

Parenting

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[0 : 00] All right, Colossians chapter 3, verse 20 and 21. Colossians 3, 20 and 21.

Hear the word of the Lord. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children lest they become discouraged.

Let's pray. Father, we believe that every single word that you have given us is profitable for doctrine, for instruction, for correction, for rebuke, for training in righteousness.

Every word is good for us. Every word trains us to be godly. Every word is there in order to increase our joy in you, increase our walk of holiness.

And so we pray that we would take this word today and that you would use this in us. That you would call us out to love how you have designed the family. With husbands and wives and mothers and fathers.

[1 : 13] With children being obedient. Lord, let us love the design. Let us believe that this is true. And let us lean and rest upon you in these things.

Help us to understand. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. According to census data website 2023. 17.8 million children in the United States. 17.8 million children in the United States live in homes without a biological step or adoptive father.

If you do the math, that's one in four. One in four. Add to that the potential that some of the three that do live with fathers have fathers that are at worst abusive and at minimal neglectful or unengaged.

Our culture. Our culture. Our culture has been pushing against the authority of Christ. Christ in so many ways.

[2 : 27] To be able to redefine what marriage is or what love is or what even a man is or what a woman is. A part of the.

I guess you could say side effects of such attacks is that the idea of a father is something that the culture is pushing past. But we as God's children as we read the word need to uphold and love both fathers and mothers.

Those tasks and jobs are designed by God. And they should be celebrated and loved. And one of the things that I want us to do as we think about this today, since it is Father's Day, is I want us to get away from a mindset that has been a part of the Christian church for close to 100 years now. And that is a mindset of hunkering down and waiting until the storm passes over. Because of bad preaching and bad theology, the church is in this mindset of hunkering down and hiding in a bunker until the cultural wars pass over and Jesus comes back.

Or until the Lord takes me home. And so we're not engaged with the culture. And I want you to have in your mind this thought. This world could continue on for another 4,000 years.

[3 : 57] I just want you to think about that. I know we look at the news and we look at things with Israel and we think to ourselves, oh, just any day, just any day.

But every generation has thought just any day. You and I, I mean, I'm 50, what am I? 53. The first thing to go when you get old.

I forgot. Anyway. If I live to be as old as my grandfather, I don't have but just about 40 something years left.

And my grandson, who's going to be two in August, that's another 98 years for him if he lives to the same age as my grandfather. And what we're talking about here is setting ourselves up for 4,000 years from now.

And there's a lot we have no control over. But I want us to think this way because if we don't, we're going to have a tendency to be people who see the wreck of this world and who are just hoarding things and holding on to them instead of doing what we can for the betterment of society.

[5 : 11] Imagine if you're on a ship and the ship wrecks. And as the ship wrecks, it hits this island. And there's two groups of people that come out of this ship. There are those who will take all the supplies, the resources that they can find on that ship.

And they will go onto the island and they'll build shelters. And they will build things and machines and processes to make it a better place to live. And then there's a whole other group that's going like, but we're going to be rescued any day now.

We're going to be rescued any day. And what they do is they take all the supplies that they can and they hide them in some sort of little hidey hole and hoarding it all and hoping that one day they're going to be rescued.

Here's the thing. We're all going to be rescued one day. The question is, are we going to live in such a way as to hoard things or are we going to take everything we've got and go out into this world and try to make it the best place to live that we possibly can?

That's what it means to be salt and light. That's what it means to be kingdom minded. That's what it means to take the gospel to others. The only way that this world can become a better place is if the gospel is spread and people are saved.

[6 : 25] And so we want to challenge us as Christians and you as fathers to change the world. That's what these two verses are about.

It's really about changing the world. And there's three truths in these two passages that I think will help set up our minds to think the right way about this.

And so I wanted to look at these three things. The first thing is this. Children should be addressed by the church. Children should be addressed by the church.

You'll notice the very first word in verse 20 says children. Paul, the apostle, wrote this letter to be read in the church and he's addressing the children.

He's expecting children to be in the worship. He's expecting the children of members to be there. And he wishes to speak to them and addresses them and teaches them because this is what should happen.

[7 : 35] The church, although parents are the primary disciples of their children, the church must also come alongside parents and together in a team approach, speak to the children as well as the parents speak to their children.

And if we're going to do this, if children of adult church members are going to be addressed, it means there's three things we've got to keep in mind. Number one, you as a parent and a grandparent have to bring your children with you.

