

Planned Parenthood

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning again, everyone. I noticed some funny looks as they were looking at the title of today's message. It's not what you think. Because when people hear that, Planned Parenthood, they think of the entity, Planned Parenthood.

But how many people actually plan for parenthood? How many are prepared for being a parent? So this morning, as we celebrate Mother's Day, Mother's Day for many is a bittersweet day.

They have had to say an earthly goodbye to their moms. There are those moms who have had to bury children. There are those who have lost children, lost moms.

And so it is a bittersweet for some, a happy day of being together for others, and also a day of longing for those who know Jesus, when they will be able to say hello again to moms one day when we get to heaven.

What we're going to do today is talk about planning, or five steps for planning parenthood. I know some of you may have different places to go to spread around time between moms.

[1 : 26] So I will do my best to get you out in a very short amount of time this morning. But let's take the next few moments and look in 1 Samuel.

And we'll look at Hannah. Just a few moments looking at the prayers of Hannah that she had for her children.

And in 1 Samuel chapter 1 and verse number 10, we're reading God's Word, and it says that she was in bitterness of soul.

Now we know that Hannah, for whatever reason, was not able to have children. And so she was in bitterness of soul for that. She desperately wanted children.

And because of that, she prayed to the Lord. And she wept in anguish. And we go to verse number 12. And it happened, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli, he was the high priest at the time, watched her mouth.

[2 : 33] And in verse 13, Now Hannah spoke in her heart. Only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore, Eli thought she was drunk.

Let's go down to verse 20. So it came to pass, in the process of time, that Hannah conceived and bore a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked for him from the Lord.

Then we go down to verse 27. And from her very own words, she says, For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition, which I asked of him.

So as we see in Hannah praying, in these instances, each time when she was praying, she was in bitterness of soul. She prayed before the Lord. Eli, the high priest, saw her praying, didn't realize that she was praying, thought she was just mumbling to herself.

And then she says, God heard me, or she conceived, she bears a son, and she says, God heard me. He heard my despair. He heard my cry.

[3 : 46] Now there are many women today who cannot have children for whatever reason. And I know that must be difficult for some, especially those who would like to raise children and to have children of their own to love and to care for.

But she says in verse 27, For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me by petition, which I asked of him. I think one of the first steps in planning parenthood is simply praying for children.

She prayed for children. You know, how many of you moms, when you were growing up, you were praying, Lord, prepare me. Prepare me for the children that I will have.

Some of you ladies who are not yet married and who will be, I trust, looking forward to raising a family. Are you praying for children? Are you praying before that time even comes to say, God, prepare me.

And I pray that you would bless me and bless my husband with children, if that's your heart's desire. So she prayed for children.

[5 : 06] That's the first thing that we see. Next, let's go to 1 Samuel 2, 21. 1 Samuel 2, 21.

And the Lord visited Hannah so that she conceived and bore. It was not just Samuel. God blessed Hannah and she bore three sons and two daughters.

Meanwhile, the child Samuel grew before the Lord. Now, we're not told here exactly if she prayed continually for her children that she bore and as they were growing up, how she continued to pray for them.

But I think we can infer from Hannah's dedication to the Lord and the way that she dealt with Samuel, I think it would be safe to say that the second step to planning for parenthood would be the second thing and that would be she prayed for her children.

I think that would be a safe thing to say that she continued to pray for her children. Undoubtedly, she continued to pray for Samuel as he was growing up, as she had given him to the Lord to be growing up, to be serving in the house of God.

[6 : 32] But I think it would also be fair to say that she was praying for her children as they grew up. And as parents, I think there are things that we need to be praying for.

There are a lot of things for which we need to be praying for our children, but I summed it up in just three things. The first thing that I believe we need to be praying for our children is paramount.

The most important, bar none, is to be praying for their salvation. The moment that the day a child is born, I believe it is fair to say, you can begin praying for their salvation.

Am I wrong? I believe it's important that we begin preparing from day one that we would be asking, number one, God, and is that a fair prayer?

Of course it is. God says he wills that all would be saved. And so especially those that come are born into a family who love God, a family who are children of God, God would want that family to know Christ as their Savior.

[7 : 46] So I believe, first of all, we need to be praying for their salvation. Pray, I think, every day for their salvation. Well, they're three months old. Should I pray for their salvation? Of course!

