

Beginning At The Beginning

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[0:00] Praise the Lord, who reigns above and beats His courts we all.

! Praise the Holy God above and all His grace will show. ! Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show.

Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show. Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show.

Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show. Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show.

Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show. Timber, soft and simple, sound in His high praise on green.

[1:14] Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show. All the reach of heavenly art.

All the powers of music, praise the music of the heart. Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show.

Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show. Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show. Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show.

Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show. Praise Him, Lord, who reigns above and all His grace will show.

Praise the Lord in every breath, let all things praise the Lord.

[2:49] Praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord. In the image of God, we were made long ago.

With a purpose divine, hear His glory to show.

But we failed Him one day, and like sheep went astray.

Thinking not of the cost we His likeness had lost.

[4:13] But from eternity, God had in mind the work of Calvary.

The lost to find. From His heavens, O God, Christ came down earth to trod.

So that men might live again in the image of God.

Now that I have believed and the Savior received, Now that I from the cry of my guilt am relieved.

I will live for my Lord, not for gain or reward, But for love, thinking of what His grace has restored.

[5:47] I'll never comprehend. Redemption's plan.

How Christ could condescend to die for man.

Such a Savior I'll praise to the end of my days, As I upward onward trod.

In the image of God. It's hard to be patient, isn't it, while somebody puts that thing on?

There must be a better way. I'm not sure what it is. There we go. Can you do something around here that I really like? So I think I'll try it again. Good morning.

[7:18] Good morning. Alright. It's a terrible morning, isn't it? You get wet out there, and it's cold, it's icy a little bit.

Glad you're here. I'm glad to be here with you this morning. Perhaps you have noticed from your bulletin that we are going to begin this morning a family series.

Three Sundays. Don't get too afraid now. Just a very brief little series in between the holidays here on the matter of the family. And as I thought about that, and thought about some defense for it,

Because I thought some might wonder, now why do we have to have a series on the family?

I thought I would defend it by saying I really had nothing else about which to speak. But I didn't think you might believe that. So there are some good reasons for it.

It's not because I've heard of so many family problems here at Maranatha, because I really don't know you that well. So you are safe along those lines. The real reason for it is because Thanksgiving and Christmas are family holidays.

[8:27] We think a lot, we do a lot with family during this time of year. Perhaps more so than any of the other holidays any other time of year.

But a happy family relationship can make the holiday times just terrific. But a weak or wrong family relationship can make the holiday times absolutely miserable.

It seems as though the holidays bring out either the best in the family relationships or the worst in them.

So it seems to me a fairly appropriate brief span of time here to think together about this matter of the family. I want you to know that whenever I talk about the family, I do not speak about it as one who has all of the answers.

As someone much more wise than I have said, I don't even know all the questions, much less all of the answers. And I do not come to you this morning or any of these times as the answer man who has the final word.

[9:42] I have a family, believe it or not. I keep them hidden pretty well from you. I had my daughter here with me on Sunday or Wednesday night. My little boy Mark this morning said, Daddy, can I go to Columbus with you?

And I came about that close to bringing him this morning. I do have a family, a disgustingly normal family. We are not in any way, we have not arrived as a family.

And I want you to know that that's the attitude with which I come to you this morning. I do not have all the answers. I am not the perfect husband, father, etc.

Please understand that. I come to you in the spirit really of Charlie W. Shedd, who said when he first entered the ministry in the early days that he had a sermon which he preached and entitled, How to Raise Your Children.

Then, a few years later when his children began to come along, he changed the title and the content of that sermon to, Some Thoughts on How to Raise Your Children.

[10:52] And then, when they became teenagers, he again changed the content and the title to, Some Helpful Thoughts for Fellow Strugglers. And frankly, it is in that spirit that I come to you this morning.

Just some helpful hints for fellow strugglers in relation to the family. Now that's enough introduction. I think you're with me. I think you're awake. I can hear you breathing out there.

So we're going to begin this morning at the beginning. Genesis chapter 2. Will you come back with me, please, to the Garden of Eden?

To me, it is always a healthy and a happy exercise to go back before the fall. And to find out just exactly what God intended, what God provided, what God had in mind when he established and got this whole shoot and match of the family started.

As we shall see this morning, he was the one who got it started. So if you want to blame it on somebody, you have to blame it on him. God originated the family. Now this message this morning is an unorthodox message.

[12:11] This is the kind that homiletics teachers say never preached this kind of a message. This is the kind that is not a model for budding ministers. I don't know if we have any budding ministers around here or not.

