

SUNDAY CLASS: Parenting 1 – Overview

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[0 : 00] All right, so I've titled this Parenting 101, Welcome to the Family. Parenting 101, so the way to work, these, I don't know, it's all kind of 101 stuff, you know, but next week we'll do zero to six, so kind of 101 continued, and I'll talk more about that in a little bit, and then six to 11 after that, and then the final week of March we'll do kind of 12 to 18, so the Parenting the Teen Years.

So welcome to the family, thanks for being here, thanks for making through the spring forward, my least favorite Sunday in some respects, or at least the way it starts. All right, in the 20th century, a German theologian named Carl Zuckmayer wrote a letter to his friend Carl Barth.

Does anybody know who Carl Barth is? Carl Barth. Carl Barth was actually a tremendous theologian, did head off some liberalism in the church, but unfortunately he was a little too infected with his own liberalism, so he's concerning in a lot of ways, but just a massively important theologian in a lot of ways.

And so his buddy, another German theologian, wrote him, and he said, if one, after visiting America, he said, if one has lived in America and seen in countless cases what injustice has done to children, one has enough of it.

One sees too much that someone, hidden behind misunderstood psychoanalytic maxims, allows them to become little tyrants and ill-humored despots.

[1 : 46] Despot whom adults crawl in front of for pure convenience, only to get peace. And one sees how this effect in the unfortunate adolescents, when they, brought up without authority, are confronted with the difficulties of life.

You know, if Zuckmai wrote this about parents and children in the early 20th century, imagine what he would write now. These little tyrants, these ill-humored despots.

You know, it's no exaggeration to say that the family is in the midst of a crisis. Today's culture is awash in therapy.

We live in what people call a therapeutic moment, a therapeutic world. And what that just means is that we're all trained to discover who we are by looking inward to how we feel.

And so we live and relate and think about ourselves in very, very different ways than people a hundred years ago. And we're all, we're all infected, so to speak.

[2 : 51] So much of education and entertainment is tuned to this key. From the earliest age, children are trained to think constantly about the way they feel. You know, I was reading one book that's not by a Christian.

I think it's by a Jew or something like that saying, you should never ask your kid, do you feel happy today? Because the point is, they will never say yes.

Just like it's pretty hard for you to say that. You know, there's always something about which we don't feel happy. And so what happens when you're just trained to think about the way you feel, it leads to what we see in our culture, psychological labels to describe who they are or what has happened to them, and medical and medical procedures to change how they feel.

And so if all of their life is tuned to how they feel, then it's not surprising that they want to make drastic changes to their life when they don't feel the way they want to feel.

Does that make sense? So today's Cultures of Washington Therapy, today's influencers are seeking to dismantle the nuclear family. The family is the building block of society.

[4 : 01] There's no person who comes into the world without a mother or father, regardless of their political ideology, and regardless of whether their parents were harmful or helpful.

And yet today's power brokers are seeking to do away with heteronormativity. This idea that the male and female in the home, as the authoritarians or the people in authority, is a normative structure that's done great harm.

It's a power structure that suppresses people. And so there's kind of this pushback. And so we see the pushback to this heteronormative, and I'm not going to hang out in this area for long, but heteronormative narrative.

And so we need to embrace homosexuality, transgenderism, all these things. I'm not wanting to handle all those things individually, but do want you to be astute to the fact that everywhere you turn, what the family is being attacked in that respect.

Today's parents have rejected the ways of their parents, abandoning law and order. If I could put it in a humorous way, the rod and the wooden spoon, for more gentle, non-judgmental parenting.

[5 : 16] View those types of parenting as just authoritarian parenting. We're into more accepting, helpful parenting. The results are not good. Children are afraid to leave the house, afraid to fail, unable to launch.

It's a massive category right now for counselors and those training adolescents. What is this failure to launch? These kids raised up in homes that had access to all the training and things they needed to do, and yet do not know how to get out of the home.

Author Abigail Schreier details the problem in her engaging book, *Bad Therapy*. If you want a book to listen to at the gym or something, this is fascinating.

Why the kids aren't growing up. She includes fascinating chapters like *Full of Envy and Mean as Hell*. *Spare the Rod, Drug the Child*. You know, it's just like...

And it's a bit of a toxic shock, you know? I mean, it's a little bit of a... But the point is, it's helping you to see the way so much of what we've talked about in parenting has been drastically changed.

[6 : 25] And in many ways, we have told parents, like, you are... You are not the expert on your kid. You need experts in your life, which is just not true biblically.

So if there was injustice done to children in the early 20th century by sparing the rod, there's a travesty of injustice done to children today, both in the womb and outside the room.

What do we do? What do we need to do? You know, Christian parents need to return to the Bible. God makes promises to work through His Word that He does not make to worldly wisdom or therapy or psychology or life hack or wives' tales.

You know, the Bible is sufficient for whatever we face in every age. 2 Timothy 3, which we have there for you, That's a statement about inspiration.

It's breathed out by God. It's exhaled by God. So what it's saying is the Bible is not man's summary of what God has said, but the very words of God.

[7 : 37] It's inspired by God. And yet the implication of that divine inspiration is sufficiency. Now the Bible does not contain all that our children need to know.

You need to know your math problems. You do have that calculator in your pocket that your teacher never said you would have, you know. But you need to know math problems.

