A Season of Appointments: The Appointed Family

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Preacher: Pastor Ken

[0:00] the season of Advent study on the season of appointments. And it goes without saying that this time of year, and really any kind of year, can have quite a bit of appointments for us.

But I feel like it's particularly for me anyway, this time of year, there are appointments, there are medical appointments. There are children breaking legs or wrists, maybe, wherein more medical appointments may come up.
There are work appointments, especially if your job forces you to go other places. Think of Mr. Randall, who's often on the road somewhere, and sometimes we miss out on fellowship with him while he's gone.
There can be party appointments. Now, it's not necessarily a bad thing, right? Unless you don't like parties and crowds. But there are lots of party appointments this time of year.
Yesterday, we just had a family Christmas party, a large family Christmas party. And then there's going to be more Christmas parties and celebrations and things.
[1:14] Shopping appointments. This is one I'm really looking forward to. I just got somebody's look like, eh, not really. Anyway, so my wife and I have tried to make appointments to go out together to do our shopping and get that squared away, and we'll do it sometime this week, maybe, if the car.

We might have to just get like a dog sled or something and get around. But then again, we're losing all the snow, so I don't know how that's going to work out. But anyway, the point is that there's appointments all the time.
We have appointments everywhere. Sometimes it's meeting appointments. You know, in the case of Dr. Janie, she would have appointments of people dropping in to be beat up and fixed.
But most importantly, it's the time of God's appointments. Last week, we looked at the appointed prophet, John the Baptist, and the prophecy 700 years before he came on the scene, that he would prepare the way for the Lord, that he would turn the people back to God.
That was what was prophesied and came about. Today, we're going to look at the appointed family, Mary and Joseph. And look a little bit at their situation and what we can take from that.
[2:33] Next week, we'll look at the appointed place in Bethlehem. And you might say, what's so exciting about a study on Bethlehem? I don't know if it's exciting for you or not. I'm excited by it because we do learn a lot as we dig into these things even a little bit more.

On Christmas Eve, Sunday, the 24th, we're going to look at in the morning the appointed time. And we're going to look at Galatians 4 where it says that at the fullness of time, God sent his son.
And what does that mean? And what does it mean for us? And then finally, Christmas Eve night when we have candles in hand. And the candles will be out.
And we will be having our candlelight service. And we'll be talking about the appointed proclaimers. Namely, particularly the angels and shepherds. But also you and me.
And that we're proclaimers for Christ. So it's really an exciting study. I've been looking forward to this for quite some time. And these appointments as we have them.
[3:42] And Advent is all about divine appointments for our good and for God's glory. R.C. Sproul has said that the central event of history is the advent of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

And he can't be any more accurate on that. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus and the coming and promise of eternal life in his name. So one of the most known appointments as we get to it today is the appointed family.
Everyone knows Mary and Joseph. Everybody knows this story. They can say it backwards. But we're going to dig in a little bit more. And we're going to look first of all at the parents themselves.

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Let's look at Mary and Joseph. So Luke 1. I'd like to read verses 26 through 38. And take a few things away as far as what we learn about Mary specifically.
Luke 1 verse 26. In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth. To a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David.
[4:53] And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, Greetings, O favored one. The Lord is with you. But she was greatly troubled at the saying and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.

And the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.
He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever.
And of his kingdom there will be no end. Verse 34. Mary said to the angel, How will this be, since I am a virgin? And the angel answered her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.
Therefore the child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son. And this is the sixth month with her who is called barren.
[6:05] For nothing will be impossible with God. And Mary said, Behold, I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word.

And the angel departed from her. Not a whole lot yet, a whole lot that can be taken from this passage.
But as I want to look particularly at Mary, I'm not going to dig too much into the details, as I would like to do on a lot of things. So what do we learn about Mary in this passage? Well, first, obvious. She's a virgin. Virgin as in she's had no intercourse with a man. And she substantiates that claim in verse 34. When she says, How will this be, since I am a virgin?
There is, the Greek wording literally says, I have not known a man. So she is a pure, and what we're going to find out as well, a godly young woman.
[7:13] She is, oh, I don't want to get ahead of myself. So she is, she is practicing what is expected of her as a Jewish woman under the law.

