

God's Word to Fathers

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[0 : 00] Our first scripture reading is taken from Deuteronomy chapter 6 verses 1 to 9. Now this is a commandment, the statutes and the rules that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over to possess it, that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which have commanded you all the days of your life, and that your days may be long.

Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the Lord your God, the God of your fathers, as promised you in a land flowing with milk and honey.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and 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 and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise.

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

[1 : 46] The second reading comes to us from Ephesians chapter 6, verses 1 through to 4.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Honor your father and mother. Father, this is the first commandment with a promise, that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.

Fathers, do not provoke your children to hunger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Here ends the reading of God's word.

Thank you, brother. And thank you for coming, those of you who especially came to hear me speak this morning. I know you're unfamiliar to our church, but we welcome you here.

We're glad to have you here. And I want to thank you for being here this morning. Now, I want to also say that don't get distracted by my gloves, please. I do not want to be like Mike.

[2 : 53] I was in a local restaurant the other day, and I walked in, and somebody said, Hey, Mike. Michael Jackson, I meant.

I said, No, no, no, no, no, no. There's anybody I don't want to be like. I don't want to be like Mike. I certainly don't want to be like him as a father, that's for sure. But in any event, I actually wear gloves because I have an allergic reaction to paper, and especially glossy paper, and as such, my skin begins to peel once I handle it too much.

So please, I hope you're not distracted by them. God's word to fathers, raise your children in the Lord.

Let us pray. Father, in these moments together today, it is our prayer that you will illuminate our hearts and minds so that we are able to see and hear your word so that we in turn can live in full submission with the help of the Holy Spirit in obedience to Christ.

Give us open minds and hearts so as to love you. May we hear with our ears and see with our eyes. And for those who may not know you, may you quicken and raise them to eternal life so that they too may share in the richness and fullness of the gospel that you have given to your people, the church.

[4 : 22] Help us, Father, especially the fathers, to come to fully appreciate all that you have commanded so as to enable us to have godly offspring.

Help us all, Lord, and fathers in particular, for we are weak and frail. And may our own children not be hindered due to our failures to live as fathers as we ought.

Lord, you know that we need examples of good fathers in our church, in the church. You know that in our nation, we greatly lack fathers. Help us, Lord, as many of us that are hearing my voice did not have their own fathers in the home.

Heavenly Father, we ask that you grant a special dose of grace so that despite this, we can be the fathers that we ought to be. Protect our young ladies in particular and help them to desire godly men that are submitted to you.

Help the married women to come alongside their husbands so as to encourage them to be better fathers. And for young men, our sons, we ask that they would submit themselves to the lordship of Christ and that as they mature, that they will be the fathers and husbands that you desire them to be.

[5 : 46] Receive glory from our lives, O Lord. Amen. Amen. I forgot to mention, I have the special privilege of having all of my children who actually live here in Nassau, three of them, along with their wives and children, here with me this morning.

I hope that's a testimony to me as a father. And I have one more son, my eldest son, who is the second child, who is not here because he lives in the United States with his family and children. And we will hope to see them this Christmas in a few weeks. Over the last several weeks, we have been in a family sermon series entitled, God's Word to the Family.

We have already covered God's Word to Wives. Submit to Husbands. God's Word to Husbands. Love your wives. And God's Word to Children. Obey your parents.

Today we turn our attention to God's Word to Fathers. Raise your children in the Lord. As the sermon texts have already been read this morning, permit me to give you a summary of where we are headed this morning.

[7 : 01] Fathers, a sermon summary, fathers as head of the family are given the responsibility of raising their children in the discipline and the instruction of the Lord.

To that end, I want all of us, before we get started, to place your mind and think about heaven. I really want you to just think about heaven, whatever thoughts come to mind.

What is it that comes to mind? What are the things that grips our heart as we anticipate one day being there? The Bible describes heaven in so many different ways, but what are the things about it that captivate our attention?