Blooming idiots, maybe, but not budding ministers. I couldn't resist that. You'll have to forgive me for that. But at any rate, where was I? Oh, yeah. This is not the orthodox kind of a message.

It's like a funnel. You know what a funnel looks like. We start out very broadly, and I'm going to give you my outline so you kind of know where I am and don't get lost in the shuffle here. We're going to just take this passage apart limb from limb, and I'm going to dangle some details before you.

That's the widest part of this funnel. Just all kinds of details. No rhyme nor reason to them. Just this is interesting and notice that and don't forget that thing. Just a bunch of details.

Then we're going to move down the funnel to what I'm going to call some general principles. Things we're going to try to put together some thoughts as a result of these details.

[13:16] And then at the very bottom of the funnel, something to take home. We'll call it some application. So that's the format of what we're doing. So don't get lost in the funnel here.

Be sure you kind of know where I am. Excuse me. Genesis chapter 2. My throat is not the best this morning, so I'll try to stay away from that microphone when I do that.

Genesis 2. We're going to begin at verse 18. I think I will read the rest of the chapter here for you.

Genesis 2 and verse 18. And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone.

I will make him and help meet for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air. And he brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them. And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field.

[14 : 19] But for Adam there was not found in help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. And he slept. And he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof.

And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman. And he brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.

She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife. And they shall be one flesh.

And they were both naked, the man and his wife. And they were not ashamed. And all kinds of details rush upon our minds as we consider these verses.

So let me just point out a few that are very significant for us. I noticed the term in verse 18. It is not good that the man should be alone.

[15 : 24] Not good. And all of the ladies said, Oh, well, okay. It is not good.

Now that may not seem really like a very significant detail. Until you look back in chapter 1 and you find a tremendous contrast. Come back with me to chapter 1 and please notice the contrast.

Chapter 1 and verse 4. We read, And God saw the light, that it was good. Look at verse 10.

And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he seas. And God saw that it was good.

Excuse me. Verse 18. It says that God gave the sun to rule over the day and the moon over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

[16 : 29] Verse 21. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind, and God saw that it was good.

Verse 25. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and God saw that it was good.

Look at verse 31. Verse 26. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good, but it was not good for the man to be alone.

It's a very significant detail. We'll come back to this in a few moments, and I dare not say too much here. But it does appear from this text that men need women.

Remember, too, that Adam was, at this time, a perfect person, as perfect as a creature could be. He had an untested creaturely holiness, with a perfect environment, a wonderful occupation, spiritual communion with God every day.

[17 : 47] Nothing between he and his creator whatsoever. He had something to do. And yet, with all of that perfection around him, it was still not good for him to be alone.

I think a very significant detail. Then, also in verse 18, we're going to jump on this word, help meet. God said, I will make him and help meet for him.

Obviously, referring to Eve, or the woman that he was going to make for this man. He says, I'm going to make for Adam and help meet.

Now, I think most people, when they hear the term, help meet, think of the term, helper. The woman is the man's helper.

And the implication of that term is that whatever the man wants done, whether he wants to do it or not, the woman is supposed to do it. She is his helper.

[18 : 54] So, if he tells her to do something, she's automatically supposed to do it, unquestioningly and instantly. She is his helper. Like the husband who always wants his coffee just absolutely boiling from the hot plate on the stove right to his cup.

Still has to be bubbling and boiling in the pot as it goes into the cup. And he looks at it and he says to his wife, I could use a little sugar with this.

And she gets up and she gets the sugar and puts it on the table. I could use a spoon. She gets dutifully the spoon. You know, a little cream would be nice too.

And by the time he gets the sugar and the spoon and thinks about the napkin and gets that and sits back down, he says, you know a doughnut would really be good with this. And here's this woman. She's going up and down, up and down like some kind of a yo-yo. She says, I'm a helper. That's my role in life. Not a doughnut, but a roll.

[20:02] That was terrible. That was really bad. Anyway, I couldn't resist that either. It's a bad morning. Where was I? Oh, yes.

What does this word mean? Help meet. It really does not mean helper as such. It has much more the idea of a suitable companion.

It's a very difficult word to translate, frankly. Some have translated it one who corresponds to the man. That doesn't mean one who writes him letters.

Others have translated one who answers back to the man. And somehow that has a poor connotation to it.

So the idea of a suitable companion. And if you think about it, that's a pretty good definition of it.

What kind of a person is Adam? What kind of a person is a man?

