

As For Me and My House

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[0:00] As for me and my house, talking about families this morning, friends the world is in trouble.

! Gross darkness has fallen across the land and perilous times are among us.! In the meantime it seems sadly that the church is backslidden largely. We've dropped the ball. We're missing some of the essentials. It seems like most people are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. People without natural affection. I know I was talking to someone lately talking about lawlessness in their street and just mayhem. Lawlessness, it's rampant isn't it?

And would you believe that someone stole something from our church in this last week gone by? I know our beloved sister Julia planted some lovely plants and someone took a liking to them and thought they'd look nicer in their own garden so they took them away.

That's how sad it is that people would even steal from a church. That's how low people have sunk to that level. And we've seen that lately. But at the heart of it there's a problem. It's in the family is the problem. It's an order problem.

[1:18] It's an order problem. And the prophet Isaiah stood by a dying king and the prophet tells Hezekiah the king, you're about to die. Now of course we've had a queen who's died.

And it's as if this prophet comes to the bedside, the sick bed of Hezekiah the king and the prophet says, you're about to die. Set your house in order.

We take it up here in Isaiah 38 verse 1 it says, Now Hezekiah was a faithful king. He was humble, prayerful, a godly leader.

He stood against idol worship. Hezekiah had restored the true worship and the Passover feast. God had wrought revival in the reign of Hezekiah. He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Yet now he was sick and Isaiah tells him, you're going to die. Hezekiah turned to the Lord, it says then, and he prayed. And God gave him 15 more years.

[2:43] The Lord graciously gave him more time and opportunity to set his house in order. As an aside, despite the time, the extra time that God gave him, Hezekiah got prideful.

And he actually failed to lead his own son towards godliness, Manasseh. So Hezekiah was getting ready to die. We will all come to that same place.

God says you're going to die. Your time on earth is coming to a close. We don't know how long we've got. I don't know that I'm going to get to 96.

But we can all hope that we'll live that long, can't we? But we've got no guarantees. How much longer have I got? How much time on that clock? Until that appointment that is set by our maker. How much time? Your time on earth is coming to a close. How much opportunity do we still have? Maybe time is shorter than we realise.

[3:46] When we face the closing days of our lives, we want to make sure that things are right with our house. And as we read of David, another case of a king.

And in the last hours of King David, he gave his final charge to his own son. In 1 Kings 2 it reads, Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die.

And he charged Solomon, his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth. Notice the most important thing for Solomon.

Here that David told Solomon about. David didn't say to Solomon, Listen here Solomon, and talk on about all of his wealth, and his estate, and his property, and all of the earthly affairs, and here's where my will is, and here's all the things that you've got to attend to when I'm dead.

No, he says, David says to Solomon, Listen Solomon, I'm going to die. And then he talked about the things of God. Because that was the most important thing that David charged Solomon with.

[5:11] He talked about getting right with God. He talked about the way of God. He talked about walking in his ways. He talked about heavenly things. David wanted to get his house in order.

He wanted his son to know this matters. And we're all answerable to God, aren't we? We all have a charge to deliver to our own family. I know a case in point, Julie's dad, Peter's dad, on his deathbed, virtually, he called the family together into the bedroom, and he charged his sons and his daughters, and his grandsons, granddaughters, and he urged them to get right with God. Some are still in the process of doing that. Amen. Set thine house in order. And when you're on your deathbed, you want to tell someone something important, don't you?

You want to give them a charge. That's what King David gave to Solomon, the son. Set thine house in order. It matters, doesn't it?

When we face the reality of eternity, there's some things that matter more than any other thing, more than any earthly considerations, that we walk in his ways. That we walk in his ways.

[6:42] Joshua is another example. And he urged the people to get it right, to choose right, to choose life, as he exhorted the people of God in Joshua 24 from verse 14, where it reads, as Joshua spoke, Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity, and in truth.

And put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt, and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day, whom ye will serve.