Now, some of you are old enough to understand the joke when I say that many of us, when we were younger, had a drug problem. Because we were drugged to church, right?

Our parents drug us to church all the time. They would take and that's a terrible joke, but I just didn't deliver it well, I guess. I thought it was funny. So. But I remember growing up, like it was never an option.

There was never a Sunday that said, it's like, well, are you going to go today or not? Like, I mean, if your arm was chopped off, you might get to stay home from church, but that was about it. But nowadays, we have parents who will look at their children, children who are even under the age of five and go like, do you want to go today?

[8 : 51] It is not optional. If the church is going to speak to children, you as parents have to make this not an option. You have got to hold the line and you've got to say, no, we are going to go because what's going to happen here?

The truth and the hope of the gospel is going to be preached. Here's the thing. Just because a child is brought to church without question and without fail does not mean that child turns out to be a godly person.

But if you let them choose. Then the chances of them becoming a godly person have just decreased. And listen.

At the risk of offending you, the idea of honor your father and mother doesn't end when they move out of the house and get a job.

Your adult children, even if they're 45 years of age, you still have a responsibility for the church to speak to your children and your grandchildren.

[9 : 55] And so when we have an opportunity to speak the word of the Lord, bring your children with you. Secondly, it means this. Children, which also includes teenagers.

If your parents are telling you that you need to go to church. There's not a lot of kids in here today, so I'm sorry to front all of, you know, five of you out. But here we go. Okay.

I know that sometimes coming to church, there are songs that you don't know saying words. I mean, come on.

All hell, the power of Jesus name. Let angels prostrate fall. Like how many people even know what that means? Does anybody know what prostrate is? No, it's not some medical thing.

It's to fall flat. Right. But like kids, we're telling you to come and we're singing songs that has words in it that you don't know. And I understand that that's difficult. And I understand sometimes the preacher can be a little boring.

[10:52] That happens. But the thing is, is that if your parents tell you, hey, we need you to go with us. Then your duty is to honor your father and mother and not give them a hard time about it and just go.

Just go. The culture around you is going to tell you that going to church is nice but not necessary. And that is not what scripture teaches at all. The third thing we've got to think about then, if the children are going to be addressed by the church, that's this.

That the members of the congregation have a responsibility to speak to the children of the church. I served as a children's pastor for two years.

On a Wednesday night during our WANA program, we probably would have about 100 kids. In the nursery, okay, so bed babies up through about two to three years of age, we'd have about 35 kids. Do you know what the hardest thing to get people to volunteer to do in a church is? Work with children. Let's just admit it.

[12:04] Nobody likes to work with children. Except weirdos. Except there's some of you people. You love children and you've got a gift for it. And that is special and that's sort of strange to me because I don't have that sort of mentality.

But I do understand the necessity to work with children. And I cannot tell you the number of times that I've gone to people to ask them. And not here. Not here because you're all perfect angels. But in other churches, as I've gone to ask people if they would volunteer in the children, the number of people who tell me no because they don't like children or they can't work with children or they're not very good with children, I'm not very good with children.

When our little niece was just like, I don't know, 18 months old, she's sitting in the pickup truck and I walk up to her and I go, wah, like that. And for four years, she would have nothing to do with me. I'm not good with kids. That's not the point. The point is we have a responsibility as the church to speak into the lives of the children of the church.

[13:09] They must be addressed. And fathers, your job is to look at when the church is taking that task seriously and when they're not.

And if the church is not taking the task seriously to speak into the lives of the children, fathers, you need to advocate. And say, I need the church to speak into the lives of my children.

I would have given, I would have given my right arm. For someone to come along and speak into the lives of my five children as we were growing up.

But they were the only children in the church. And if anything was going to get taught to them, it was going to be me. At home and at church. I taught the children's Sunday school for five years at the first church that I pastored because nobody else would do it.

I would have given my right arm for someone else to come alongside and say the same things that I'm saying about Jesus because my kids needed to know it wasn't just some weird thing that dad believed.

[14:11] But it was something that a lot of people believed. The church needs to speak into the lives of children. Second thing we need to see.

Second truth that will help us. And that is this. Children's obedience is pleasing to God. Children's obedience is pleasing to God.

That's what the verse tells us. It tells us children should obey their parents for this pleases the Lord. This word obey. I think we need to clear up some misconceptions about what this means.

Here's what it means. It means three different things. Three things that come together. Because this word is about the idea of answering a call. Like a call to an action and answering that and completing that.