[21:03] Well, as was sung this morning, we were made in the image of God, man and woman. As such, we have personality. We have a mind.

We can think with our minds. We have emotions. We can feel exhilaration and joy when Ohio State beats Michigan. Or some other such incidental thing like that.

We have a will. We can decide. We can make choices. That's the kind of a creature man is. He's like God.

He's like God. He has personality. He can talk. He can have interpersonal relationship because he's like God. And beloved friends, when God made a woman, he made her matched.

A suited companion to him. Can Adam think? So also can Eve. Does Adam have emotions? So also does Eve.

[22:09] Can Adam make choices? So also can Eve. She is a perfectly matched companion for him. For him.

Men and women were designed to complement one another.

To complete what Adam was lacking. So Adam would have someone with whom to think. Someone who could share his emotions.

Someone who could help him make those decisions in life. A woman then is a helpmeet.

A suitable matched companion for a man. Any view that puts women down as people who cannot think.

[23:12] Or people who are somehow inferior to men. Is an unscriptural view of women. Well, there's some other details here.

We found out it was not good for the man to be alone. And we found out that a woman is to be a helpmeet for him. I'm interested in this next section. We're simply going to call it the search.

And of course, into the verses here, 19 and 20, verses 19 and 20 in particular. We find that Adam is now going to name all the animals.

And have you ever wondered why he did that? I take it, as I understand this text, that upon deciding, now Adam needs a helpmeet. That God brings all of the animals by and Adam calls names to them.

And we read at the end of verse 20, But for Adam there was not found any helpmeet for him.

[24:14] I take it that God paraded all of these animals in front of Adam in order to create an appetite within him. So that Adam would begin to sense, hey, I don't have a partner.

All of these various kinds of animals, they have their partners, but I don't have one. And so there was a search going on, trying to find a suitable mate for Adam in the animal kingdom.

But there was none who fit the bill. And so we have then God by special creation bringing into existence the woman.

I'm going to read the verse again, verse 21. The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. Really, you have here the first anesthetic, do you not?

And he slept. And you also have the first operation. And he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof.

[25 : 20] And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman and brought her unto the man. Someone has said, and probably rightly so, God saved the best till last.

If he created the animals and then he created man on the sixth day, he saved till last the woman. And he did not. Have you ever tried to think of how God did that?

Taking a rib, one rib out of a man. And he formed that rib. He built it into a woman.

That's fantastic, really. Probably doing it. You see, God could have taken dust like he did with Adam and he could have started afresh, couldn't he?

But in order to show the intricate connection between man and woman, he actually constructed her out of a part of the man's own body.

[26 : 29] There is a vital relationship there between the man and the woman. Well, then he introduces her to Adam.

Look at verse 23. We're all going to pick up another detail here. Adam said, This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.

The little word now. We tend to pass over that word in our English versions. The word literally means now at last.

There is a bit of excitement in it. As he sees her, he comes to consciousness and God brings this beautiful creature to him now.

The very first moment he lays eyes upon her, he recognizes her uniqueness. He recognizes her relationship to him. And he says, Now at last!

[27 : 33] Here is my helpmeet. Here is one who matches me. And he's so excited. He's so thrilled. And that little word now tells us that.

Now at last. I have a helpmeet. Had he been Fred Flintstone, he probably would have said, Yabba dabba doo!

Or had he been Uncle Jed of the Beverly Hillbillies, he would have simply said, Ooh, doggie! But he was excited. He was thrilled because he recognized here was his special companion.

Well then notice verse 24. A few other details we have to grab here. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.

That verse is so loaded, frankly, we could spend the rest of our time right there. We hadn't better do that. But have you ever noticed, or have you ever wondered, why does it say man and not woman?

[28 : 45] Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and he shall cleave to his wife. Why doesn't it say therefore shall the man and the woman leave father and mother and cleave to each other?

Why doesn't it say that? Have you ever wondered about that? One man in commenting on this verse suggested, and I think rightly so, that the reason it says just the man, the man is to leave and he is to cleave, is that God is laying the responsibility for that home, for that relationship, for that family, on the man.

It is the man who is to leave. It is the man who is to cleave. There is a sense in which it is the role of the young man to say to that young woman, I love you, I want to establish a home independent of our parents, I will love you, I will live with you, I will cling to you for life, we're going to make it together.

That's the man's role. If the man grows up and straightens around, he settles down and things get going. That's silly. That's totally unscriptural.

When a young man marries that young woman, he is saying, Hey, hang on, we're going to make it together. And I'm going to see to it that we make it. It is not the woman who is to hold the family together.