As we think on those particular things, I want you to consider two passages of Scripture. Isaiah 6, 1 and Revelation 4, 2.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon the throne, high and lifted up on the train of His robe till the temple. I'm from the Apostle John in the book of Revelation.

[8 : 18] At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, a throne stood in heaven with one seated on the throne. In both of these passages, we get a glimpse of heaven.

And what is it that we see? We see Jesus on the throne and in splendor. Paul adds and says in Ephesians, which is the book we're focusing on in these sermon series, he says in Ephesians 1, 20 to 23, the following, God seated Him, that is Jesus, at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.

And He put all things under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all and in all.

Now let's be honest with ourselves. As I ask you to think on or about heaven, did Jesus sitting on the throne at the right hand of the Father come to mind?

Was Jesus at the center, front and foremost, when you thought of heaven? Sadly, for most of us, that's not where our minds went.

[9 : 49] Two Thursdays ago, as I was listening to the podcast Things Unseen by Sinclair Ferguson, a podcast I recommend all you listen to, Sinclair asked his listeners to do the very same thing.

And while this podcast series topic was something else, admittedly, my immediate attention's thoughts on heaven was not said it so much around Christ Himself, but rather on the other things mentioned also in Scripture.

And yet, Christ sits on the throne. He is Lord and Master, and we are, supposedly, His humble servants, those who are to live in submission to Him.

The point I wish to make is this, God in Christ Jesus is our authority. The authority that we all must submit to. To be clear, the matter of authority and submission did not come as a result of the fall,

but rather, it is the order of things.

So, even when we get to heaven, when we all get there, those who believe, we will all still experience the authority of God.

[11:08] The only difference is that in heaven, His authority will be coupled with our perfect willful submission. salvation. The fall, therefore, was man's act of rebellion against God's authority, and therefore, is now the nature of mankind.

Rebellion is in our DNA, and at the core of it is our failure to submit ourselves to God. The truth of the matter is that in our human nature, we don't want to submit to anyone, for we all want to be our own masters.

And yet, our very salvation is repentance from rebellion, and as such, is itself a willful submission to God.

Everyone, therefore, who is born of God is enabled by the Spirit to live as we should have prior to the fall.

God places us in, God gives to us a new heart, and in so doing, we are enabled to submit to Him in obedience.

[12:24] There are no exceptions to those born of God, for submission is at the very heart of our faith.

And faith that is void of submission to God is meaningless and useless and, in fact, is not faith at all. In this sermon series, God's Word to Family, all that the Apostle Paul is addressing throughout the entire book of Ephesians is the matter of our submission to God.

In fact, it can be argued that all of Scripture is about bringing us back to living as we were created in the beginning. to be in proper and right standing before God means that we are in submission.

It is imperative, therefore, that we first have the right understanding of who God is and, secondly, to do all the things that He has commanded, all out of love for Him.

Submission, therefore, is unto the Lord. And no other authority on earth, be that husband, wife, master, father, no other authority on earth is to impede on our submission to God.

[13:52] How, then, might we show our submission to the Lord? In our congregation today, all of us are either wives, husbands, children, fathers, or singles.

I didn't miss anybody, right? No, I didn't think so. Some of us are in two categories. Men like I once was, were both husbands and fathers at the same time, meaning fathers in the home.

Fathers with children in the home is what I should say. But as individuals, and in those particular roles, all of us are submit to God.

In what ways, then, do we submit to God? How are we to live? I'm glad you asked. Here's just a snippet, as found, again, in Ephesians.

In Ephesians 4, 25 to 32, it says, therefore, I'm talking about how we ought to submit to God.

[15:05] Therefore, having put away all falsehood, let each of you speak the truth with his neighbor. For we are members of one another.

Be angry and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only what is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you.

along with all malice, be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. These are the ways we submit to God, by living in obedience to what he said.

[16:15] In chapter 5, 3 to 11, the apostle Paul continues. If you think that was enough, here we go again. but sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you as is proper among saints.

