

# Four Truths to Build Your Family

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, everyone. Please turn in your Bibles to Psalm 127, Psalm 127.

I trust for those that have been attending the conference, you have been enjoying it, and I hope you've been enjoying it a little bit more than me. I don't say that to diminish anything about the conference, but I have been battling this head cold for this weekend.

And just so you know, I am pumped up with every type of cold medicine I could find in our medicine cabinet. In fact, I think I even took some of the kids' old acne medicine as well, just to make sure that I'd survive.

So if I go down, doctors who are here, there's a few of you, you'll know what to do. Thank you. So obviously, as we get into this theme of tonight's sermon, or this morning's sermon, it's not going to be a surprise to you that we are dealing with the subject of family.

We're talking about family. And one of the things that has come to mind more so than any other way as we have been working our way through this theme, and this reminded me of a conversation that we had with some of the leadership team a couple of weeks ago, is that we as Christians, as we do not drift towards holiness, we don't drift towards sanctification.

[ 1 : 37 ] So it's the same thing with godly families. They don't happen by accident. They, despite what Chris led us in teaching yesterday, last night, the last session about God's will, there is an aspect of our actions that play a part, that as holiness is an intentional action.

Raising a family that is honoring to the Lord is somewhat planned out. There is a, I don't know another word to say in my cold head, but we are to plan it, pursue it.

And this weekend, or today, I am hoping to add to that dialogue on how we can go about this. So this morning, my sermon is entitled, Four Truths to Build Your Family On.

Four Truths to Build Your Family On. It is going to be based on Psalm 127. That is the psalm that David wrote, read for us this morning.

And in case you did not know, Psalm 127 is a part of a group of psalms known as the Psalms of Ascent. Psalms 120 to Psalm 134 are a group of psalms.

[ 2 : 59 ] They're a little bit smaller, but the people of God, when they would approach Jerusalem during the times of the festival, they would sing these psalms together as they prepared to come to worship God during one of the several feasts that they had during the year.

And in these psalms, they provided almost these ideal blueprints of how we are to grow our lives, how God has designed them to be.

So, without much further ado, let's get to this text. Verse 1, it says, Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.

Our first point is, and the first truth is, building your family without the Lord is useless. Building your family without the Lord is useless.

Now, notice the word house. It is a metaphor for family. It is a common metaphor. It is used throughout different scriptures. Probably the most popular one is Joshua 24 15.

[ 4 : 09 ] If you're familiar with that, it reads, As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. That is a metaphor for the family. We also see this when God is speaking through the prophet to King David.

He says, Your house, your family, and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me.

Proverbs 24 3 says, By wisdom a house is built.

He's talking about a family is built. By understanding it is established. Then we have a warning in Proverbs 14 1. The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down.

So God is talking about in this instant that this word house, the word house being used by Solomon is a metaphor for family.

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. And I want you to pay attention here. There is no condition. There is no exception. What Solomon is clearly saying is, Unless the Lord builds the house, those who labor build it in vain.

[ 5 : 20 ] He is not saying, Those who build it without God, the labor is going to be tougher. He's not saying, Those who build it with God, it's going to take a little bit longer.

He's not saying, Those who build it without God, it's going to be more frustrating. He's simply saying, Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.

One of the things that Pastor Corrente mentioned last week is he provided us with ample examples from Scripture, from those who, although given a design by God, did not trust the Lord, and attempted to build their home with their own two hands.

Probably the most excellent and worst example is the story of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar. God had given Abraham a command that he, God promised Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation, and as he aged, he became nervous.

My wife is not going to be able to bear a child. Well, why don't we just have a child with the hand mating Hagar? Maybe that will solve the problem.

[ 6 : 45 ] To this day, that solution that Abraham offered answers the question, Why is it so crazy in the Middle East? You have the lines of two brothers still continually fighting one another.

There's a story of Abraham again and his nephew Lot. They had large herds as wealth increased, and they started grazing over the same pastures.

So Abraham said to Lot, Choose another place where you could move. And Lot looked over, and he saw this really great fertile land close to these cities called Sodom and Gomorrah.