[30 : 17] It is the man. He's to do the leaving and he's to do the cleaving. And if there's some man who says, Well, I'm not ready to leave mother and dad yet, then don't get married.

Because the word leave means just that. It is a very real severance. The taking of those emotional apron strings that we parents have on our children and there is a cutting of those strings.

And we live independently the one or the other. There is to be a leaving. By the way, I did not say we're never supposed to talk to each other or contact one another or confer with one another.

I didn't say that. But, beloved friends, there must be an emotional independence. It must be there. Leaving. Cleaving.

Cleaving has the idea of clinging to. The man is to cling to his wife. Another word for it would be to be welded to her.

[31:23] Some have translated it to be stuck to, which lends itself to be stuck with. But we don't say that. He is to adhere tightly to be welded to her for life.

You ever try to break apart a weld? That's a pretty solid bond, isn't it? That's the term used here for marriage.

A man is to leave. And he is to cleave. And then the text says, They too shall be one flesh. And I understand that to be a reference to the sexual relationship between husband and wife.

Mentioned in scripture? Yes. Because human sexuality is a creation of God. And within the marriage bonds, there can be and ought to be and must be a freedom of sexual expression, without guilt and without fear and without shame, between the husband and his wife.

Obviously, outside of marriage, the Bible is very clear that sexual relationships are wrong. They are sinful. They bring the judgment of God upon people.

[32:48] But inside of marriage, with our marriage partner, there is a real freedom. And there is a real enjoyment that is supposed to be there.

And that's why this verse is here. So we have kind of gotten through the detail parts of our funnel. We've talked about the... Well, you know what we talked about. Why should I review them? Just some of those details of the passage. We move from that down a little bit now to some general principles.

Some general principles. It seems to me that on the basis of these verses, we ought to make some general statements that are based on these.

And I have a number of them that I'd like to share with you. One such general principle is this. Men need women. Men need women.

[33:54] If Adam, in all of his perfection and completeness, needed a woman, then most men today need a woman.

Now, I don't want that to be misconstrued. And I don't want to say it too solidly. Because I know when we come to the New Testament, there is another principle that comes along that says there is a valid form of single living.

As a matter of fact, we're going to talk about that tonight. The single life. Does everybody have to get married to be a success? That's really the theme tonight.

So what I'm going to say to you is simply this. Most men ought to marry. Most men. This is a general principle that does not apply to every specific case.

But since we are all related to Adam, and Adam needed a woman, then it seems to me I'm on very safe and sane ground to say most men need a woman.

[35:05] And I think men ought to realize that. I think that will help us to have the right attitude toward our wives. Do you view your wife as a necessary evil?

Or as someone who compliments you? Not compliments you, tells you how wonderful you are. But someone who completes you.

I'll be honest with you. I'm thankful for my wife. She is a wonderful completer for me. I have some very real weaknesses, but she is able to help me.

I remember in the early days of our marriage, around Thanksgiving and around Christmas, this very time of year, I would get very depressed, very sad. Instead of happy and glad like everybody was supposed to, I'd just say, Oh, brother, Christmas.

And I myself was surprised. I thought, what's wrong with me? Why do these feelings of depression come over me at holiday times? Maybe some of you know what I'm talking about.

[36:10] My wife came from a family that looked forward to the holidays, and they knew how to celebrate the holidays. And our family, to be perfectly blunt about it, did not. Holidays were not happy times in my home as a child.

And I don't think I really realized that until I was married, and Christmas rolled around, and all of a sudden my wife was making all of these happy preparations, and here was Lauren. Bah, Christmas! She helped me. She completed me. And that's just one little illustration of it.

I think there needs to be a humility about us as men. Do not think that you are so self-made, so self-sufficient, that you have no needs, and a woman can contribute nothing to you.

If you believe that, then you're better than Adam, and you know more than God. Because he said it was not good for the man to be alone.

[37:16] So we learned something about men. Men need women. Second, general principle I want to draw from this. We learned something here about women.

And that is this. A woman is a valuable prize. A woman is a valuable prize.

Do not other scriptures say, Whoso findeth a woman findeth a good thing? And did not the writer of the Proverbs say, Who can find a virtuous woman?

Etc. As my mom would have said, She is as scarce as hen's teeth. Beloved friends, A woman is a valuable treasure.

God made her from the rib of the man to show the intricate closeness of this woman in her origins with man.