So here are the three things. Number one, for obedience to be true obedience, it must be immediate obedience. In our house we had the phrase, delayed obedience is disobedience. [15:19] If you delayed, then you've already disobeyed. And one of the things that we have done is that we've allowed people, we've allowed our children to have moments where we tell them, they tell them to do something, and having no respect and honor, they wait to do it because we don't have the expectation of them to do it immediately.

So like you can't sit there right now and look at your children and kind of go like, see, it needs to be immediate. Well, if you haven't taught them that, that's your fault. That's not their fault. Now I'm teaching, so all of us are on the same page.

Now we've got it, right? It needs to be immediate. And you have to hold them to that standard. Now, you can, you can allow for a delay in obedience if you command it that way.

You understand what I'm saying? Listen, when you're done, when you get home from school, I want you to take care of this. That doesn't mean they have to take care of it right now. It means when they get home from school, they take care of it. But it needs to be immediate.

Secondly, it needs to be complete. It needs to be complete. If it's a call to a particular action, that specific action has to be completed.

[16:28] It's not halfway, right? It's not halfway. If you tell them to clean their room, then putting everything in the closet is not complete. You go tell them, get everything off your floor, and they put everything on their bed.

To be complete, a child must obey both the spirit and the letter of the law. And you must not fall prey to the siren call of loopholes that your children are masters of.

Children are the best lawyers in the world. You just told me to get everything off the floor. I did. I got it up on the bed. And we have a tendency to go like, what do I do?

When that happens to you, when they say something like that, immediately think to yourself, loophole. That's disobedience. We don't allow loopholes.

That obedience must be complete. And the third thing is that obedience must be sweetly submissive. The Lord is not pleased with an obedience from a grudging heart.

[17:34] You tell your children to do something and they walk off all scowling and kicking the ground. You are allowing them to displease the Lord by not correcting that.

It is to be sweetly submissive to their parents. And if it is not, then it is not obedience as the Bible demands and as God has designed.

And why would we go through this? Because it says that their obedience is pleasing to the Lord. He says, for this pleases the Lord. What does this word please mean?

It means that it's acceptable. The Lord accepts it. The Lord loves it. The Lord likes it. It's a similar word to what Paul uses in Romans chapter 12.

In Romans chapter 12, verse 1 and 2, you'll remember this verse. It's talking about a different topic. But this is what he says. He says, I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable or pleasing to God, which is your spiritual worship.

[18:42] And then verse 2 says, do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that you may test, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable or pleasing and perfect will.

Here's the thing. Children, teens, you do not have to wait to be 35 years of age, have your own house, have your own car, have your own job, go on mission trips galore to be pleasing to the Lord in your life.

You can be pleasing to the Lord right now, right here, by just the way you treat your parents. It doesn't have to be an adult thing. So often I think that we relegate the idea of living in a way that is pleasing to the Lord as something that only maybe adults can do.

But the truth of the matter is, today, you can be pleasing to the Lord. When your obedience is immediate, complete, and sweetly submissive, it is pleasing to the Lord.

Now, I'm going to say this, I'm going to come back to this. That does not mean that obedience to your parents is how you get saved. Okay? Just because the Lord is pleased with your obedience does not mean that the Lord has saved you.

[20:01] Lost children can be pleasing to the Lord in their obedience if it's done immediate, complete, and sweetly, but it does not save them.

But a child who is disobedient to their parents. See, here's where the loophole comes in. Because what happens is we have our children, the older they get, they stay late after curfew, and we've told them, you've got to be home at such and such time.

And when they walk in, they tell you, hey, well, listen, I'm late because we were reading through the book of Ecclesiastes together. And we read all 12 chapters, and it took us a couple of hours.

And there's a part of us that wants to say, wow, I'm really proud of that. I want to, no, that's not pleasing to the Lord. You don't take one thing to try to obey something here just so you can disobey something over here.

That would not be pleasing to the Lord. And fathers, you need to hold them accountable. Fathers, your children's obedience to you and to their mother is a pleasing thing to the Lord.

[21 : 08] Even the children and grandchildren who have not professed faith in Christ. So fathers, when you let your children disobey, when you let the disobedience go unchallenged, then you are not helping them to live a life that's pleasing to the Lord.

But Brady, my kids are grown and out of the house. What do I do about that? First Samuel, Eli was a priest of the Lord.

And he had two sons. They were both out of his house and grown and married, serving as priests before the Lord. These two sons were getting away with all manner of public evil.