And even though he knew that Sodom was explicitly called a wicked city, he chose the financial advantages of making that decision.

His decision to raise his family in an environment filled with immorality and his daughters engaged in immoral behavior with him out of desperation in order to continue the family line.

[ 8 : 02 ] As we talked about this weekend, bad decisions. Eli, the priest, in 1 Samuel, Eli was a judge, had two sons that were priests, and he failed to discipline them.

He knew they were being undisciplined. They were corrupt and immoral, and he did nothing. And it resulted in not only the death of his sons, but the loss of his priesthood.

And of course, we see the damages in King David's family where there was such wickedness in his family that he did not address that we had stepbrothers forcing themselves upon their stepsisters and revenge and the killing of other step-siblings over another.

That David's failure to lead and discipline his family led to great suffering and loss. Family. Wow. The fact of the matter is, I would garner at some point, some of us, if not all of us at some point, have raised our family not with God, but in our own will.

[ 9 : 28 ] That at some point or another, we chose to pursue our own selfish actions in our own families. We open our eyes, we see that there is division, there is suffering, pain, and some of you may know generational consequences within your families because you chose to pursue your own good rather than God's own glory.

The question that happens is, where do I go from here? what happens now? I think we had some great advice last night, which tied in very well into this, that to look back on our pain and regret serves to do very little, but it's where God has us now that matters.

I have some good news for you. God is in the business of building families. Here's better news.

God is in the business of rebuilding families. God is in the business of healing marriages.

God is in the business of restoring children to parents and parents to children. And God is in the business of bringing couples together for His eternal design.

[ 11 : 16 ] God does amazing work in families. As we heard from last week, it was God's design from the very beginning to build a family.

And when man begins to prioritize God's glory in the family rather than man's glory, guess what we see?

God's glory, not our own glory in the family. So, the truth that I share with you as my first point is only the Lord can build a family.

So, building your family without the Lord is useless. The truth is useless. All right. My second truth that I have to share with you for you that are note-takers, pay very attention.

Building your family without the Lord is useless. That is my first point. That is my second point. Building the family without the Lord is useless.

[ 12 : 19 ] I want you to pay attention to this word vain. Those who build it labor in vain. Notice also, it says, the watchman stays awake in vain.

Verse 2, it is in vain that you raise up early. There's a theme. Now, that word vain, we usually understand that word to mean smug or to mean arrogant.

If you're familiar with that Carly Simon song, You're So Vain, it's talking about arrogant, egotistical, conceited, as if trying to build a house without the Lord would mean that you are arrogant.

It does, but that's not the point that Solomon is making right here. Vain here means futile, unsuccessful, pointless, unattainable, impossible, or, as I have said, useless.

It cannot be done. It is a work, no matter how hard you toil, does not produce the intended results. Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.

[ 13 : 32 ] You can't do it. The man who's telling us this through the inspired power of the Holy Spirit is the man named Solomon, King Solomon.

When asked, what could he have? He prayed that the Lord give me wisdom. He had wisdom. He wrote us this book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

He was well acquainted with wisdom, but also with foolishness, disobedience, dare I say, abject stupidity. But yet he can say with absolute certainty, unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.

The BK paraphrase is to build a family without the Lord is a waste of time. No matter how much effort, no matter how much energy, no matter how much time, study, or deduction, it will never produce the results that you are looking for.

This is exactly what Solomon means when he says, unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. But the fact of the matter is that doesn't stop us from trying, does it?

[ 14 : 49 ] There's many ways that we as Christians even believe that we do things, we think it is in God's wisdom, but oftentimes it is the earthly wisdom.

There's two ways that I see this echoing or repeating within different Christians. The first way is that we create a Christian subculture.

What I mean by that is we have this world, this world is evil, let us go create a world that is good.

We won't have superheroes like Superman and Batman, we're going to create Bible Man, right?

We're going to create this kind of image of the world. We look at what non-Christians make to make sure their Christians succeed.

We know in the world non-Christian success materially and political power would come from the right school, emphasis on financial success and educational achievement, so we create our own versions, right?