Whether the gods which your fathers served, that which were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell.

But, as for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord. Joshua said, I'm going to stand up for my God.

Stand up for what is right. As for me and my family, my house, I'm going to be the godly family leader that my family needs. Won't you stand with me?

[7:59] That's what he was saying, the people there, wasn't he? Urging them. Joshua was committing that his house would make a godly stand. And as we think of young couples preparing for marriage today, that we would make that stand, that we'd make that commitment, that decision.

That we'd come to that same godly stand that Joshua came to. Now Joshua was one of those, only two spies, who encouraged the Hebrews to go forward into Canaan, despite the giants.

He was a man of faith. He declares, as for me, and my house. He was saying, I'm not talking about your house, or their house, I'm talking about my house.

I'm not talking about my neighbour's house. I'm talking about my own house. And I'm going to declare that the Lord is the head of my house. I'm talking about my own house.

I'm going to declare the word of the Lord to my house. I'm going to make sure that my house is in order, God helping me, the best way I can make it. So, it's the same for us, isn't it? We know there's many troubles in the households.

[9:09] There's many families torn. And things might be beyond repair for some. But yet, we can still make our own individual stand as an individual believer that as for me, I'm going to get myself right.

And God helping me, I'm going to lead my family right. Because we're only responsible for my house, aren't we? My house. Each one can say my house. We look at the world today, the mess that it's in, there's a lack of order, isn't there?

And the problem really, the root of it all, the lawlessness, the misery at times in society, the problem lies at the house level, doesn't it?

At the family level. We've forsaken God. It's been said, as is the home, so is the church, the state, the nation. It comes down to the family level, doesn't it?

The family is that basic building block of society. And God's plan is the God-fearing family. He's the designer of the very best model. As we know, right back in Genesis, where God gave the design, his plan, as the very best model.

[10:12] God builds families. God created Adam's helpmeet. Helpmeet. And he made the very first home. And it was very good.

Very good. We see God's idea that man cleave unto his wife like glue, an unbreakable bond. That's his plan. Of course, we know sometimes it doesn't stay that way, but God helping us, we can do our own part to make it so.

God gives us the blueprint, that biblical ideal. What is it? A God-fearing father, a God-fearing mother, God-fearing children. There's a blessed order here.

We can endeavour to find that, to know that. God helping us to see that, to realise that. And our Lord gives us that firm foundation on which to build a family.

It's been said, if you don't want a home on the rocks, build it on the rock. The rock. And some homes lack that sound foundation because they leave God out. We know at times there's unbelieving spouses that can make it even all the harder, can't it?

[11:21] When God gets left out, it's very hard, isn't it? But think of what the ideal would be and we can pray for that, to be so. The maker and designer of our family.

He's designed the family how it ought to be and that's his plan. The Lordship of Christ that Christ is the Lord of the home. He is the head of the home, the ultimate head and that the home be a godly family unit.

It's interesting when the Lord spoke to Noah, he said, come thou and all thy house into the ark. That's what we want, don't we? As believers, I know for me, as a father and my children and my children's children, I'd want them all to get into the ark, don't you?

You might have loved ones, friends, your own family. You think, I just want everybody to get into the ark. Of course, we know some don't get into the ark.

That's up to them, isn't it? But the invitation to Noah was, come thou and all thy house, all thy household into the ark. So this is the hope, the blessed promise for Noah that this could be so.

[12:35] And we think, what does a godly home, a Christ-centered home, look like? It honors Christ as the head of the home, the center of it. It's a home that loves the Bible and cares about God's truth, that radiates Christ to others.

Friends, today, the biblical family is an endangered species. The family unit is under attack and it's like the devil is in the home demolition business and this me-centered society would disregard the rightful honor in a home and care little for Bible standards and no wonder it's out of control, out of order.

But there is a blessing promised that says where God is honored that there will be a blessing. It says he blesses the habitation of the just. Think about family values, about godly values of respect, of honor, of decency, of godliness, of love.