[38 : 19] When he first introduced woman to man, in Adam's reaction we hear a note of excitement. Now at last, here she is. Adam didn't put his wife down.

Adam was not ashamed of her. He was so excited. I'll bet he opened the car door for her five years after they were married.

He considered her a prize, a treasure. And he was going to hold her in high esteem, and he was going to respect her and love her and cling to her.

Now there is not a husband here who doesn't drop the ball every once in a while in this particular area, including myself. But beloved friends, we ought to make it a point.

We ought to be very careful in the attitude we have toward our wives and women in general. Amen? It's true.

[39 : 18] Sometimes even preachers think that they make points with congregations or gain ground with people if in the course of their sermons they make the woman the butt of all their jokes.

You don't impress God with that. Sometimes we have the notion, and we'll talk about this next Sunday when we get to the role of the husband and the wife. Sometimes we have the notion that, you know, I'm the boss around here and I do all the thinking and I make all the decisions and my wife, she's just here.

She is a necessary evil. And then we blame it on our Christianity and say, well, the husband is the head of the wife. That means if he's the head, the wife is nobody.

And we blame it on our fundamentalism. And we pit one part of the Scripture, we think, against another. We dare not do that. There's no necessity to do that.

The Scriptures are a harmony. Genesis 2 does not conflict with Ephesians 5. They don't conflict. We need to realize that. And let us clean up our attitudes and say, hey, a woman is a valuable prize.

[40 : 28] Treat her like delicate china. She's a valuable prize. We learned something else about marriage here.

There's so much here that I'd like to mention. We learned something about the permanence of marriage, don't we?

How could I not mention that in that verse? Therefore shall a man leave and cleave, and they too shall be one flesh.

I like what my former pastor used to say when he said, this is the only time when one plus one equals one. They too shall be one flesh.

There is an indivisibility there. There is a permanence there. The fact that God intended for Adam and Eve to have more than one partner, he would have created them like that.

[41 : 34] But the fact that he created one woman for one man is symbolic of the fact that God intended one man and one woman to live together for life.

Now, do not misunderstand what I'm saying. I think we need to realize that God intended for married people to stay together.

And someone says, but Mr. Warren, it is tough inside of marriage. Right? We have this crazy notion, I'll probably mention this again.

We have this crazy notion that the young lady walks down the aisle and the young man, one of these doors, walks out and boy they're all dressed in their tuxes, you know, and the little ruffles out here and the ruffles out here and the preacher comes out and everybody's in their finery, you know, and they look so happy and they look so mature.

They've got it all together and the preacher says, wilt thou, and they wilt right there at the altar. And they go back out, you know, and they have their reception, they're off on a honeymoon and you think, man, there's a young couple, they got it all together, they're really going to make it.

[42 : 50] They're going to live happily ever after. I have some good news for you. Nobody, nobody lives happily ever after.

Mr. Warren, something wrong with your marriage? No. Just normal. Nobody lives happily ever after. That is a myth. And you think you get in there and say, oh, we're going to love and love will answer all of our problems, et cetera, et cetera. Leave, cleave for life.

Come what may. Oh, we know each other. We have dated for X number of months or years. You think you know each other.

But it's not like living together. There's those tremendous trifles, you know. They're for real.

[43:51] The toothpaste tube trauma. Where he's the roller and he's got it all just right, you know. And she's the squeezer. And just about the time he's got it just right.

And about four times that happens and all of a sudden the lid blows off the bathroom. Aha! Who's been wrecking my toothpaste? Miserable woman. Or even more important, what's called the toilet tissue issue.

You know, at his house they always rolled it down. At her house they roll it up. Or the doorknob dilemma, we call it around our house.

What are doorknobs for anyway? Well, they're to open doors or to... No, they're to hang clothes on. Et cetera. Those are called tremendous trifles.

Oh, it'll never happen in my family. Oh, and those are just silly little things. Wait until the real things come along. Like the children.

[44:59] And discipline. And money, et cetera. I like to compare marriage to a pressure cooker. You know what a pressure cooker is, don't you?

It's kind of a thing like that, you know. And it's got a lid on it. It's got a little gauge up there. And it's got locks on it. And a little escape valve and so on. That's marriage. You take the meat.

You take the potatoes. You take the carrots and whatever. A little bit of water. You throw the thing in. You put the heat on. And the thing starts to boil inside there until it's done. That's marriage.

God takes one young man, one young woman. He throws them in the pot. He puts the lid on. And he locks it.

