offence to man that he's not good enough by his own efforts. That he can't pull himself up by his own bootstraps. That someone had to come and die in his place.

Someone holy and perfect had to shed precious, spotless, perfect blood for his sin to be cleansed. And for man to come to that place that he's got to bow the knee, the heart, and yield, and realise that there's no way, no way in the world he can make heaven by his own effort.

That's the fear of God. And that should move us, it should live in us and in our homes. Oh, that there was such a heart in them that they would fear me. Deuteronomy 5, 29.

Fear ye not me, saith the Lord. Will ye not tremble at my presence? Let us now fear the Lord our God. My people love to have it so.

They don't want to have it so. It's the case today where some would not have it. And the Bible says, Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. It's a terror of the Lord.

[18:27] It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. This is all on the elaboration about the fear of God. David cried, Put them in fear, O Lord.

Psalms 9, verse 20. And unite my heart to fear your name. Friends, it talks about perfecting holiness in the fear of God. I'm saying all these things to urge each one here tonight.

Godly fear. It's something we should aspire to. We should have David's prayer. Unite my heart to fear thy name. So we see these hallmarks of a home set in order. Firstly, a godly order.

Where there's a man doing what he ought to do. A woman doing what she ought to do. Parents doing what they ought to do. And children, likewise.

A godly order. A godly fear. Where the fear of God matters. The things of God matter. Where we get so serious that sometimes we might even tremble at this truth.

[19:27] Because it's so impacting. It's so confronting. And thirdly, it's a home marked by godly honour. There's a godly honour about the home.

And the home relationships. Honour marks the relationships of the godly. Honour. What does honour mean? It means giving esteem. It means giving worth. Giving respect.

There's a lack of that at times, isn't there today? A lack of respect at times. A lack of giving esteem. And of giving worth. And giving respect. Think of these things about honour. This is really important now. We can all learn from this in all of our daily relationships.

It says in Leviticus 19. It says, They shall rise up before the hoary head. That's the grey head. And honour the face of the old man. And fear thy God.

[20:20] I am the Lord. The Bible says someone we should want to honour is the one who is elderly. We should honour the face of the old man. In some circles today, the elderly are kind of put aside.

You know, put them away. Put them out of sight. You know, we want to be a trendy church. The elderly haven't got a place to serve or to be a part. The honour of the elderly is lacking.

And that's a sad reality. And that's just in the world in general. Elderly people are not honoured as they ought to be. And friends today, all of you younger people here today, think of those who are older than you.

And honour the face of the old man. Rise up before the hoary head. The grey head one. Romans 12.10. Another place of honour. It says, Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love. In honour, preferring one another. We ought to prefer one another. We ought to honour everyone. Honour one another. Honour your brothers and sisters in Christ. 1 Peter 2.17.

[21 : 24] It says, In part, honour all men. Honour all men. The one who ultimately deserves our honour is the Lord himself. In Revelation 4.11 it says, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power.

For thou hast created all things. And for thy pleasure they are and were created. Do things that are pleasing to God. We're talking about the home, the home front.

It's where the devil's energy seems to be sometimes the strongest, I think. Wouldn't you say that? At the home front.

In the home place. It's where the enemy just wants to attack and destroy and tear up and just wreak havoc. And another place where the Bible talks about something that's honourable.

Marriage. Hebrews 13.4. Hebrews 13.4. It says, Marriage is honourable. Marriage is honourable in all.

[22 : 29] And the bed undefiled. But whoremongers and adulterers, God will judge. Marriage is something that's honourable. Marriage is something God esteems.

He praises marriage. He esteems it. And we ought to honour it. In the home, we see honour.

In Esther 1.20. The king of his day, and he's just a worldly king, he says, All the wives shall give to their husbands honour. Wives are to give husbands honour.

In 1 Peter 3, Sarah honoured her husband, Abraham. She is a role model for the women of today. Sarah honoured Abraham. She respected him.

She submitted and obeyed him. And again, it's not that the husband is to be a dictator, or to be a bully, and a bossy boots. But we know that the Bible says we ought to be subject one to another in the fear of God.

[23 : 34] So there's a sense where even the husband is subject to the wife. But there is that necessary order in the home, as we talked about. And there is a necessary submission that's out of godliness.

And men, likewise, are commanded to honour their wives. It says that in 1 Peter 3, verse 7. It says, Husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife.

Giving honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered. So, interesting, isn't it? Marriage is honourable.

Husbands, honour your wives. Wives, honour your husbands. And what a children too. They're not missed out. In Exodus 20, verse 12, it says to them, Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Parents are to be honoured too. So, young people, there's a place for you to honour your mum, your dad. It's something God says.

[24 : 36] It's in the Ten Commandments. It's something that's important. So, honour your parents. A house that is set in order will be marked by honour. It'll be a God-honouring home.

Marriage is honourable. Husbands, honour your wives. Wives, honour your husbands. Children, honour your parents. And children ought to be treated respectfully too.

As we know, it says to fathers, Provoke not your children to wrath, to anger. There's a sense where a father needs to be guarded. As we all can have a temper, we all can say unwise things, even in a fatherly role, as I have done to my children.

And we need to be honouring our children in a respectful way. Bringing them up in a nurture.

Nurture means love. It means tenderness and compassion.

Bringing them up in that caring environment. The nurture and the admonition. So, it's talking about instruction and learning of the Lord. So, friends, just to close, we've been talking about the godly home.

[25 : 46] It's built by God's plan. God loves to build homes. He wants us to be home builders. Homes built according to his godly order, where there's a godly order to the home.

He's a god of having things decent and in order. Not of confusion. A godly order. A godly fear.

Where the fear of God is in that house. All the house will fear God. And we know for some, some might be in a situation where not everyone is a believer in that home.

It can be lots of testing things. I acknowledge that today. But not every home situation is as we would like it to be. There's homes torn apart and a mishmash and all kinds of confusing and difficult things that happen to people just by the nature of life.

And these are things sometimes completely out of our control. Yet, as God helping us, we can seek from this moment on to aspire to that godly order, that godly fear, where God is feared, where God is honoured.

[26 : 52] And where we honour one another in godly relationships. And God will bless you as you seek to aspire to that. Set thine house in order was the message from the prophet.