Let there be no filthiness, nor foolish talk, nor crude joking, which are all out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure or who is covetous, that is, an adulterer, listen to this, has no inheritance in the kingdom of God.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partners with them, for at one time, you were

in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

Walk as children of light, for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true, and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

[18:07] Take no part in the untruthful work of darkness, but instead expose them. all of what I just read to you from the apostle Paul in the book of Ephesians is about how we submit to God.

And you would notice by all of those things, the vast majority of those things have a direct impact on the people around us. All of them, just about all of them.

submission to the Lord, therefore, means that we all, as individuals within the family, live in this manner.

The point I want to make here is that when the scripture said, wives submit to your husbands, and husbands submit to the Lord, those words include all that we just read.

we do it in that manner, and in that light. Submission to the Lord, therefore, means that we all, as individuals within the family, live in this manner.

[19:19] This goes for wives, husbands, children, fathers, and next week, Pastor Moss, I believe, is speaking on singles.

I wish to also point out two additional things concerning submission. Submission is both outward, and it's upward. As we are born as individuals, we are not born unto ourselves.

We are born into families. And within the family, there's a structure and an order. Therefore, out of submission to the Lord, we submit to the ones who are in authority within the family.

authority. And it's from there that we are told in Ephesians 6 to submit to all authorities outside the home. Church, employer, and government, for example, are what Paul has in view.

Wherever we may find institutions designed by God, we are called to submit to this authority. this is the outward working of submission.

[20:37] It starts with God, then moves outwards from there to the homes in which we live, and then it extends further outward to the other institutions, the church, the state, and places of employment being examples.

But submission is also upward. Notice again the pattern that Paul follows. First, we are submitting upward to God.

From there, Paul moves to the institution of marriage, by the way, the first institution. And what I want us to pay attention to is that Paul first addresses the one who is under authority in the marriage first.

Wives, and then the one with the authority within the marriage, the husband. Then Paul broadens to the family, and again addresses the one under authority first, that is children, followed by the one in authority over them, fathers.

The pattern in the family is bottom-up as well. Children to fathers, and fathers to the Lord. children are given the children in the discipline and in the children.

[22:00] It's not exclusive of mothers. That's not the point. The point is the father is leaving with the help of the wife. Children are submit to God by living obediently to their parents, and fathers as the head of the family are given the responsibility of raising their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, which is his act of submission to God.

While our sermon series focus on the family in particular, it's important to note that Paul addresses also slaves and masters, and in that order, that same upward approach.

While this passage of scripture has become controversial in the public square, because some would use it to say that the Bible endorses slavery, that is not at all the point that Paul is making.

Paul is addressing how submission works outside of the institution of the family and into all other institutions. As such, we are called as people to submit to the leaders that God has established, be they in the church, in the workplace, or in government.

And the leaders of those institutions are likewise called to submit to God in making sure that they do not mistreat those under their authority. So mission outside the home is again upward.

[23:32] Having given the backdrop, let us proceed with today's text of Scripture. Fathers as head of the family are given the responsibility of raising their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

And I have two points I want to make. So what's God's words to father so as to raise our children in the Lord? First, do not embitter them. And secondly, bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

That's first deal with. Do not embitter them. Take a good look around. The murder rate is soaring. Self-control is fast becoming non-existent. Fights and brawls are now commonplace. Adults and children are disappearing from our midst, going missing. Perhaps some, if not most, are dead. But do not be disled. Children the world over are being abducted and so are sex slaves. Disrespect for authority is rampant.

[24 : 49] And cursing now seems to be the norm. How did this all happen in just a few decades? And why are the children and the younger generation so angry?

Could it be because of their fatherlessness? Consider the effects of children growing up in fatherless homes. According to the U.S.

Census Bureau in 2023, over 19 million children lived in fatherless homes. That's one in four children.

I personally believe that's an understatement. I honestly believe that's understatement. But that's what the statistics said.

In the Bahamas, I am sure it is much higher as over 75% of all children born here are born to single mothers. Here are the actual statistics of 2023.

[25 : 50] These are U.S. statistics. Listen to this number. Remember now, one in four children are in fatherless homes.