And he says, you're in there for life. You cannot get out. One man for one woman for life. That's it. By the way, incidentally, if that's true, then beloved young people, you better think twice about who you marry.

[46:01] It's not just any old Tom, Dick, or Harry that happens to come along. If I'm in this thing for life and I'm locked in there, I better make a good choice the first time. Right?

We'll talk about that down the road, too. But anyway, here we are inside there. We can't get out. Then you know what God does? He turns on the heat.

And the pressures begin to build inside that relationship. Oh, the money. What did you do with that money? Let's make a budget. And the children and the in-laws and the outlaws and all kinds of things start going.

And the young couple says, hey, let me out of here. You know what God does? You're there for life. God's sadistic.

He just likes to see us suffer. I know. Why do you put anything in a pressure cooker? To tenderize it?

[47:00] To make it useful? That's exactly what God does in marriage. He tenderizes our heart and makes us useful.

You see, marriage is not the union of two already perfect people who live happily ever after.

Marriage is rather the blending and uniting of two very imperfect and immature people who agree to grow.

We all together. That's marriage. That's marriage. Permanence. It's biblical.

That brings us then finally to some take-home applications. What can we take home to live out this afternoon, this week?

[48:03] Just some thoughts I'd like to share with you. One is this. It seems to me that if God created the family, and he did, and that if he recorded the creation of that family first in his word, then it seems to me that the family also ought to be first.

We ought to be first in our priorities. You mean how to put the family before work? Or before church?

And I'll have to explain that sometime. Or the family before some pleasure that I may want to have. You mean the family ought to have some priority in my time, and in my money, and in my planning?

Yes. Yes. Beloved friends, the family, your children, your wife, your husband deserve and biblically ought to have some priorities in your affections and in your life.

After all, God created it before he ever created the government, or your job, or even the church.

Really. There ought to be some priority structure.

[49:32] We ought to be giving it some importance in our lives. That only seems logical. It grows right out of the order of the text here.

But let's look at it a slightly different way. If indeed God created marriage and the family, if he did, then don't you think he knows how to make it work?

Now, if I have a car problem, I want to take it to the people who made it. Because I think they ought to know how to fix it.

We had a dryer from a certain company not too many years ago. It was a brand new dryer. Just a couple of months old, really. And it got to the point after a couple of months where it wouldn't quit. It just loved to dry so much, it just kept drying, drying, drying. Never would quit. I said to my wife, oh, don't worry, honey, I can fix it. Give him my trusty flashlight and my screwdriver, and I'll have it fixed in a few moments.

[50:41] So I went downstairs and pulled it away from the wall and got the cobwebs out of there. And I took those four screws off the four corners of the back plate, laid it aside, turned on my flashlight, looked all around in there, and yelled up to my wife, Honey, call Sears.

They made it. They know how to make it work. God made it. He knows how to make it work.

Therefore, we need to listen. When he tells us how to be a husband, when he tells us how to be a wife, and when he tells us how to find a mate, when he tells us how to be a child in the home, he made it.

He knows how to make it work. Kind of like with E.F. Hutton. When God speaks about the family, we better listen.

Father, we thank you for your word. We realize that this has been a little different approach. And yet we trust an approach that gets us into the text and helps us to think your thoughts after you.

[52:02] We thank you that you have put the solitary in families. You give us opportunity to live and grow together. Pray, Father, that as we continue thinking about you and your word in this area, we might learn.

We might grow. We might change. We might be benefited. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Hymn number 414, please.

Hymn 414. This is a very general kind of a hymn, and yet it applies to our particular situation this morning.

When we walk with the Lord in the light of His word, what a glory He sheds on our way. Even at home, the Lord does that. Let's stand together as we sing. While we do His good will, let's stand together as we sing.

Can we live together as we sing? Singing together as we sing. When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word, what a glory He sheds on our way.

[53:24] While we do His good will, He abides with us still and with all who will trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

We sing together the second verse as the final one, please. Not a shadow can rise. A cloud in the skies, a cloud with His eyes in the rain.

Not a cloud nor a fear, not a sign or a tear, can I finally trust and obey.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

[54:57] Shall we pray together? Our Father, we are trusting you for a good series together. We pray that you would awaken within us an interest in the things of the Lord, the things of the Word.

As well, Father, as an openness to rethink how we are living at home. Father, it's very easy to be spiritual in public. It's very different at home.

Grant that we might be those who are Christians in word, in view, in attitude, wherever we are. We ask it in Jesus' name and thanksgiving. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.