She's practicing purity. She is saving herself for the one man that she is betrothed to in whom God is giving her.
It is a very different culture. It's a very different expectation, bless you, than what we see in our culture today.
And dare I say, what we see in our church culture today. Purity for marriage has taken a hit significantly.
Significantly. There was a time in the 90s and through the early 2000s where what is deemed, quote, purity culture.
[8:13] And, you know, where there were books put out. A guy named Joshua Harris wrote a book, I Kissed Dating Goodbye, and a couple other books anyway. Promoting and encouraging purity among young people in the church.

I've never read these books. I know they are out there. But I do know what has happened in recent years is that there has been a huge backlash against Harris, first of all, who I believe is no longer identifying as a Christian.
But, so I would say, well, never was, right? You can't deny Christ if you are actually saved. But anyway, that's a different story. But he is saying, I'm not a Christian.
All right? And there's a huge backlash against his books and the influence they had. And that, you know, that it caused, and I understand some of the issues that, you know, the extent that people took it.
Parents, churches and such. And as any good thing can become distorted, there's been this wave of anti-purity culture feeling.
[9:25] And there's some people out there who said basically that it's not that important anymore. Not everybody. And not everybody who speaks against that purity culture say that.

But, you know, but it's not an issue. It's not something that we need to worry ourselves with or we need to come to grips with the reality that that's just not the culture we live in.
And that's not the America of the 2000s or 2010s or 2020s. That our nation has changed.

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And as Christians, we need to kind of come along with that. And I disagree, naturally. And I think a lot of you do as well. And so maybe the way it was presented was not right or was too firm.
I don't know ultimately what the objections are. But you can look that up yourself. But the reality here is with Mary, the one who would be the mother to the Lord Jesus, we see is saving herself and following God's expectation for her life.
[10:33] We see that she is betrothed. I mean, she's promised to someone in marriage. Similar to our societies being engaged. But it's very different at the same time.

In biblical times, the act of betrothal was regarded as binding. So that the breaking of the betrothal was legally equivalent to a divorce. Actually, you had to have a certificate of divorce in order to end a betrothal.
Betrothal? Betrothal. So the couple, they didn't live together during this time. They were actually preparing themselves for life together. The guy was working.
He was building. He was expecting to get a place for them to live. It was a year-long process. So he had one year from the time of the betrothal period beginning to prepare a place for he and his new bride to live.
He had to have, of course, he would have a trade. Typically, it's whatever his father did that he grew up in and learned. And he would also have to, the family would have to provide the dowry.
[11:45] You know, the amount of lambs and goats and whatever else was necessary at the time in agreement for the marriage. Marriage. If the man died, the woman who was betrothed to would be considered a widow.

So it was a very serious, very serious time in the life of a young couple as they were preparing to be together. Now, we would say an engagement would be similar in our culture.
But how frequently do we hear of and see engagements being broken? And, you know, it's like, and it's unfortunate when that happens, but sometimes it just seems so flippant in people's minds. Like, oh, we're engaged. Oh, well, now we're not. Or I've moved on. Or we fell out of love. Or whatever. And so engagement can be on and off with ease.
But in this culture, that's not the case with the betrothal period. And one other aspect that we see with Mary is clear is that she is committed to the Lord.
[12:55] You know, she's keeping herself pure for marriage. She willingly, we see in verse 38, she willingly submits to the Lord's will for her life. She said, behold, I am the servant of the Lord.

Let it be to me according to your word. It didn't matter to her what it was and how it was going to impact her life. She just knew that God had looked favorably upon her and bestowed grace upon her in that he has chosen her to be his vessel for this tremendous purpose.
And she is willingly submitting and saying, Lord, I am ready to be used by you. And this is something that had been prophesied 700 years before it came to be.
Right? We go back to Isaiah. I'm going to go to Isaiah 7. It is where we're going to look at right now briefly. I should have put a bookmark in.
So Isaiah 7. So 700 years prior to this encounter, Isaiah would prophesy about it. And at this time, to give the context of what's going on here in Isaiah 7, he's having an encounter with King Ahaz.
[14:20] And at this point, the Aramites and the Israelites were seeking to conquer Jerusalem. So remember, I mentioned about the divided kingdom.

You've got the united kingdom of Israel divides when Rehoboam becomes the king. So you've got the northern ten tribes, the southern two tribes. The northern country is known as Israel.
The southern country is known as Judah. So you have the Israelites from the north and the Aramites who are seeking to conquer Jerusalem in the south, in the southern kingdom. And King Ahaz, who's the king in Judah, is fearful.
So Isaiah approaches Ahaz and he declares that Aram and Israel would not be successful in conquering Jerusalem. So he's encouraging the guy.
He said, I have some news from God. Don't worry about it. They will fail. The Lord then offers Ahaz the opportunity to receive a sign.
[15:18] How cool is that? Like, so God sends a message through Isaiah. And then he says, pick a sign to see that, to know and be confident that the Lord is going to bring this about.