[ 15 : 58 ] It could be Christian homeschooling, it could be just simply Christian schooling. If only my child would go to Trinity Western University or some other Christian university, everything will be okay.

If I assure that my kids go to the right Christian camps, the right Christian youth groups, everything will be fine. They will succeed in life.

If we, and the thought behind creating this Christian subculture is that if we can expose our kids to the right systems or thought processes that make us happy and proud of them, they will be okay.

Sadly, this is a failed way I can demonstrate to you through many of the lives of my friends who were at the top of the class of their Awana groups, their Sunday school classes that were the revered kids in church that have wandered far, far away from the Lord.

I have many friends that I have attended Christian schools, Christian colleges with who no longer acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the themes, Chris Hamilton has made it very clear to us, if you don't fear, believe, and follow after the Lord and live it out in your own home, your kids are going to pick up on that.

[ 17 : 35 ] If Jesus Christ isn't at the center of your home and how you live, how you talk to your wife and how you relate to them, there's testimonies in here and I would encourage you to get to know some of the families.

Some of the families in here will tell you my relationship change with my kids when I specifically said, please forgive me. As a parent acknowledging that they have offended their child and asking for their forgiveness.

There's power in acting like Christ with your kids. There's too many disaster stories of kids and families that have been exposed to the right subculture.

If we date this Christian way or we stay away of the things of the world, these kids will turn out okay. The second way is that we don't always realize this, but you and I have accepted the philosophy of the world without even knowing it.

Let me share you what I consider a funny story. I've shared this story with some of you guys, so please bear with me as you hear it a second time. In case you don't know my story, I had the pleasure, and this is where I know Chris and Anne from, I graduated from Master's Seminary, which I attended in the mid-2000s.

[ 19 : 08 ] Upon graduating from seminary, I got recruited to go to what was called the Harvest Fellowship Training Center, and it's kind of a pastor's polishing school, and their goal was to use me in church planning, so they take these fresh graduates, so I'm at this school, and at that time this church is just blowing up, there's about 15,000 people attending this church, and on one of the days I get invited to the women's ministry, so as you can imagine the women's ministry, has several hundred women, and I've been asked to be the theologian of the month, so once every so often they bring in a person, a theologian, to answer any of the questions that the women would have, so just think about you, BSF women, several hundred of you guys, you got questions, and you get to ask a real-life theologian, in case you didn't know, there's nobody in the world who knows more about the Bible than a freshly graduated seminary student, they know everything, so I'm prepared, I'm asked a couple of weeks, would you like to do this, yes, and I'm like kind of the first master seminary student there, there's guys from southern and all these other wacko seminaries, you know, anyway, we get there and I've studied, I've got all the passages, the tricky passages, ready to answer, right, in case you did not know, there's certain passages that cause a lot of trouble, right, Genesis 6, you know, did the angels, the sons of angels, come and procreate with the daughters of man and create a superhuman race, that's one of the questions, Hebrews 6 is another big question that comes in, can a believer lose their faith, then there's this, there's a story in Judges 11 about this man who makes this vow, his name is Jephthah and he says I will sacrifice the first thing that comes out of his house, his daughter comes out and they asked, did he really sacrifice, so I'm sitting there, I've got with me the biggest John MacArthur study bible, I've got everything labeled, I'm ready to go, ladies bring it out. The question that gets answered to me, that controlled the discussion for the rest of the day was, can I read my daughter's diary?

believe it or not, we did not have a class at seminary on how to answer that question.

Now, let me ask you this, how do you think the world would answer that question? They would probably tell you to give your daughter the freedom she deserves in order to foster her emotional, mental, and psychological well-being.

[ 22 : 08 ] They'd suggest that you seek out perhaps a communications expert or a therapist to help you develop her emotional self-awareness.

Perhaps they will tell you that your role as a parent is not to know and correct, but to know and affirm. So if she tells you what she wants, your role is to provide that for her.

And they might say in this example I'm using right now, I give to you that is shared from a well-known Christian leader who provides counsel to many churches across Canada to my friend's daughter, daughter, that her privacy needs to be respected and she needs to carry plenty of condoms with her.