And 63% of all youth suicides in the United States are children from fatherless homes. More than half come from one quarter of the population of children.

More than half. 63%. 85% of youth with behavioral disorders are from fatherless homes. 85%. 71% of high school dropouts are from fatherless homes.

And in fatherless homes, teenager pregnancy rates are far higher. Homes without a father have a devastating impact on children and society.

Fathers absenteeism, therefore, is not an option for us as believers. How else might fathers, and in particular, fathers in the home, embitter their children?

[26 : 55] consider these thoughts. Firstly, by our absence and non-involvement. You there, but you ain't there.

You get what I mean, right? You're present, but absent. Many fathers are simply not involved or too involved in many things to take them away from being with their children.

Another way children are embittered, with excessive rules, overbearing rules, or ever-changing rules.

The rule is always moving. The target is always moving. or no rules at all, which produces nothing but a chaotic environment in which our children live. Children are also embittered by our hypocrisy. We tell our children to do certain things that we never are prepared to do, and we tell our children not to do other things that we ourselves are guilty of.

[28 : 08] then there is physical abuse, the excessive use of physical discipline. Then there is also verbal abuse, shaming, embarrassing, teasing, taunting.

And this is the type of behavior that causes our children to live in a constant state of fear, or under a threat. Then there are unkept promises, and boy, this is a big one.

I think this is a big one. Unkept promises. If you do this, I will do that. I'm sure the children here would say, yeah, that's true. We tell our children we will do certain things, and then we never do them.

Or we put it off. Then there is lying. some of us have even may have lied to our children, and they know it.

These are things that embitter our children. Also, by creating unrealistic goals and demands. I have seen parents as ridiculous, and I mean ridiculous, unrealistic goals and demands placed on their children.

[29 : 34] children. And then another one is when a parent actually favors, obviously favors one child over the other.

Those are certainly things that may embitter children. And this list is not exhaustive. I decided to stop. That was enough. And by the way, you know, guilty, guilty, guilty, going down path, right? Any of these behaviors, or combination of them can be triggers that easily embitter children. And sadly, we fathers can either fall into these patterns of behavior or in the least exhibit them from time to time.

Fathers, we are to submit to God in such a manner so as to cease from embittering our children. For to embitter our children, and listen to this, for to embitter our children is likely to result in our children being embittered against all authority, including God's authority. So the first word to fathers in raising our children is, do not embitter our children. To not embitter our children requires therefore a change of heart.

[31 : 05] It begins by seeing our children as God sees them. There are many portions of scripture that reveal to us God's thought on this matter.

Psalms 123, 3-5 reads, Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord. The fruit of the womb a reward.

Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Bless is the man. I often wonder if he actually believed this.

Bless is the man who fills his quiver with them. He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

And then here are the words of Jesus. Mark 10, 14. But when Jesus saw them, this is the disciples, the disciples were actually saying, Jesus don't have time for you.

[32 : 06] They were holding the children back. And in response to that, Jesus said, when he saw that, he was, notice the word, indignant, and said to them, he's talking to his disciples, and said to his disciples, let the children come to me.

Do not hinder them, for to such belong the kingdom of heaven. Children are to be valued and seen as blessing from the Lord, for God places a high value on children, therefore so are we.

I'm going to make a little comment here, that I think is necessary. Often when I hear parents talk about their children, one of the things that come out of their mouths is, they're expensive.

And I think we're guilty of saying this. Children are expensive. And the reality is, they are. But where are we placing the value when we say that?

Think of that for a minute. Where are we placing the value when we say that? I think you get the point. As I was preparing for this sermon, I had the privilege of coming across a message that one Christian father had sent to another believer, another person.

[33 : 38] I'm using this with permission. He wrote, and I quote, and I'll tell you unquote when it's done. It's a little lengthy.

A final thought in that any decision you make is entirely yours. Again, this is one father adult speaking to another adult. However, keep in mind that you are speaking of not going to your son's own home because in doing so, you will experience some discomfort.