Set your house in order is an important command, isn't it? So what does that look like? What is God's order for the family? We see the role of the father, the husband. Really, the buck stops with the man here.

Really, we know that. It's me. Ask for me. Joshua said, ask for me. Father, take the lead, especially in spiritual matters.

[13:59] Leading is the point firstly for God-fearing fathers. Point number one, leading. Fathers are called to lead. We're called to take the lead. There's an authority within the family and the father should have godly authority.

We see in Genesis 18 where it speaks of Abraham. He will command his children and his household after him and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment.

So Abraham was told to command his children. Notice there's a couple of things here. Authority, command, and example.

He will command his household after him. So there's not just authority that he'll command but there's example. He will command his children after him.

There's that sense where they'll follow his example. So it's important brothers, sisters, men of God here today, it's important that the father set the right example. Set the right example.

[14:57] And you know, I think of myself, could I have set a better example to my children? I think I could have done. I think I could have done better. We can look at the life of Eli.

Eli was a judge, a devoted high priest. He served for 40 years. He had a good testimony but something was lacking.

Eli had an order problem with his wicked sons. Eli was a good man. His life was pure. He loved and delighted in God's service but there was a fault here in Eli.

One point he failed to exercise the proper authority of a parent over his children. Says the Lord says of him, 1 Samuel 3 13, I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth because his sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not.

That's a big problem isn't it? Fathers restrain your children. There's a need for godly parental discipline and we see the tragedy of godless wayward children.

[16:03] There's a need for the father to exert authority. Of course there's bounds to that but it's a godly authority that he should exert. And we need fathers who will do right.

God fearing fathers are exhorted.! Restrain them! Think of fathers of the home here that we want to restrain our children from those wicked things.

Put some boundaries around them, set some limits on the material that they would absorb that would come into their minds from wicked companions, wicked amusements.

We've got to restrain our children because children need that sense of authority. It brings order to the home. In some homes it seems the motto is more God because there's an order problem.

There's a lack of godly fathers. Fathers we've dropped the ball. We've dropped the ball. We need to lift up the ball and get back in the game. Responsible leadership by the husband is God's plan.

[17:00] It's an order thing. It brings peace to the home. God has placed the husband as the head under Christ to guide, to plan, to lead, to be an servant.

The husband is meant to take up the towel like the servant, the ultimate servant leader, our Lord Jesus, to take that place of the servant. The wife is a help to take his side to be that equal partner. The husband is exhorted to be the priest of the family. There's a sense where we've got a spiritual responsibility. That can be hard to bear. But God helping us, we can be that one who will be as a priest of the family, leading the family spiritually.

God helping us. We all need that help. I need that. I could do better as the spiritual leader of my own family. But God fearing fathers are called to that leading.

Number one, first point. Second point about godly fathers is that they're called to loving. They're called to love. We see that in Ephesians 5 25. Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it.

[18:16] Now this is 1 Corinthians 13 love. It's unconditional, it's sacrificial, self-giving,! Loving and health and sickness and poverty and prosperity. Love as Christ.

We miss that, don't we? As Christ loved. That's a big kind of love, isn't it? For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but he nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.

To nourish means to promote health and strength. To cherish means to impart warmth and care. So the husband is called to love, to lead, and in that loving is called to protect.

It says in 1 Peter 3 verse 7, likewise he husbands, it says, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel. Giving honour, in other words, count your wife as precious, as valuable, to protect.

Secondly, to provide. 1 Timothy 5 verse 8, the husband is called to provide food, clothing, education, that nurture.

[19:25] But if any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel. There's very strong words there that the husband ought to be faithful to his wife, the husband obviously puts Christ first in his life.

Luke 14 26 talks about hating your wife, hating your husband, of course in comparison with Christ, that we love him supremely, of course we should love and keep on loving.

God fearing fathers. Secondly, we see God fearing mothers. God fearing mothers. It tells who can find a virtuous woman for her price is far above rubies.