This comes from a well-known Christian counselor, an enlightened one guiding who's attempting to guide and advise my son's 17-year-old daughter.

daughter. You may be wondering what I said. It's been over 15 years and I would say very few times has God ever actually said anything that is ordained by him out of my mouth.

[ 23 : 37 ] I would say this would be the one time that he did. I simply asked her the question, do you love her? if you do read it. Let me tell you how much the world thinks of the world's wisdom.

There's a book right now written by a secular Jew that is out there telling us that the world's wisdom is bunk. It's garbage.

Everything that they learned in psychological classes and therapy classes is garbage. garbage. I would tell you, read the diary. I would tell you, if you love your kids, help them choose their friends. If you love them, I will tell you, deny them internet in their bedrooms. In fact, I would say, deny them internet unless it's in a family space where you can see the computer.

I would say, if you love them, let them fail sometimes. Chris made that very clear. Sometimes you have to give your kids some freedom so that they can fail and you're there to disciple them and coach them through that.

[ 24 : 53 ] The fact of the matter is even the secular people understand that kids who do not know how to deal with stress, disappointment, and not getting what they want are actually failing as adults in today's society.

here's one and I'm going to get into a few kitchens here. I see a lot of parents here who force their kids to do their chores, do homework, go to school, but they don't want to force them to come to church or go to youth group.

Now, I'm not saying that you bully your kids to do those things, but I think those are the things that you negotiate your kids to do, and you win at all costs. The fact of the matter is you want as much Christian influence in your child's life where other leaders and believers in Jesus Christ can have a say into their lives.

And I've heard the stories. Well, my kids are so much older and the other kids are so much immature. You know what I say? Allow your kids to come in and help, minister. Your kids aren't so young that they cannot serve others, are they?

Can we not have kids that are in grade 11 or 12 not work with the kids that are in grade 7, 8, 9? A lot of you kids don't know that are older are actually fantastic leaders.

[ 26 : 16 ] I see giftings in some of you that I think if nurse will really shine under the leaders that we have in our youth group, they can come and learn and partake to give.

those are the way that some of the world has come into our world. We think we're using this, we think biblical wisdom is giving freedom of wisdom, and here's the other danger, my friends.

It's always thinking that how we were hurt as children is the same way we're going to hurt our children. Do you know what I'm saying? I'll say it another way. the way we were wounded by our parents we're so fearful of wounding our children with.

But sometimes we need wisdom and discernment. Maybe you were wounded because you were stubborn and disobedient. Maybe your child isn't. Maybe they want you to speak into their lives. Maybe they want and need more direction. So that is the second truth. First truth, as you know, is building your family without the Lord is useless.

[ 27 : 23 ] The second truth is building your family without the Lord is useless. What do you think the third truth is? Building your family without the Lord is useless. Verse 1, unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

There's that word again, vain. Now the picture that Solomon is using here is a guard who is watching over the walled city. The basic thing is that one watchman is going to, he's not going to be able to stop an invading army.

So the fact that he's kind of fighting this, it doesn't matter. If God wants that city overthrown, that city is going to be overthrown. Waking up ten minutes early to tell the losing army they're going to be overwhelmed doesn't really make much of a difference.

If that city is going to be protected, it is going to be protected by God. Too often we parents take over the role of God.

We tend to be overproductive. I've seen it in other places, praise the Lord, not here in Squamish, no contact sports, right? No skateboarding, no mountain biking. You might fall and break your arm.

[ 28 : 39 ] And I ministered for a great part in urban Toronto area. And a lot of parents are deathly afraid of their kids falling off and breaking an arm like that's the end of the world.

you're never going to be out of my sight. You're not going to go on a youth trip. It's living in perpetual fear that something bad is going to happen.

If you want to hear more on this point, I would say that Chris's sermon on how to know God's will last night speaks and I was struggling with too many words today and thankfully Chris used up a lot of those words last night.

I don't have to repeat, but I'm going to encourage you that the Lord's going to do what the Lord's going to do. The fact of the matter is many of us struggle in making decisions for our families.