Now, any of us who are grown and have grown children, we can understand what this might mean. However, permit me to say something to you about my own children, each of whom I have, each of whom have married.

each of them have determined how their homes will be governed. There are things I like about each home, and there are also things that are not to my particular liking.

But it is their homes. I address things when absolutely necessary, and may even come alongside them, and make comments from time to time.

[35 : 07] But I never lose sight that it is their homes to govern. I am the parent.

Again, this is the father talking. I am the parent. And as such, I will take the responsibility to manage those relationships as well as I can, irrespective of how they interact with me.

And I will make it a point to meet them in their respective homes until such time that I may be barred from doing so. Again, I am the parent who ought to know better how significant my involvement is in their lives.

if you make the choice, and here comes the advice from the one to the other, if you make the choice to not go to your children's homes, then that's a choice you must live with.

It's not a wise choice to make, no matter how difficult the bridge of discomfort may be for you to walk. All of my children, again, this is still the conversation, all of my children are a treasure to me, and I will treat them as such.

[36 : 38] So know this, there is no mountain high enough, no valley deep enough, so as to cause me to choose not meeting them exactly where they are at and where they live.

They will have to choose to ban me from their lives first, and even then, the doors to my life will remain open to them.

Did you catch the heart of the father towards his own grown children? These children are even in his home anymore.

What might he have been as a father in the home as his children were growing up? Fathers, you must value and cherish your children.

Thankfully, the Lord has seen fit to tell us exactly how we might accomplish this, and for that, let's look at God's second word to fathers in the raising of our children.

[37 : 54] Bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Again, I read Ephesians 6, 4 to you. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Notice the words, bring them up. What might that mean? Think of it as channeling them towards the Lord.

children are like water. Now, I don't mean literally like water, if you get what I mean. It's just a trunan analogy, refreshing and a blessing.

As with water, they also are very important and essential for life's existence and continuation. And as water must be channeled in the right direction in order to be productive, the same is true of children.

children. We channel water to the garden so that it remains green and bearing fruit. We channel it through pipes so that we may shower, brush our teeth, or clean the house.

[39 : 03] Likewise, children must be channeled. An exercise that takes planning and deliberate action.

If water is ever anywhere that it ought not be, it is likely to wreak havoc. So we make sure that our roofs don't leak.

For water can cause the rafters to rot and weaken. We cannot afford water to leak in our pipes, for that can lead to water damage and molds in places that we cannot see.

Children, improperly channeled, are likely to wreak havoc. perfect. My father was a contractor by trade.

And by the way, I had a wonderful father. I must say, I had a, I cannot say how great a father I had. Very dear, I don't mean perfect.

[40 : 05] Trust me, he was not a perfect man, but he was a father. And he was a contractor by trade. And though it was decades ago, I can still hear his voice saying to me, wherever the cracks or crevices may be, you can be sure water will find it.

And given that our children are all born in sin, just as we are, do not be deceived. Your children will be sure to find those cracks and crevices in your life.

Children will go astray with certainty unless we do the work and channel them, that is, bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

What then does it mean to bring up? In the Greek, this simply means nourishing and helping them to flourish.

And it is accomplished in two ways, through the discipline and instruction in the Lord. What then is discipline to mean as used here in the text?

[41 : 24] The Greek word being used here is paideia, I'm not sure how to pronounce it, which means to provide guidance for responsible living.

It largely has to do with the setting of the setting of behavioral patterns that lead to a closer walk with the Lord. This would be more of a comprehensive and holistic approach as in the upbringing, training, modeling, instruction, and corrective discipline.

This requires time. And lots of it. By the way, I had a friend who always said to me, I had to shake my head every time, this is what he said, often he said to me, I may not spend quantity time with my children, but I spent quality time.

To which I responded, I am certain that you can never predict when that quality time will happen. Think of it for a moment of your own life when you were a child.

And I am sure that when you think of that moment, a special moment or a trigger moment, a point upon which it's like in your brain, you can't move it out, I am sure that would be a moment that your parents didn't plan.