I don't know about you, but oftentimes I have sought a sign. I've desired a sign from God to know for sure if a decision I'm making is right or if a direction that we're going is right.

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And I'm sure I'm not the only one here who desires that and wants that at times, depending on how important the decision is. And so we have Ahaz who's given this opportunity by God.
Ask a sign of the Lord, whatever it is you want it to be, that's going to encourage you. And Ahaz refuses to put God to the test.
I haven't decided yet if his answer in verse 12 is a genuine humility before the Lord or if it's a sense of self-righteousness.
[16:29] I haven't quite figured that out and I don't think that I'll ever really fully know. Verse 12 says, but Ahaz says, I will not ask and I will not put the Lord to the test. So it's almost like, oh yeah, good for you Ahaz.

You don't want to upset God and you don't want to inconvenience him. You don't want to do something that he would otherwise be upset about. So now we get to verse, we'll continue in verse 13.
And he said, here then, O house of David, is it too little for you to weary men that you weary my God also? Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign.
Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel. He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose good. For before the boy knows how to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted.
The Lord will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah, the king of Assyria.
[17:39] So, speaking about the king of Assyria. So, you see here in this time, it's a context, a historical context is that this is the sign given to Ahaz.

That the virgin will be with child and will bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel. And before that boy knows how to refuse evil and good, those two nations are going to be gone.
They're not going to be a problem anymore. So, you've got to think about that. This woman's got to become pregnant, nine months, then for a child to grow up.
What age would you think that a child would know to do right and wrong? Anyone wants to, what? When he has the wisdom of the age that he's in.
The wisdom of the age he is in? That is a very political answer. Anyone want to give me a number? Twelve. Twelve? Two?
[18:47] Interesting. So, when do we feel, when do we think that our children know enough to know what is right and wrong? When they start walking.

When they start talking. Start walking, start talking. Judah's basically been talking since he was like six weeks old. And he hasn't stopped.
So. They get maturity. Maturity. Okay. Good, good. I just, it's interesting to see the differences. It went from like two to twelve, right?
So, I'm assuming probably a few years is what Isaiah is getting at here. Um, you heard of the terrible twos, right?
Yep. Why are they the terrible twos? Are they really that terrible? No. Huh. Three in ten are much worse. Three in ten are much worse.
[19:44] Much worse. Much worse. Fifty. No. No. All right, all right. Let's bring it back in. So, anyway, the whole point is that Isaiah, through the, the Lord through Isaiah is communicating that within a few years' time, Israel and Aram will be destroyed, you know, and such.

So, it would seem that Isaiah 7.14, you know, that the virgin shall be, he'll give you a sign, behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.
Why in the world are we talking about that at Christmas time? Um, because it seems to have a context, it seems to have a purpose in that, um, it was for King Ahaz and his assurance of what's going on and how God's going to work.
Well, it's because under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Matthew informs the readers of his gospel that it was fulfilled at the birth of Christ. So, turn to Matthew 1.
Matthew 1.18 and following says, Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way.
[20:53] When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband, Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in

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her is from the Holy Spirit.
She will bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. And this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, Isaiah, behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means God with us.
When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him. He took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son, and he called his name Jesus.
So we see here in verse 23 that Matthew applies that prophecy to what was taking place with Mary and Joseph and Jesus.
[22:12] And so that is why we would say that it's applicable here, because it directly tells us in Matthew 1 that that is the case. So what do we get in Matthew 1?

Now we've turned our attention from Mary in Luke 1 to Joseph in Matthew 1. And what's happening at this point? Well, Mary's been with her cousin Elizabeth. You know this from Luke 1, verse 56. So she's been with Elizabeth for three months. My suspicion is that she was there until Elizabeth gave birth, right? Because Mary was visited by Gabriel when Elizabeth had been six months along. And if she had been with Elizabeth for three months, it was at the time that John was born. And so she comes home to Galilee. And Mary's found to be pregnant. There's only one reasonable conclusion, and that is that the baby's daddy is not Joseph.
It is established in Luke 1. It is established in Matthew that they have not had relations together. They are not a married couple yet. And so that's the only, in Joseph's mind, that's the only logical conclusion.
[23:19] That's the only thing that makes sense. Mary's back, and she's got a bump. And I know that's not for me. So at this point, Joseph's legally permitted to divorce Mary and even pursue having her put to death.