How we need, we desperately need God fearing mothers. God fearing mothers. Homemaker is an important, noble, rewarding role and designed for women. When a woman writes home duties,

that's important.

Being a homemaker is a good thing. It's a blessed thing. Here's another quote. Mothering is the most important job on planet earth. It's been said the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world.

[20:34] Almost all great men have been made great by one or two loving women, a godly mother or a devoted wife. Napoleon was once asked, what's the greatest need of the French nation?

And he said, the greatest need of the French nation is mothers. Mothers, you've got an important role.

So what is the biblical order for the mother? A wife is called, a mother is called to be a helper. It's a wonderful gift from God as we see here. Her price, her value is above rubies.

So Mrs Far Above Rubies is a tremendous asset. She's trustworthy, hardworking, look at Proverbs 31, godly, unselfish, kind-hearted, a help me.

Now that's not to say there's an inferiority, but a voluntary submission. And she cares for the household. There was a survey made by a Melbourne university that estimated the value of a housewife.

[21:45] And they reckoned there was an average of 54 hours a week. I think they probably got that a bit low, that number, but spent on housework every household. And the study from Melbourne university said a wife is the biggest economical bargain in the world.

And speaking generally, the bargain can continue day after day and year after year with no loss of efficiency or tendency to wear out if the husband will only realize his prize and act accordingly.

And they reckon that during the average married life, a wife spends her time as follows. Food preparation 13,600 hours. Dishwashing 10,000.

Care of the house 13,500. Marketing 4,500. Washing, ironing, etc. 13,500. Caring for the family 10,000.

In addition to this Mrs Wife walks 300 miles around the house washes 25,200 dishes a year and still has time to look her lovely and dainty best when you come home.

[22:47] Now I'm sure we've got lots of sensitive new age guys that are doing the dishwashing and all of that. But of course we know a lot does fall on the shoulders of the wife doesn't it?

And so the wife the godly mother is a helper. And secondly she's a home builder. We see Proverbs 14 verse 1 that every wise woman buildeth her house but the foolish plucketh it down with her hand. She's a builder. That's what she's meant to be. Amen. She makes her household a top priority. And we see further Proverbs 31 says she looketh well to the ways of the household and eateth not the bread of idleness.

So God has designed the woman the wife to be that role of the keeper at home or the worker at home. So women today you've got a wonderful important role and responsibility to care and manage your home and the wife's ministering her fulfillment is truly found in the home.

It says Paul writes that I will therefore that the younger women give not occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. So bear children guide or in other words manage it's quite a strong word that word guide it's got a sense of manage or rule the house.

[24:08] So there's an important responsibility to take charge to get to look after the home place. And we see Titus 2 4 it reads further teach the young women to be sober to love their husbands to love their children to be discreet chaste keepers at home in other words home workers working at home the guardian of the home the caring for the home good obedient to their own husbands that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Now we know in today's economy often the women do have to work for whatever reason to mortgage reasons usually but we know that there's still that sense where there's a responsibility for the home that's an important priority we see the responsibility to follow the leadership of the husband hopefully it's godly leadership hopefully it's rightful authority we see that in Ephesians 5 22 where it says wife submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord this word submit it's got that present tense continuous tense so keep on submitting and 1 Peter 3 verse 6 it reads further of the example of Sarah even as Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him Lord see the example of

Sarah that she set that example of honouring her husband of course we know it can be hard the husband is unsaved in some ways the woman virtually has to assume the spiritual head of the home yet in subjection to her husband yet men women if we can just aspire to that godly order god will bless that god will bless you for that even if you might be a young Christian very much a baby Christian god can use you to do the right thing we see many references to how a woman should adorn herself now you can go down to the fashionable shop and wear the latest fashion but rather to adorn yourself with good works it says here in 1 Peter 3 how the woman should adorn herself with that meek and quiet spirit so women of god here today be an example to your husband with that meek and quiet spirit let it be that ornament that adornment and then it talks further how holy women trusted god they adorn themselves in that way another reference is in 1 Timothy women adorn themselves with modest with shamefacedness and sobriety so it's got that sense of reverence of humility that modesty that prudence and such to adorn yourself with that women it's a blessing that you do so and then we see that a woman can be well reported of for good works so there's that sense where we should follow every good work so women wise here today you've got much value the