Because it's the love and the care and the nurture of parents that is preparing the soil of their soul, of their heart and their personality.

So I think it is important for us to be praying for our children's salvation. Another thing that most people don't think about, and maybe until it's too late and they pray for a lifeline, but it's the second thing.

I think we need to be praying for their spouse from the day that they're born. But not only that, I think we need to be praying for their spouse's salvation because they're around that particular time, maybe their spouse is going to be born.

Maybe has already been born, maybe going to be born in the next few months, the next few years. And so we need to be praying that God would be preparing a helpmate for our children.

[9 : 08] And I believe that's important because salvation is the number one thing. Because if we don't know Jesus as our Savior, nothing else matters. But the second thing, because God instituted family, and because the family is the foundational unit of society, God instituted family before He instituted anything else, before the Elks Club came to be, no, even before the church, even before the church, even before God gave law, even before God instituted the temple, even before God instituted any type of faith, so to speak, He instituted family.

So family is the foundation, and society rises and falls upon the health of our families. And so I believe we need to be praying for our children's spouses, praying that God would be providing them just that helpmate that they need.

So I think that is important. But then thirdly, I was trying to figure out what three things or more.

Well, I think the other thing that really pretty well covers it all is to pray that our children will be sensitive to God's Holy Spirit.

And I think that would cover just about anything else. Praying for sensitivity to how they are to live, how they are to support their family.

Because the choice of career, the choice of staying home with family, the choice of working, whatever choices they make, the most important thing is would they be sensitive to God's Holy Spirit for them individually.

[11:03] Because the way God leads this family may not be the way God leads that family. We want our children to be sensitive to God's leading for their own life. And I think that's extremely, extremely important.

So their salvation, praying for their spouse, and praying for sensitivity to God's Holy Spirit. You say, well, what if it's too late? What if my children are already grown and I haven't?

Is it ever too late to pray? Of course not. Is it ever too late to show God's love to others, whether it's to their spouse that we don't particularly care for or whatever it is?

We need to be God. We need to be a conduit of God's love to others and to them. So it's never, never too late. Let's look at 1 Samuel 11.

Let's look at 1 Samuel 11. In verse 11, it says, Then she made a vow and said, O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your maidservant and remember me and not forget your maidservant, but will give your maidservant a male child, then I will.

[12:17] Now, moms, how many of you could actually consider or would consider doing this? Give him to the Lord all the days of his life.

Now, today we pray that I'll give him to the Lord. No, she made it literally. I'm going to go drop him off and give him to the Lord. So that's what she was thinking.

Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life and no razor shall come upon his head. So, she was probably praying a Nazarite vow.

So, you think about Samuel. He was never going to get a haircut. So, but here it is. Let's look at also verse 28. Therefore, I also have lent him to the Lord as long as he lives he shall be lent to the Lord.

So, they worshipped the Lord there. I think the third thing that we see is, not only did she pray for children, not only did she pray, I think, pray for her children, she promised her children.

[13:29] She promised her children to the Lord. Now, whether you say, I will give my child to the Lord and literally do that and they leave the country for the rest of their life and you never see them again because there are some who do that.

God leads them to be a missionary and for purposes or for reasons that may not be known, they spend their entire life overseas and hopefully the family gets an opportunity to see them but what if not?

Would we be willing to do that knowing that they're given to the Lord, knowing they're serving the Lord in a capacity that doesn't allow us, doesn't allow you to see your grandchildren, doesn't allow you to, that would be difficult, I can't even imagine.

But Hannah did something that for many would be inconceivable. She literally gave her son to the Lord but now God blessed her with other children but we say, well that's just not the same.

She promised her children, the thing is, are we willing to promise our children to the Lord to say, God, you use them however you see fit.

[14:48] Now is that a hard prayer for some of us to pray? I think it might be because sometimes parents say, well I want my children to live next door to me, I want my children to be in the same city, I want my children to be a doctor, I want them to be a lawyer, I want them to be brain surgeon, whatever.

whatever. They have their lives planned out for their children, but to say, oh wait a minute, I don't want them to be a missionary, I don't want them to be whatever, but for us to say, God, I surrender my child to you completely.

That's hard to understand, but that's exactly what she did. And I believe as a child of God, and I believe in planning for parenthood, I believe it's important that we promise our children to God.