But we see here that, and we see that Joseph is called just, verse 19. He's a just man. So he would clearly want the law.
He would want the legal ramifications. He would want that to be carried out. But he was a careful observer of the law. But rather than acting in a way that would have brought shame and dishonor to Mary and her family, he expresses compassion and mercy toward her.
So he's a just man. We see he's a compassionate and merciful man. And there's no question, he loves her very much. He could have made a public display of his indignation by taking Mary before the court and making an example of her.
But his concern for the law did not lead him to the conclusion that he must humiliate her. So he wanted to, he preferred to divorce her quietly. He was going to go along with it. He was going to divorce her because he knew she had been unfaithful, or at least in his mind she had.
[24:39] And thus, he gets a visit, right? God's intervening. God's hand is in the process. He warned Mary, hey, this is what's going to happen. Don't freak out. And now Joseph sees things going on, like, okay, we need to move forward with this divorce and get this over with and put her away.

But then the angel says, no, no. This is to fulfill prophecy that the virgin would be with child. So this pregnancy is not because of another man.
This pregnancy is because of God. He's doing something that, it is a miracle, right? It's an amazing miracle that cannot be explained. It cannot be explained away without saying that the word of God is not true.
But we see that it is. So Joseph, he's a man of principle. He's a man of compassion. He loved the Lord. He loved people. He loved Mary. And so you want to be careful.
So Mary and Joseph, we see, are godly individuals. They love the Lord. And they want to do what is right by his word and his law. So that's the parents.
[25:52] That's a lot for point one. Next two points are going to go quickly, though. Turn to Luke 2. So the parents in this family, in the appointed family, godly, good individuals.

Now chapter 2, verse 22 through 24. So after Jesus is born, we learn something about their finances. We learn something about their finances.
Luke 2, 22. And when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. So they brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

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Verse 23. As it is written in the law of the Lord, every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord. And they came to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons.
This narrative concerning the offering at the temple accomplishes two things. First, it establishes Mary and Joseph as godly people. We've already established that before.
[27:02] And we're going to get more on that in a minute, too. But it also establishes that Mary and Joseph, they were poor. They're poor at this point in their life. The wise men have not come yet.

Because what are the three gifts that the wise men bring? Gold, frankincense, myrrh. Guess what? Gold is valuable, right?
Frankincense and myrrh could be sold for more money. So the fact is that the wise men bring stuff that they could utilize in order to help their bank account.
And gold specifically would help their bank account. In Leviticus 12, verses 6 through 8. Now this is the law that is referred to in Luke 2.
And when the days of her purifying are complete. So after childbirth, she has her time of purification. Whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting a lamb, a year old for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtle dove for a sin offering.
[28:12] And he shall offer it before the Lord and make atonement for her. Then she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, either male or female.

And if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtle doves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for her and she shall be clean.
So we see from Leviticus 12 and what was laid out there and based on what Mary and Joseph bring to the temple, they're poor.
They cannot afford a lamb for their sacrifice. We don't know how poor they are, but that is the case for them. Martin Luther mentioned, quoting Martin Luther, If Christ had arrived with trumpets and lain in a cradle of gold, his birth would have been a splendid affair, but it would not be a comfort to me.
He was rather to lie in the lap of a poor maiden and be thought of little significance in the eyes of the world. Now I can come to him. Now he revealed himself to the miserable in order not to give any impression that he arrives with great power, splendor, wisdom, and aristocratic manners.
[29:31] So the fact that he was born into a poor home, into a poor family, and was not of great means, is a way in which God chooses to identify with the world.

He didn't come as a king. He didn't come with great splendor. But he was born in a lowly state, in a lowly family, to identify with all people.
And finally, in verses 25 through 42, we won't read them. You get to the purpose for the family. You get the purpose for Joseph and Mary and what we know about them as godly individuals. You see in verse 25, they encounter a guy named Simeon, who was a righteous, devout man.
He was waiting for this time that God had promised that he would see the Christ. He would see the deliverance of Israel through this baby.
[30:39] And he wouldn't see death until he saw him. And he came into the Spirit to the temple when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him according to the custom of the law.