Is it safe? Is it not? I was just thinking the other day. I first met Chris and it was 20 years ago. Do you know that? It was 20 years ago. We were both serving in youth ministry together. And I remember that I had fellow students who had kids who did not think it's safe to send their kids to their youth ministry with Chris, Ann, and I.

[ 29 : 54 ] This is John MacArthur's youth ministry. There's like 40, 60 staff members. It's loaded with good godly people. There's elders oversight.

I couldn't think of a safer place. No, no, no. A bad seed might come in and you're like, you're at the seminary dude? Like these guys, you just want to control everything. Right?

There's this idea that I want to keep everything perfectly safe. I want to plan everything so no harm will come to my child.

If I can save them from anxiety, if I can save them from losing, unless the Lord protects my wife, when I'm gone, I'm not going to leave, right?

Unless the Lord protects my kids when they are out of my sight, I won't let them out of my sight. Unless the Lord protects their family's health and income and safety, I'm going to do it all in my effort.

[ 30 : 59 ] I can't control everything. In fact, I've been on three youth retreats where a youth died. Complete lady, girl slipped on a rock and hit her head.

Another, on a beautiful day canoeing, a gust of wind, like a little mini storm showed up on the lake and the kid could swim, tipped over the canoe and he died.

the fact of the matter is what God means to do, God means to do and only God can ultimately protect. Here's my point.

Do we live our lives with a humble dependence upon God and an awareness that our lives could change in a blink of an eye? have we planned out our lives so perfectly that we think we can protect ourselves from the harm and dangers of this world?

Do we think that if we lay out our plans, our weeks, our months, our years, and know what my career and financial aspirations are, that I can guarantee that everything will be as I believe God's will is?

[ 32 : 15 ] This is something that has I have seen over and over in my 15 years of being a pastor that there are too many people in the church who think that somehow there's some amount of spiritual maturity or an amount of spiritual service to Christ or amount of serviceable faithfulness to God that somehow makes them exempt from pain and heartache.

There is none. I could ask Chris right now in a church of close to 10,000 people, I would say there's probably a heartbreaking story every week.

Every single week the church is dealing with it. I still remember the youth retreat where the kids built the hole in the sand. caved in and the child died.

I believe John Piper says it best, he says God's providence does not always align with our preferences but it is always aligned with God's perfect purpose. My other pastor once said the only assurance we have is that our lives pass through a sovereign God's hands and he allows what he chooses to allow.

And God allows what he allows and he prevents what he chooses to prevent and it is his choice and all his promises to us are that he will give us sufficient strength to endure the heartbreak.

[ 33 : 57 ] and that he will give us the fullness of joy to every person who will live dependently on him. Those are the only guarantees we have my friends.

So the question that I have for you right now and I'm sure some of you are evaluating some of your moments your own life your own family perhaps it's your regrets and you are asking yourself am I trying to do this life of my own or am I trying to do it with God?

Am I trying to make this family of mine in your own strength or God's strength? Well a former pastor once told me there's four ways four questions that you can ask yourself to see if you're doing it under your power or God's power.

Very quickly do you get angry or upset when things don't go your way? Guess what? You're probably doing things under your own power. Number two do you worry? Do you worry?

Do you worry as if you're responsible for everything that has to happen? Do you worry like it all depends on you and that if you are anxious and you get anxious if it doesn't turn out the way you imagine?

[ 35 : 07 ] Guess what? Probably doing it in your own power rather than God's own power. Number three are you impatient? Are you impatient with your wife, your kids, your job situation, your church?

That you're only as patient as long goes the way only blah blah blah blah blah blah. You're patient as long as things go your way. And the fourth and final way that I think is probably a

predeterminate if you're doing things in your own strength or God's own strength is do you feel empty?

Do you feel as if you get depleted, burnt out, as if your strength is gone and you wonder if you can carry on? guess what?

Red flag. Guess whose strength you're doing it under? Because when it comes to measuring our strength against God's, it's like a double A battery against, I don't know, Elon Musk's solar powered battery to power the world, right?

it's just endless. The fact of the matter is only the Lord can protect your family.