They would steal from the sacrifices that were meant for God. They would treat women who came for the sacrifices as prostitutes. And God spoke a word of judgment upon Eli and all of his household because he refused to correct his grown children.

Fathers, we never stop needing to give correction, direction, leadership to our children.

[22 : 54] God expects us to speak truth to them. And so I would encourage you fathers to seek whatever biblical means are at your disposal.

I don't mean psychological means. I don't mean angry, vindictive means. I don't even mean traditional ways that you were raised. I mean biblical means, which means you're probably going to have to study the Bible and you're going to have to look at some things.

But using every biblical means at your disposal to encourage your grown children who are no longer in your household to be submissive to the Lord and pleasing to the Lord in all that they do. Your motive in raising your children is for them to be pleasing to the Lord. Your motive for raising children should not be your reputation, your personal preferences, your personal peace, or nice little photographed Christmas gatherings.

But instead it should be for the glory of God. And you know, this truth holds all the way through so that even all of us, as we are obedient to the different authorities that God has placed in our lives.

[24 : 18] And there are three, right? There's the home, the church, and government. And as we are obedient to these authorities in our lives, we are then pleasing to the Lord.

Yes, it still holds that those authorities have to work within the spheres that they are given. But as a Christian, we ought to be people who are given to the Lord in authority and submission and obedience.

We ought not be people of rebellion and riots. And there are some, there are definitely going to be some Christians. Let me take that back.

There are going to be some non-Christians, some of your children, grandchildren, my children, grandchildren, who will be sweetly submissive and who will be complete in their obedience and who will be immediate in their obedience.

And they will grow up to be certain kinds of people that are actually fairly pleasant to be with, but they've never been saved. And you cannot mistake pleasantness for salvation.

[25 : 29] And so as a father, you have to push and push and push to bring the law to bear so that you can bring the gospel to bear upon the lives of your children.

I mean, think of it this way. Just because a lost person walks into this building every Sunday does not mean that they're a Christian. But it's a good thing that they're coming because that right there changes who they are and changes the world around them.

You have children who are obedient to their parents. It makes a difference in the world even if that child is not saved. But don't be satisfied with just that.

Take the gospel to them time and time again. Well, that's the third thing, the second thing. Now I'm on to the third thing.

And that is this. Fathers are meant to spread hope. Fathers are meant to spread hope. Verse 21 has a command and a reason in it.

[26 : 35] The command is do not provoke your children. Fathers do not provoke your children. See, verse 20 says children obey your parents. And it's the word parents. And it means both.

And then here it's the word father. And it says fathers do not provoke your children. Now why fathers? Because we're more likely to do this than mothers are.

It doesn't mean that there's not a mom who doesn't do this. It just means by and large fathers, we're most likely to be the ones to provoke our children.

And this word provoke, it means to stir up and to anger someone. As a matter of fact, in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, God is the one who's provoked.

God is the one who's provoked by our sin and idolatry and unfaithfulness. So what does this mean? Does this mean that I can't ever make my children mad? Lord, help us know.

[27 : 34] That is not what that means. If that would be what it meant, then we're in trouble. But the way to understand this is to look at the second half of the verse.

It says, lest they become discouraged. So the idea is don't provoke them in such a way as to dishearten them. Don't provoke them in such a way as to demotivate them.

Don't provoke them in such a way as to bring about a withered motivation inside their heart, a discouragement. Because a child can become demotivated to do what his parents are telling him to do because the parents are provoking him.

Now, there's probably several ways that this works, but let me tell you how it worked in our house.

I'd have a child. Tell that child, it's time to come to the dinner table for supper.

Child would come towards the dinner table and I immediately see, go wash your hands because you didn't wash your hands. They go into the bathroom and as they're going into the bathroom, they start to walk off and they're stomping just a little bit and I'm like, that's not sweetly submissive.

[28 : 39] I said, hey, that's not sweetly submissive. Come back over here. So they come back over here. So now you need to be sweetly submissive about this. And so as you walk off, you need to have a little joy in your heart as you go to the bathroom to wash your hands.

And they kind of go like, like that. And obviously, I can tell that's fake. So as they get halfway down the hallway, I call them back. I said, no, you need to come back. I said, we're going to have to have some discipline over this because you're not being sweetly submissive.

So we get some discipline, then we come back into the hallway. And then as we're there in the hallway, they walk off. They go to the bathroom. I yell after them, be sure that you use soap. Two pumps of soap. And they're like, okay, two pumps of soap.