Bible says you're more precious than rubies that you are commended in that role that you have and it says that your children should rise up and call you blessed and your husband also so the God-fearing wife and mother is commended very much then we see another aspect of this order in the home it's God-fearing parents God-fearing parents that's what we need to be don't we a God-fearing mother a God-fearing father tells us how it was God's plan from the Genesis the garden in Genesis 1 verse 28 that God called the couple to be fruitful to multiply to replenish the earth now we see marriage has been perverted and corrupted defiled that it should be not one man and one woman for life that now it's some other hodgepodge that man has made some fanciful construct that it can be whoever you marry male or female and what a woeful world we live where such a thing could be said that marriage is so soiled and tainted that they could call that marriage today but no

God's marriage is a man and a woman a male and a female that they can be God-fearing parents to bring up children as God blesses them so we see the Bible talks about children as being a gift it says lo children are an heritage of the Lord and the fruit of the womb is his reward you see that happy is the man who has his quiver full of them that picture of the quiver and the bow and arrows that the arrows are filling that quiver that you can have such a fulsome family and it tells how parents are to love their children sadly their average family spends only 17 minutes in conversation each week that's a pretty shocking statistic isn't it 17 minutes per week in conversation friends no wonder we've got some problems in the family we need parents to step up to bring up their children God helping them to know the Lord to guide and instruct them to discipline them in love it tells how we should train up a child in the way that he should go when he is old he will not depart from it so there's very much an instruction there for you and me as mums and dads as parents

[29:31] God helping us bring our children up to know him to hear his word that it won't be a strange thing for them to hear the bible read at home it won't be a strange thing for them to want to get together to come and fellowship as a family as a God fearing home and the God fearing family is a place where there could be godly instruction godly example where we teach the children to know the bible to teach them the bible at home God helping us to be as it were as in deuteronomy it says hear o israel the lord our god is one lord and thou shalt love the lord thy god with all thine heart with all thy soul and with all thine might and these words which i command thee this day shall be in thine heart and it says and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkest by the way and when thou liest down and when thou risest up so it's telling us here let the word of god not be something strange in your home but you want to talk about it you want to teach your children diligently it's got the sense of intensely sharpened there's an intensity to that teaching diligently it's a sharpness there and then deuteronomy 32 46 it says of moses he said unto them set your hearts unto all the words which i testify among you this day which you shall command your children to observe to do all the words of this law so there's a sense where parents

should command that parents are commanded to command their children to observe to do so be that model to your children mums dads pray for your children impart to them pray that they'll be saved yet it's not so much what we say but how we live too isn't it that we set the example like

Abraham not just say it but set the example that they'll follow you and Ephesians 6 4 says fathers provoke not your children to wrath but bring them up bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord so we've seen godly fathers godly mothers we've seen god fearing parents lastly god fearing children the bible gives two commandments to children obey your parents and honour your parents children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right honour thy father and mother which is the first commandment with promise that it may be well with thee that thou mayest live long on the earth so obey be obedient listen submit to them and honour esteem value is precious Isaac was an example in Genesis 22 carrying the word without murmuring as he took the word to the mount Samuel was a very good example in his instant obedience even in the middle of the night and then the Lord