Then he takes him up and he blesses him and he tells him his prophecy. And it says in verse 33, Then they come along and they meet Anna, a prophetess, who's been in the temple for years serving.
And she worships with fasting and prayer night and day.
That's her service. And coming up at that very hour, she began to give thanks to God and to speak of Jesus to all who were waiting for the redemption of Israel. And when they had performed everything according to the law, they returned to Galilee.
So after Joseph and Mary had done everything that they were supposed to do according to the law, they returned home. And the child grew and became strong and filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.
[32:01] In verse 41, His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of Passover. And when he was 12 years old, they went up according to the custom. So what was the purpose of this family?

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What was the purpose of Joseph and Mary? Based on their trip to the temple, based on what they experienced with Simeon and Anna, and based on what they did year in and year out, they were visiting the temples.
They were godly individuals who were raising a godly family to be faithful to the Lord. And it's a good indication of the home that Jesus grew up in.
How much do we have of Jesus' childhood? How much do we know? Hardly anything. Very little. In fact, Luke 2 gives you the most definitive account of his childhood.
And we see him in the temple being presented at, like, what, two months old? A month old? And then we're told he's 12. So there's a long period of time that's missing.
[33:04] Then after that time when he's 12, you don't see him again until he's 30-ish. So you're not given any indication as to what the family life was like. Unless you get to these passages and you realize, oh, Joseph and Mary were good people, God-fearing individuals.

They followed the law. They did what was expected of them to do. This is the household that Jesus grew up in. They would have followed what Deuteronomy 6, verses 4-9 says.
Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children.
You shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand. They shall be frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorpost of your house and on your gates.
Parents in Israel were expected to make the law of God and the word of God important in their home. They were to live it and do it, and they were to teach it to their children.
[34:13] That is how we can know that Jesus was brought up under the law. That is how we can know that Jesus would have been following the law of the Lord because he had parents.

Yes, Jesus is God, but he had parents who were teaching him and bringing him along and modeling it for him. The Apostle Paul makes it clear in his letter to the church at Galatia in Galatians 4, verses 4 and 5.
We're going to look at that passage in a couple weeks more in depth. But it says, So Jesus was born into a household that were under the law and followed it accordingly to the best of their ability as good, law-abiding Jews.
Mary and Joseph's purpose was to raise their children, especially Jesus according to the law. And in order for Jesus to redeem those who were under the law, he had to be subjected to it himself.
So you've got the family, Mary and Joseph, great, godly, God-fearing people. You've got their finances. It's a poor family. They're not well-to-do. And you've got the purpose for why Jesus was born in them, for what their purpose was as a family, to raise their children.
[35:47] To know the Lord. Now Advent, as I mentioned, it's a season of appointments. You've got the appointed prophet. You've got the appointed family.

And what you get from these divine appointments, I think, is one very important human aspect, especially as it relates to this topic, to this issue of raising children to know the Lord.
And the human aspect is this, is that you need to wait. You need to be patient. That's the purpose of Advent. It's the waiting, right?
You're waiting for the, they're waiting for Christ to come. Now we're waiting for him to come back. Again. The prophecies that were made, that we've looked at, were made hundreds of years before their fulfillment.
John's ministry, we looked at last week, was foretold to Zechariah three decades before it would begin. Thirty years before his ministry would start, it was told what he would do.
[36:47] Jesus' birth and purpose were declared ten months before he would be born. Jesus would be under the law for three decades before his public ministry would begin and ultimately before he would die on the cross to redeem those who were under the law and those who were not under the law, to redeem all sinners.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, celebrating Advent means being able to wait. Waiting is an art that our impatient age has forgotten. I think it's interesting that he said that because that was 80 years ago. And how much more impatient have we become? Our personal lives, we are so busy. So busy all the time. We're busy with work, church, family, sports, appointments, leisure activities, and other things that I didn't even think of to mention.

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We are busy all the time. We have our phones in our hands. What's on our phones? Calendars. Anytime someone says, oh, hey, can we get together and talk on this day? Well, hold on, let me check my calendar. Make sure I'm not too busy.
Or if I am, I'll shoehorn you in. We're so busy that we forget Exodus 20, verse 11. That for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day.
[38:06] Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. There are people who do not go to church on Sunday because their kids are busy with sports and obligations.