And they wash their hands. No, that wasn't long enough. Put your hands back under the water again. They come back from the bathroom and all of a sudden, you look at their hands. You go like, no, those hands are not dry. You need to dry those hands. Did you use a towel at all?

It's like, no, I didn't use a towel. Go back to the bathroom. Use the towel. They come back in and you can see they've wiped it on their clothes. You say, no, you got to go back. Change your clothes now. Now you got to go up and wash your hands again. And as you come back, you need to be sure to use the towel.

[29 : 38] Now they're sitting at the table and they're looking at the food and they have a little snarl on their face that says, I don't like this food. So that's a problem. We need to get down. We're going to go to the room. We're going to have some discipline.

Come back. You can't be ungrateful and unthankful with the food that God has given to us. So here we are. We're going to pray. Everybody bow your head. Close your eyes. Now I am notorious. I'm notorious that when it comes to time to pray for food, I pray very short prayers.

I always have because we've had five children and I just got into the habit of praying short prayers during food time. So it doesn't take long. So when I see a child beginning to move around in prayer, I stop the prayer.

I tell them to sit still. They don't sit still. I take them out of the room. I discipline them. I bring them back in and we're going to start the prayer over. The food is getting cold at this time. They don't want to eat. They begin to play around on the plate with the food.

Do you understand what I'm getting at here? What I'm getting at here is when we micromanage, when we micromanage every aspect of everything that they're doing in that moment, that is a thing that begins to build up in a child a discouragement that says, I can never please dad.

[30 : 47] He's never happy with me. And that discouragement gets transferred over to the Lord. And they say, there's no way that the father could ever be happy with me because I can't do anything right.

I can't get it perfect. I can't get it nailed. Do not provoke your children unless they become discouraged.

And the result of this is a hopelessness that anything that they do matters. But the question is, what is the opposite of this discouragement, this disheartening, this demotivating attitude? attitude. What's the opposite of that? It's hope. It's hope. And what this means is that fathers, we are called to treat our children in such a way as to encourage, promote, inspire, and foster hope in our children.

As a matter of fact, the goal of all that we do with our children ought to be to inspire hope even when they're grown. It's not to nag, badge, or insult, be disapproving or discouraging to them, but instead, it is to do what we can to inspire hope and courage to excite a heartened attitude in our kids.

[32 : 38] But hope in what? I mean, we just want them to be really hopeful kids, is that it? Do we want their hope that they're fundamentally good people and that's just it?

Is that what Paul would be having? Would Paul want them to think they're great and there's nothing wrong with them? Is that the kind of hope that Paul would have them? No, no, that's not the kind of hope that Paul would say.

Is it the kind of hope that they have learned how to get along in society and they'll be really good at social skills in this world? Not afraid to make phone calls or ask the people to change their order at McDonald's?

Is that the kind of hope that Paul would want to inspire in children? No. The kind of hope that Paul would want us to build into our children is the kind of hope that he's talked about already in Colossians chapter 1.

Beginning in verse 24, he says this, Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake and in my flesh I'm filling up what is lacking in Christ's affliction for the sake of his body, that is the church, of which, of that church, I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you to make the word of God fully known.

[33 : 58] The mystery hidden for ages and generations, that's that word that he's making known but it's now been revealed to his saints. Verse 27, To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery and here's the mystery, Christ in you the hope of glory.

Christ in you the hope of glory. So fathers, the goal that we should have is that everything we teach our kids, everything we do to correct our kids, everything we do to get them involved in kind of the different activities of life, everything that we do as a family should have the underlying goal to build into our children Christ in you the hope of glory.

which means we have to have a mental shift. It's not just can we keep them from getting someone pregnant, get them graduated, get them a good job and they move out of my house.

Even, even the lost pagans can get that accomplished. What we want to see is for them to have a hope in Christ.

We want to see our children to become God-loving, gospel-preaching people who will make a difference in society, who will make a difference in their own children.

[35 : 33] And yes, it's true, we're not going to hit that goal every time. But if we aim at nothing, we certainly will hit that every time.

and even if your kids are 45 years old or 53 like me, this should still be your goal to produce hope in Christ in your children.

Now, you don't have a lot of control in that. Much of what you're going to have to do is pray and speak the gospel and wait.

But you know, this is where I am with this sermon because you know, I told you last week, we preach verse by verse spository preaching because we have to deal with things that we wouldn't ordinarily want to deal with or maybe it's not a fun topic and this is not a fun topic for me because I'm not standing here as somebody who's done a good job with this.