[42 : 53] I am sure. This requires time and lots of it. fathers must not only be engaged in the development of their children, but also actively leading the charge to that end.

While this will be with the help of the mothers, this is primarily the responsibility of the fathers, training, modeling, instruction, and corrective discipline.

These are all things that require the presence and active engagement of fathers. your time. One thing we ought always bear in mind concerning relationships, and I mean all of them, all of them require time.

And there is absolutely nothing that is of greater value to children than your active involvement, especially during the formative years of their development.

Your time is of far greater importance. And I want you to hear this. Boy, we spend a lot of money sending our children to school and paying for their education.

[44 : 13] Do we admit that to be true? Our culture tells us that the greatest thing that we can do for our children is educate them. That's what our culture tells us.

I'm here to suggest to you that far greater than the money you spend sending your children to college or to school is the time you spend with them. Your time is of far greater importance.

Fathers, bring your children up in the discipline and the instruction of the Lord. The word translated instruction, now I really had trouble trying to pronounce it, it was nuthetia, I think that's how you pronounce it, N-U-T-H-E-T-E-A, I don't think I put that up there, no.

This is more of a targeted and stern warning to the child to avoid and cease from improper conduct. In a world where men have largely become feminized, this requires spine, the kind that fathers ought to have.

Fathers must have the ability to confront and dissuade their own children from all things ungodly.

And as a matter of disclosure, I received help with those Greek words.

[45 : 43] from the Westminster Presbyterian Church, PCA. As a young father, I was, for whatever reason, very aware that my voice and influence over my children's lives was at its peak in the early years.

But I knew that as time passed by, my voice would fade into the background. having that understanding, God saw fit to raise my attention to what I think is one of the most powerful texts of scripture regarding parenting.

It is our second text of scripture, but I only want to zero in on verses 4 to 9. That's Deuteronomy 6, 4 to 9.

It reads, Hear, O Israel, Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and 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 and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise.

[47 : 11] You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

My youngest child, Jonathan, would be five, nearly six, when these verses hit me almost like a lightning bolt. That would mean that my eldest, my daughter, would have been somewhere around 12 or 13.

That would now be 25 years ago. How did I miss this particular passage all these years? It's beyond me.

things. In the wake of this newfound understanding, I determined then and there that I would first know the commandments of God for myself.

In particular, I mean the Ten Commandments. Okay? This particular passage, if you go back to Deuteronomy, chapter 6, Moses is talking about the word of the Lord to us.

[48 : 24] These commandments that I give to you today, the commandments he's talking about is the Ten. They appear in Deuteronomy, chapter 5. I determined that I would know the commandments of God for myself and then ensure that my children would also know them and be instructed by them.

Therefore, if you had to say what's commandment number 7, hopefully they would still be able to say it. Whatever one of the Lord I know most of us say commandment of 7.

Boy, I don't know any of these commandments. And herein lies a problem. Therein lies a problem.

The word of the Lord is not on our hearts. I use these commandments of God and the memorization of them as a springboard.

from which to launch conversations about the Lord. Knowing the commandments for yourself is vitally important as they can be constantly reflected upon.

I remember on occasions when I was interacting with my children and I would say, now how do you think commandment number 9 relates to what is happening now?

[49 : 41] Okay. Now, I'm sure that my grandson would probably, I'm not going to pull him on the spot, my grandson and my granddaughter would be able to say to you, what is commandment number 9?

Okay. Want to give it a shot? Thou shall not lie. lie. Sorry? They got it right. I shall not lie.

And the point I'm trying to make, it's amazing how you can use the commandments in regular conversations, just to direct conversations.

How does it relate to number seven? By the way, that's the adultery. How does it relate to number two? That's the formation of idols. Simply, it's there and it's constant.

So when you say, when you're able to say, as simple as, do you think commandment number two is relevant here? That's when they really want this toy?

[50 : 48] They gotta have it? Or they would die? How do you think it relates to commandment number one? Or, whether they see another child with something that they must have.