There are parents who make themselves busy on Sunday. God has set an example of rest for us to follow.
And this time of rest allows our bodies to recover. It's not good to keep going and going and going. Your body needs to rest. It allows our minds to relax, to not be worried and concerned about everything all the time.
It's not healthy. The one thing that's out there, you know, is the mental health crisis in America. Can I tell you something? Mental health crisis in America.
In America. Because we have things so much at our disposal, at the ready, and we have ourselves going over and over and over again.
[39:12] And you see, you have the mental health crisis in Europe as well. But guess what? A developed country. In any of these developed countries, you see these mental health crises and mental breakdowns and anxiety and stress overwhelming and taking people out.

And you see suicide rates high and increasing and getting worse. We go to the less developed countries.
And it's not that those things don't exist. But you don't hear about it being a crisis. Because they go about their business. Doing their work as they need to do it.
And they're not getting overwhelmed with more stuff than they can handle. By and large. And you see these countries.
And you see these countries are starting to develop. And you know what's happening. You see these problems arising. I don't think it's a coincidence. I'll be honest with you.
[40:23] I'll be honest with you. Having gone to Kenya twice. It is. I honestly feel there's a sense of peace in not being around the busyness and chaos all the time.

That's why we need rest. That's why the Lord modeled that for us. And allows us also to refocus on the Lord.
And as we take today. Sunday. The day that our church decides to gather and worship together. It's not that Sunday in and of itself is the day in which it must happen.
But it's the day that we have chosen as a body of believers that we will meet and worship together. And that we will encourage each other and build each other up.
And so as we take today to refocus. Let's learn from the example that's given to us by the appointed family. They were faithful to live by the word of God.
[41:25] They did not allow their circumstances to be an excuse of why they could not be faithful. They were poor. Can you imagine Mary?

Like, Lord, I can't do this for you because we just don't have the money to afford a child. No. She said, Lord, yeah. I am your servant to do whatever you are calling me to do.
To do it. They didn't allow their circumstances to be an excuse of why they could not be faithful. And they set an example for their children to follow. To know and do the commands of the Lord.
Often in these types of settings, we settle on Proverbs 22.6, right? Chain up a child in the way he should go. Even when he's old, he'll not depart from it. Now, reminder, that's a proverb, not a promise.
That is a proverb, not a promise. But it is also a command. It's a proverb, not a promise, in that you can't guarantee a child's gonna err, right?
[42:29] You can't guarantee that a child's gonna walk with the Lord, right? Am I right? Absolutely. No matter how much effort we put into it, we cannot promise that. We cannot guarantee that. But I'll tell you what, God expects you to do it.

Ephesians 6.4, 2 Timothy 3.15, You get a little glimpse in the life of Timothy. How from childhood, Paul writing, How from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

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His mother and his grandmother were faithful followers of Christ, and they brought Timothy up to know the Lord. They used his word, his law, to guide and direct, and they were faithful to it.
They modeled it for him. So no, life is not perfect. Children don't obey perfectly. We know that. And so we can't expect that when it comes to our training them up in the way they should go.
But we are too commanded to do that, to train them up in the way they should go. So they do know it, and we should model it. And now none of us obviously have Jesus as our child or our grandchild, but we need to realize we can greatly impact the future of our children, our grandchildren, our nieces, our nephews, our friends, kids in this church, younger people in this church.
[43:52] When I say younger people, I don't mean teenagers necessarily. For many of you, I am a younger person, and you impact me by the way you live your life or not for the Lord.

So at the very least, we need to be obedient to the word ourselves, knowing that we've done all we can humanly do to bring our children and grandchildren up in the ways of the Lord, the way that Mary and Joseph were called to do and clearly did for themselves in bringing their children up to know the Lord.
Father, thank you for your word. Lord, I know there's a lot in this text. I know there's a lot to be covered. I know there's a lot of background. There's a lot of speculation.
But Lord, we know that there is clear truth that you give to us as parents, as grandparents, as aunts, as uncles, as mature believers in the body of Christ.
You call us to be an example and to model faithfulness to your word. Lord, you have given us your word that we might know it and live obediently to it.
[45:01] And Lord, I know we're not perfect. No one here is. But Lord, we know Jesus is. And we know that he advocates on our behalf so that when we do fall short and we fail, Lord, that we can call on you for salvation.

We can confess our sins. Say the same thing as your word says about them. And Lord, we know that you will forgive us of our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
Oh, thank you for your promises, Lord. Thank you for your word and your instruction. Help us to live faithfully, to love you, and to love others the way you've called us to do it.
In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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