I look at this and I just cringe. And so it's difficult difficult because I don't like to feel bad but it's good for me.

[37 : 12] It's good for me. But here's what you got to know. Because if you're like me and you kids are all out of the house and you think to yourself, man, so many times that I messed up, so many times I didn't do what was right and I have a word for you and it's this.

And you're standing at the gates of glory. You're not going to be asked the question, how well did you do in your parenting in order to get in?

The Lord is not going to hold up the standard of parenting that he has in scripture and say, I'm sorry, you messed up one too many times as a parent, so you can't come in. What he's going to do is going to say, what did you do with Jesus Christ?

Did you admit your sin? Did you trust in the Lord Jesus Christ that his death has covered all of your parenting mistakes and sins?

Did you throw yourself upon the mercy and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ as not only he died for your sin, but he rose to give new life to you? Because the only requirement to enter into heaven is the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ and I will never get the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ by being the perfect dad.

[38 : 45] I will only get the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ by trusting in his death and resurrection. And so if you're like me and you've messed it up, there is hope.

hope. Because the hope is not that you can fix it. The hope is that Christ has saved you. And it doesn't mean that there are not things we can't do.

There are some things. As a matter of fact, let me give you three things. If we go from where we are today and we say, listen, I'm going to look at my kids that are still in my home. I'm going to look at my kids that are out of my home.

I'm looking at my grandkids and I want to make a difference in their lives. I want to take this position I have as father, as mother, as parent, and I want to do something that would help inspire hope in the gospel in my kids now.

Let me give you three things. Number one, make sure you have gospel hope yourself.

[39 : 54] you cannot give your kids a gospel hope if you do not have a gospel hope. You need to know, are you really and truly saved?

Have you trusted Christ for your salvation? Have you been born again? Because if you have not, then you have nothing to offer your kids at all.

Except what lost people give. you need to make sure that you're truly saved. Secondly, you need to make sure Christ is all in all to you.

That means that Christ is more important to you than anything else. It means that you love Jesus more than you love your kids and you tell them that.

They need to know where your priorities lie. They need to know that Jesus is more important to you than anything else in the world.

[40 : 59] That if I can't have anything else in the world, I want Jesus. I used to say it this way. You need to teach your kids that faith is thicker than blood.

Faith is thicker than blood. What I mean by that is this. We have a tendency, even as Christians, to congregate in our families that we're DNA connected to and we tend to give one another so much space and grace about things and that relationship has a tendency to supersede the relationship with Christ.

You know how I know? Because I've seen churches that split right in two because of ungodly behavior and family members don't confront family members about their ungodly behavior but they just believe.

Your family needs to know that Christ is all in all to you. So you need to make sure that you have the gospel hope. You need to make sure that Christ is all in all to you.

And third thing, read the Bible with them. Read the Bible with them. Tell them to come visit, call them on the phone, send them a recording, write them a letter.

[42 : 29] Get you a pigeon and send them something on the pigeon, some way to communicate and talk with them face to face, on the phone, in a video chat, it doesn't matter.

Encourage them to read the Bible, read it out loud with them, have them read it, just talk about it. There's all kinds of ways of doing this. But my point is this, the power is in the word of God.

You want to see them change. It doesn't come because you're a nice person and you are nice and that's really great. But the power for salvation is in the gospel, in the word.

I mean, read 15 verses a time and just talk about it. Now let me just close this out with this.

All of us as Christians, this whole thing that I'm trying to encourage fathers to do, this is really the same thing that all of us should be doing and it's called discipleship.

[43 : 38] Make sure that you have the hope of the gospel. Make sure Christ is all in all to you. And third and finally, share the word of God with somebody.

That's, I am doing discipleship right now. I'm taking the word of God, I'm sharing it with you. It's what we do on Wednesday nights when we share the word of God. It's what you do on your own when you're reading the Bible.

You're self discipling, right? You're reading the Bible in your quiet time. When you get together with a small group and you read the Bible and you talk about the Bible, that's discipleship. Discipleship is easy to understand.

It's when God's people proclaim God's word and they patiently wait on God to work as they prayerfully depend upon the Holy Spirit. It's not rocket science.

It's just hard to be committed to because we have so much else going on in our lives. But this world out there isn't going to change towards the better because it's waiting on us to get unbusy.

[44 : 53] We got to grab the bull by the horns and build hope in one another. Let's pray together.

Thank you.