[ 36 : 27 ] And without him, it is useless. So that is the third truth. You know what the first truth is? Trying to protect your family without the Lord is useless.

Now, what's the last point that you think I've got here for you today? Building your family without the Lord is useless. You're right again.

Verse 2, it is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil, for he gives to his beloved sleep.

What he's saying there in that story is that you can get up early and you can stay late, and the picture is a person who's, you know what, I am going to be purposeful, I'm going to get up morning, you know, the early bird gets the worm, and the one who stays up late can study hard.

It's this idea that if I work so hard and study so hard, I can get what I want. But notice that word again, vain. Vain.

[ 37 : 31 ] If God isn't in it, it doesn't matter. It's vain. There are some in the Christian community that if I only follow a certain recipe, I will get good kids, right?

It's like cooking chocolate cookies. If I do, and sadly it gets almost reinforced, I do this recipe, hey, I got a really good kid, and I get to that second recipe, hey, second kid, hey, it turned out really great, and then all of a sudden you get to that third kid, oh my goodness, what a disaster.

Right? And the kid's different. He just is. And here's the thing, God intended it that way. Right? Of course, there's ways that we bring wisdom into our lives as we teach our kids to love and fear the Lord, but this goes back to my earlier assertion that you can't devise a subculture which will create great kids.

It's only working with your kids in the power of the Lord that you bring godly wisdom into their life does the change that you see happen. And even I remember, this is the most powerful point, Chris, I don't want to undermine you from your teaching last year, but the first point I thought was brilliant was we can't make our kids Christian, but we can teach our kids to rightfully fear the Lord, to know that he is real good, and if we're not on God's side, we're in a bad place.

That's the only thing you can really guarantee. You can tell your kids, you know what, no video games, no music, no dress code. Hey, listen, I am the product of bad parenting.

[ 39 : 13 ] And I say this tongue-in-cheek, my mom's here, I'm having fun with her. People always ask, why did it take so long for you to get married at 46? Well, every time a girl would call the house, mom would always say, girls aren't supposed to call boys, but hang up on them.

So I didn't know the prettiest girls in school were calling me, but praise the Lord, I waited until I was 46. She thought it was going to save me. See, we need to be wary of what is God's wisdom and what man's cultural wisdom is.

Here's the thing, without God at the center of our planning, it's not going to work. And the newsflash is not all our kids are meant to be the same. And it's not our goal to mold them into what we want them to be, but what God wants them to be.

That means paying attention to their needs and their interests. And sometimes it means letting other people in. It could be a pastor, it could be a youth leader, it could be another parent of a child here at church, it could be your grandparents.

parents. Let's take a look at the end of verse 2 of this one.

[ 40 : 27 ] It says, eating the bread of anxious toil, for he gives to his beloved sleep. Has anyone here ever lost sleep over their kids?

I inherited my wife's kids. kids. And I remember there was a time we were working with them and you know, the first couple of years they weren't in our home and they came in later and there was a situation, one was making a decision and there was a decision which we strongly disagreed with.

And I remember that night turning over to my wife and saying I was glad I wasn't a parent because it was so hard to just let your kid making a decision you don't want them to make and I felt I wanted

to force them.

You know, you love them. But we waited until they went through the pain and we love them. Gave them wisdom and chose not to follow.

And I know many of you are there with some of your kids. Last week, Pastor Crente talked about how powerful it is to lay our burdens on Christ.

[ 41 : 49 ] There's over 30 verses in Scripture that talk about them. Psalm 55, 22. Cast your burdens on the Lord and he will sustain you. He'll never permit the righteous to be moved.

Matthew 11, 28, 30. Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden for I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and lowly in heart. You will find rest for your souls.

1 Peter 5, 7. Casting all your anxieties on him because he cares for you. Psalm 37, 5. Commit your ways to the Lord. Trust in him and he will act. Philipians 4, 6.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ.

Proverbs 16, 3. Commit your work to the Lord and your plans will be established. And to make my point very clear when I was talking about my family, it was me, the person who wanted to control.