Jesus as a child was obedient to his parents in Luke 2 51 there's an obedience there that's displayed by these ones as children and we too as children we're all children we all have a parent if they're still living we can honour them can't we and so a Christian home a godly home is earth's sweetest picture of heaven it's a foretaste of heaven set thine house in order that's for us blokes us fathers isn't it God helping us if there's ways we can set it in order we'll set it in order if there's still that prospect that it can be so God God will give us the strength to stand like Joshua and say as for me and my house God helping me to be the leader God helping me to be a godly man that I'll do my part friends it says except the house is built by the Lord they labour in vain to build it we need God to build a house don't we Isaiah told Hezekiah set thine house in order for thou shall die and house in order we have a generation growing up that have no discipline no wonder there's lawlessness no wonder society is falling to bits no wonder there's this lack of discipline this lack of self discipline because they don't have the home discipline the school system is out of order society is out of order out of control it is a world without order there is confusion of course there's much chaos and the author of confusion the devil is the devil is so families are not functioning as they ought to why so the father is not taking the lead that can be often the case the bible tells us that as men of god we ought to command our house we have a responsibility to take the lead to teach the word of god to train them in the way they should go while we have them under our roof let's teach our sons and daughters the word of god let's teach our children the fear of god can we say like joshua ask for me this is what i'm going to do ask for me personally my house i'm not responsible for my neighbor's house for my friend's house i'm responsible for my house and god will hold us men accountable you're about to die take steps now set your house in order i'm preaching to myself to prioritize your time to love god to set biblical principles in place in your home teach your children the fear of the lord the ways of the lord bring them up to know him teach them the fear of the lord it's the beginning of wisdom time is short people today time is short the psalmist cried teach me lord teach me to apply a heart unto wisdom to number our days how can we invest the rest of our lives wisely to be the example that our family needs us to be time is short for our planet for ourselves the final crisis is closing in on us we see in Noah's day as the days of

Noah were so shall also the coming of the son of man be for as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the ark and they knew not until the flood came and took them all away so shall also the coming of the son of man be what was Noah doing he was preaching he was preaching his heart out giving strong warning to the people of his day the message to his world all the while people running here and there busily buying and selling marrying and giving in marriage but the world largely paid no attention to the words of Noah he said he's a crazy a fanatic marriages and families continue to be made we know today I know of at least three couples that have asked me to marry them and there's probably more in the wings homes are being established people are marrying and giving in marriage as it was in the days of

Noah but many homes are being built where there's no godly order there's no love of God God God's not the heart and soul he's not the center he's not the foundation our fathers have dropped the ball mothers wives there's lots to be desired we certainly see children rebelling against their parents Christ is not the center of the home we see the order is broken down Christ is not in many homes today many know nothing of godly order and where a marriage family has been damaged

disintegrated we know sometimes it's scrambled eggs that can't be sorted but we can do our part in the now can't we we can do our part in the now in the present in the situation that we're in be that godly example be that godly example to your children parents set your house in order set your house in order and be like Joshua as for me I'm going to get myself right

[37:46] I'm going to get me right as for me I'm going to get me right and then my family well hopefully I can be that example I need to be for my family that I can bring my children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord I can be that godly testimony I can show them my example and they'll follow that that I can be that one who points them to Christ that they can find their security in Christ that the blessings of God will come to my habitation as I give God the first place in my heart of course we're speaking here today to godly families it starts when you get saved for one thing we need salvation we need the saviour we need the saviour and then God helping us will put the principles that he wants us to apply into our life as for me and my house let us pray Lord we thank you that you are the one who designed our home as we see even

Adam and Eve and their children had all kinds of problems too because of sin the sinful planet that we live in Lord we know there's damage done we know there's disorder sometimes it's beyond decision from this time forth ask for me ask for me and my house my family I'm going to do my part Lord help us Lord to make that stand that will trust you as Savior and Lord and will follow you and God helping us Lord your help you'll give us to be that one to set the example to be the example Lord to to live as you would help us to live to be that testimony in our home and Lord that you'll help us to build on that solid foundation we pray that each one might know their hearts trust is in you as Savior and that Lord you'll help us to be as Joshua to say as for me and my house we will serve the Lord thank you Lord in Jesus precious name

Amen