To say, God, they're yours, I'm going to raise them, rear them, love them, nurture them, care for them, share the gospel with them, and I'm going to do everything that's necessary, but they're yours.

And the Bible says she loaned him to the Lord. Well, realize that our children are loaned to us. They're not ours, if we stop and think about it.

[16:11] Because God is the one who gives every one of us life. And she promised him to the Lord. Now, is it ever too late to promise your children to the Lord?

No. Because I don't think we ever get to the point where our children ever get old enough to where we are not prone to try to make decisions for them.

Am I right? Because we want what's best for them. We want what we think is best for them. But when we promise them to the Lord, we're literally saying, God, I want you to have your will done in their life.

Because remember, we prayed for them to be sensitive to God's Holy Spirit. So now we're asking them, or we're literally giving them to God. And I trust, and I really know, and I hope you understand that you can know as well, that if they're sensitive to God's Holy Spirit, and you've given them to the Lord, God won't make any mistakes.

He won't make any mistakes. So she promised her children. Let's look now at 1 Samuel 1, 22 through 25.

[17:28] But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, Not until the child is weaned, then I will take him, that he may appear before the Lord and remain there forever.

She said, I've given him to the Lord. I'm going to take him, but wait a minute, I need to take care of my motherly responsibility. So Hannah, her husband, said to her, Do what seems best to you. Wait until you have weaned him. Only let the Lord establish his word. Then the woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him. He said, You better keep your promise, honey. Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her with three bulls, one ephal flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh.

And the child was young, very, very young child. Then they slaughtered a bull and brought the child to Eli. Now what she did, I think what we see in these verses is not only did she pray, for children, not only did she pray for her children, not only did she promise her children to the Lord, but I think we see that she prepared her children.

She weaned him. She took care of him. She made sure that he was able to take care of himself. She made sure that he was to a point where he could feed himself, that he could clothe himself, could do what he needed to do in order to be able to be a child that grew up the way God wanted him to grow up.

[19:02] So she prepared her children. And I think there are ways that we can prepare our children. The first way is to prepare them physically. I mean, that's a no-brainer, isn't it?

They can't change their own clothes because they haven't been able to figure out how that works yet. Sometimes, you know what, even as they become toddlers.

They have accidents. And we're preparing them. We teach them how to tie their shoes. We teach them how to eat. We teach them how to do things physically.

We teach them how to do things so they can become productive in society. So physically, think about that. What if a child did not have a model to pattern their lives after?

How would they fend for themselves? How would they make it in society? Probably couldn't. But it works the same way and by the same principle that everything else works.

[20:06] You need someone to teach you. You need someone to show you. And as parents, that takes time. And in today's society, time is something that is at a premium.

But are we taking the time to spend? With our children. To prepare them physically. Second thing is, are we preparing them spiritually? Some parents, I was talking to, who was it?

I think it was Jeremy Smith, the pastor over at Moss Bluff Bible just this past week, Friday. And we were talking about Vacation Bible School.

And he said, you know, I know a lot of parents drop their kids off at Vacation Bible School for a babysitter. I said, that's true.

I said, a lot of them do. Of course, then we followed up with, it doesn't really matter why the parents did it. We have them there for five days teaching them about Jesus.

[21:11] So the motive may have been, eh, you know, not quite so great, but the point is, they're there. There are many parents who are exactly that way.

They'll bring their kids to Awana, they might bring their kids to a Vacation Bible School, but they themselves will not be worshiping God on Sunday with the family.

And so they're not preparing their family spiritually. Many children never see their parents pray. Many children never see their parents read God's Word. There are many children who never see their parents ask God's guidance for certain things.

So are they really preparing their children spiritually? So that's where we need to be preparing our children. It could be in family devotion time.

It could be in taking time to make sure that they study and they memorize or they read God's Word on their own. Preparing them spiritually.

[22 : 14] Because if we're not preparing let's say we prepare our children physically and if it's a boy we teach them how to do boy things.

Teach them how to play sports, how to throw a football, how to throw a baseball, how to play basketball. And let's say we prepare them physically to where they grow up and they're healthy, they're fit, they are athletic, and they excel at everything they do.

But spiritually they are empty. What have we accomplished? Because think about if they live 70, 80 years, even if they live 90 years, we'd be long gone by then, but yet when they die they never make it to be with God.