[ 42 : 59 ] And I wondered if God had taken away my ability to have kids because I would have wanted to control every step that they did. See, in the midst of our longing to make things right in our families, I think we need to look to the Lord.

We need to say, Lord, I know that you love me. Lord, I know who I am because of you. I know I cannot do it under my own power. And Lord, I need you.

Do you guys ever have those prayers where you have to pray to remind yourself who you are and who God is? Lord, my burdens belong to you. You said I can give them to you.

And the promise that I carry is, you know who loves our children more than us? God. God gave his only son up for me, for you, and for our children.

Fact is, your children aren't yours. They're God's children who you've been given the responsibility to steward. I think if you understand those things, that God's got these things, you will sleep a lot better knowing that there's no control or amount of control that you can do.

[ 44 : 24 ] So, I'm going to conclude this sermon with two ways you can go about making sure things are right in your family. The first way that you can make sure things are right in your family is, do you know Jesus Christ himself as your Lord and Savior?

If you do not know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, he's not going to be, it doesn't matter how much you plea for him or biblical philosophy you add to your family. me, it's not going to matter.

I'm going to share shortly how does that happen. How do I, how does Jesus Christ become the center of my life? First, it's to accept that you are indeed a sinner. It means that you have broken God's laws, that you are outside of God's glory, that you have chosen to serve your own way than God's own way.

If you do not accept that, that you need God, God's not going to be at the center because you think you should be sitting at that center. So it begins with accepting that you are a sinner.

B, it's accepting that Jesus died for you. It's believing that Jesus died for you.

[ 45 : 41 ] Romans 3.23 tells us quite clearly that we have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And because of that, we cannot enter his presence. But God sent his son to die on our place.

And it's to believe that that is my sin upon which he died for. And three, briefly, see is confess to the Lord that he is Lord.

Romans 10.9, confess the Lord with your mouth, your heart, and your lips. And I'm losing my Bible verse here. Confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and you will be saved. So it's an acknowledgement that I'm a sinner.

B, I need salvation. And C, confess that salvation is through Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone.

That's the first way. You know what the second way is? And a lot of people I know, a lot of Christians don't really go there, is do you accept or do you ask Jesus to come and be the center of your family?

Do you ask him, or are you that kind of person, you know, you got a nice house, you know, God's kind of got that porch done and he's kind of got that nice living room and kitchen, but heaven forbid you let anybody in that garage of yours, right?

[ 46 : 52 ] Or upstairs in the bedroom where it's a real mess. No, no, no. It's asking God to be in every single part of your home. It's easy for us to compartmentalize where Jesus Christ has a say and he doesn't have a say.

But when Jesus Christ is Lord, we're asking him to take control and change everything. That's humbling. But that's what he demands.

The question is, are you a follower of Jesus or are you a follower of yourself? Let me pray. Dear Lord, holy, heavenly father, thank you for giving me a voice that could continue through this sermon.

I pray that my words were clear and that they echoed the sentiments of your word and the instructions that you have, that you gave your saints thousands of years ago who sang this song to be under you, oh father.

That unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil, for he gives to his beloved sheep.

[ 48 : 05 ] Father, if there is any here who are not your sheep, I pray that they would come to the knowledge that they need to be your sheep. When the shepherd calls, they hear your voice.

That they want to know more about you. They want to know more about the truth of Christianity. That they will make their understanding known perhaps to their friend or their spouse or maybe a brother or sister who asked them to come to church this day.

May those who are here who invited your friends, may you take the time to share your testimony with them.

May you share with them how you were living for your glory and now why you now live for God's glory. Why?

What was that event? Where was that brokenness? It's okay to be vulnerable. Father, I pray for those families that desire to live righteously before you.

[ 49 : 14 ] It's struggle to give up the garage or the backyard to you. I pray that you'd be kind and graceful with them but at the same time I pray that they would be bold and ask you in.

I pray that they would not lean on their own self, righteousness of sanctification but on your righteousness. We thank you for your words of wisdom that you continue to dispense upon us this weekend.

In your most holy and precious name. Amen.