Which commandment? Number ten. You should not covet. I use the commandments of God as a memorization of them as a springboard for which to launch conversations about the Lord.

Knowing the commandments for yourself is vitally important as they can be constantly reflected upon. No doubt that this practice alone helps to build walls, and I want you to hear this part.

Build walls and boundaries to safeguard the hearts of children against things that displeases the Lord. It is my hope that even today, they, I'm talking my wife, children in particular, they know the commandments of the Lord and that they are on their hearts.

hearts. Now I'm saying it in front of them so I'm putting them on the spot a little bit, but the fact is still the same. The word of the Lord is on our hearts.

[52 : 10] I'm going to bring up, I'm drifting a little bit, but I think I should say this to you. There was a Christian brother of mine.

My children were very young, and I have three sons, one daughter, and what was said to me in the conversation was this.

This is what it said. This is what the other brother in the Lord said to me. Do you ever worry that your children will grow up and become homosexual? That's what the question to which I answered. I said, no. Which almost flabbergasted the person when I said that. Notice the question, do you ever worry about it?

Now, I don't mean, the thought is not in my head. That's not what I mean. Do you ever, no, I don't worry about it. And they looked at me befuddled. So I decided to answer them before they asked me the question, why?

[53 : 15] I said, simply because of this. I teach my children the commandments of God. I make sure they know them.

Why? Because if they cross those lines, it's not going to be an oops. You get it?

When the word of the Lord is on your heart, and you make sure it's on your children's heart, there is no oops, as in the lives of people who are not within the confines of the church.

There is no oops. It takes a deliberate building, breaking down of the walls that you worked so hard to put on. And by the way, that doesn't mean that they won't break down the walls.

That doesn't mean that. I spend the time. I try to take the time. By the way, I'm not trying to be the exemplary father.

[54 : 22] That's not the point. When my children were very young, the Lord brought this particular passage to me. And this had a profound effect on the way I lived after that.

God. So I used the commandments and the memorization of them as a springboard, to which I conducted many conversations with them.

Driving through the streets of Nassau, seeing how people behave in a particular way, and act in a particular way, disrespect with all this, I refer back to the commandments.

Honor your father and mother. even if you mothered them. No doubt that this practice alone helps a child to build walls and boundaries so that's to safeguard the hearts of our children against things that displeases the Lord.

It is my hope that even today they know it. To all fathers under the sound of my voice, listen up. There is one God and as such we are called to submit to him.

[55 : 38] He commands that we love him and love him with our heart, soul, and might. That's our starting point.

He commands that we know the word and treasure it. And he commands that we diligently teach his word to our children. He goes further to say that we shall talk of his commandments when we sit in our homes, a clear implication of instruction given to those who live in the home, our children. Any father who does not speak to his children and family concerning the things of God and his commandments are themselves lacking in submission to God.

But as I close, I want to address those of us who know that we have failed to be the fathers that we ought to have been.

Rest assured, there is no father here present who has not failed. I certainly have failed to be the father I was called to be.

[56 : 52] But don't lose heart. For God says to you, just as he said to Cain, we did the memory verse earlier, he said it to Cain.

If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at your door. Its desire is contrary to you, that you must rule over it.

Now, before we walk away and think that that means I must do well in order to gain and earn, that's not what's meant. If you do well means, if you hear the voice of the Lord in submission and act in submission to him, that's what it means.

So how might we do well? By living in submission to God. Fathers, your call of God to be in submission, and it is that submission to God that we are unable to hear God's word to fathers, so as to raise our children in the Lord.

Let's submit ourselves to the Lord and determine in our hearts that from this day forward, we as fathers will not provoke our children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline of the Lord.

[58 : 15] Let us pray. Fathers, you know that we as earthly fathers have not been the fathers that we ought to be, and you also know that fathers are under attack in the culture.

We ask you that you would empower us as men and as fathers and as husbands to live in accordance and obedience and submission to you, to give us our many feelings and help us, Lord, from this day forward to live honorably before you.

These things we pray in your name. Amen.