And they spend eternity in the lake of fire. What have we given our children? That's the question that we need to be getting across to young families.

That spiritual nurture and spiritual education and helping them to know Jesus and to grow spiritually. It's not just being in church. church. It's understanding that God's in control and understanding that every moment of every day they can breathe a prayer to God and say, God, I need your help.

[23 : 42] God, I have a test coming up and I need help. God, I'm lonely. God, I'm this. God, I... And to understand that our life revolves around God.

Our life doesn't revolve around that video game. Our life doesn't revolve around that ballpark. Our life doesn't revolve around future. Our life does not revolve around the job.

Our life ought to revolve around God and everything else falls into its order of priority. So she prepared her children. But then, in closing, let's look at what has been called Hannah's prayer.

It's a fairly long prayer. It's in 1 Samuel chapter 2. verses 1 through 10. And in verse 1 chapter 2, And Hannah prayed and said, My heart rejoices in the Lord.

My horn is exalted in the Lord. I smile at my enemies because I rejoice in your salvation. No one is holy like the Lord, for there is none besides you, nor is there any rock like our God.

[24 : 57] Talk no more so very proudly. Let no arrogance come from your mouth, for the Lord is the God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. The bows of the mighty men are broken, and those who stumbled are girded with strength.

Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, and the hungry have ceased to hunger. And even the barren has borne seven, and she who has many children has become feeble.

The Lord kills and makes alive. He brings down to the grave and brings up. The Lord makes poor and makes rich. He brings low and lifts up. He raises the poor from the dust, and lifts the beggar from the ash heap to set them among princes, and make them inherit the throne of glory.

For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he has set the world upon them. He will guard the feet of his saints. Isn't that an awesome promise? that God will take care of us.

But the wicked shall be silent in darkness, for by strength no man shall prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces.

[26 : 06] From heaven he will thunder against them. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

And the fifth thing we see is she praised God for her children. She praised God for her children. She prayed for children. She prayed for her children.

We also see that she promised her children. We see that she prepared her children. And then lastly, she praises God for her children.

How often do we praise God for our children? How often do we thank God. Even for those who there are some who have lost children.

Some before birth. Some years after. Have we thanked God just for the opportunity to even momentarily it's sad, it's difficult on this earth when we grieve. But as Hannah prays in her prayer, she really talks about God being sovereign. She talked about he is in control. And he understands who we are. He understands our frailties. And you know what? I believe God grieves when we grieve. Because he is well acquainted. The Bible says that Jesus is well acquainted with our sorrows.

[27 : 44] He understands. And for us at least, I believe that provides comfort or can provide comfort to us.

Knowing that we're not alone in our grief. It's one thing for another individual, another human being to walk with you in your sorrow.

But it's yet another to have the Creator God of the universe be not only with you but be in you in the person of the Holy Spirit who will be able to translate those utterings and groanings when you can't even form a prayer into words.

And we'll take that and bring it to God's throne of grace. And God understands. Because He is with us. So she praised God for her children.

So as we think about this today those of you who are not yet parents and I'm not just talking to moms talking to future dads too are you praying for your children even before they're born?

[28 : 59] Or are you praying for their mate? Are you praying for their salvation? Are you praying that God would be or they would allow God to direct them and guide them and lead them? And are we are you planning for parenthood?

There are some who cannot have children. There are ways that you can be used by God in children's lives.

There are some who choose to adopt. There are some who choose to foster. There are some who just simply choose to invest their lives in the lives of others in different ways.

See God has a plan for your life. I may not know what that plan is but He does. And all we have to do is to be sensitive and say God what?

And how? And when? And let Him lead and let Him take over. So are we planning for parenthood? Let's pray.

[30 : 06] Lord we thank You so very much for each one in this auditorium today. Lord God we know that we are loved by You.

We know that You by Your grace have made the way possible for us to be reconciled back with You and for us to know Jesus as our Savior.

Lord I thank You for each one here today. May we honor You and glorify You by our lives. Lord we thank You for these moms who came forward earlier today to receive this token of our love for them.

Lord may You continue to bless each one. Bless each family here today. And Father we look to You for our leadership for guidance for peace for comfort.

Lord God we know that You are the Lord God. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.