You need to know some of history or you'll begin to repeat it. You need to know some of these things. But the Bible does contain everything you must know to know and glorify God and glorify our Lord Jesus Christ.

So in this first class, I want us to be captured by God's vision of the family. So this is kind of the intro. And then the next couple of weeks will be a little bit more application. So Proverbs 14, 26, In the fear of the Lord, one has strong confidence and his children will have a refuge.

The fear of the Lord, one has strong confidence and his children will have a refuge. There are few things we want more than that, than our children to have a refuge. So in a word, where we're going in this outline is devote yourself to building a godly family this world can never take away.

[8 : 48] Devote yourself to building a godly family this world can never take away. Firstly, the family is where godliness is first seen. So what is the family biblically? You know, the family is up for discussion in our culture.

But a family, biblically, is meant to be one man, one woman who are faithful to one another and committed to raising godly children in the Lord. We see the family, origins of the family, Genesis 2, when God built man and woman.

And believe it or not, the main reason he called them together was not to live happily ever after. or to complete one another or something like that or to have a partner, which is kind of my least favorite wife name, you know, and you may be into that, that's fine.

But, you know, but to have someone who helps you fulfill the mission of filling the earth with the glory of God. And so what man without woman is barren.

Man with woman is fruitfulness. Man with woman is fruitfulness. With children and forming arrows to shoot out into the world. And so, obviously, in the fallen world, families do not always have one man and one woman for any number of reasons.

[10:00] They are still families, but have many more challenges than God designed. The family in the garden is not man's idea, it's God's idea. In the book of Proverbs, the whole Bible affirms this idea of one man and one woman being together.

Proverbs 31, One, an excellent wife who can find. She's far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband trusts her and he will have no lack of gain. The family is meant to be the place where godliness and the fear of the Lord is first seen.

We saw that in Proverbs 14, 26, but there's something about the fear of the Lord that spreads more powerfully to children by sight. Children learn about the fear of the Lord through their ears.

But the family is designed to be a place where children learn the fear of the Lord with their eyes.

You and I both know we learn far more by example and by watching.

One of the most important verses on parenting in Proverbs gets it right when it says, train up a child in the way he should go. Even when he is old, he will not depart from it. The Hebrew word for translated train up is related to another word that was used for rubbing the upper palate of a child's mouth with a mixture of dates to get the child to learn how to suck.

[11:24] It's the way you would get a child comfortable with taste and encourage them to eat. You know, we do the same thing when the baby starts eating solid food. You give them some rice cereal or something like that and they start spitting it out with their tongue, you know.

And so you're trying to get them used to food, other foods besides mother... You're trying to wean them off mother's milk, right? You're trying to train them up in that way. And so it's fascinating.

Other cultures were trained up to eat different things. Americans generally were trained to eat bland foods. But you go throughout the world and you have these little kids who are like four that are just putting these chilies in their mouths, you know.

I'm envious of them because I don't have those taste buds all the way. Well, the idea is you're training them up to taste the right things. To spit out the wrong things.

Do you see? And so this side of the cross, training up a child in things of the Lord, is training them to live totally for Jesus Christ in every area of their life. Training their taste buds to know that this life of following Christ is a truly good and satisfying life.

[12:31] And so to obey this command, you must be dedicated to the good life of living for Christ. The first principle of parenting must be your example.

I mean, it's obviously the way it's designed. Like a baby comes from, it comes from this one flesh relationship and then it lives out in these early days in the comfort confines and training of this one flesh relationship.

So it's so woven in to your example in every way. There's an old saying that children learn more by the eye than they do by the ear. And every educator knows that's true. We learn more by watching the lives of others than we do by hearing them speak.

We're wired to watch and to see what others do and to learn from them. And I love, I think it's so fascinating that the book of Proverbs doesn't come to us as kind of loose, disconnected sayings, but it comes to us in a relationship of a father with a son, with a mother within earshot.

It comes to us within the confines, within the institution of the family. And so, the first and most important principle of parenting is living your life for Christ.

[13:48] If you are real, it will cover a multitude of failures. But if you are a fake, no matter what you do that's right will be undercut immediately.

Your child won't taste something you don't taste. Your child won't love something you don't love.

Your child won't live for something you don't live for.

You will not fool your child. Charles Spurgeon used to say, children and animals are good judges of character. You know, animals flee away. And so, children are too. You wonder why they gravitate to certain people.

Why you don't have to tell them to like that person. They know who to trust. And so, they're sniffing you out. Your parents are sniffing you out.

I remember talking to a friend of mine who grew up in a Christian home. His mother and father go to church. They're pro-life, pro-family, pro-country probably.

[14 : 48] But he always wondered whether they're Christian. He really meant much to them. And it came to a head when he was in college. Close friend of mine. He had a college girlfriend. He got her pregnant.

He told his parents and they encouraged him to get an abortion. And he called me just devastated. He was not serving the Lord, but he knew I was and was just devastated.

It really, I mean, to this day, he's not serving the Lord. So I think, really, it tempted him deeply because it just threw in his face that all this was just a charade.

Or at least that's what it appeared, you know. Not saying he couldn't sin in that way, but his children, his girlfriend miscarried, but he never recovered from seeing through his parents' faith. You know, Archbishop Tillotson said, to give children good instruction and a bad example, is but beckoning to them with the head to show them the way to heaven, while we take them by the hand and lead them in the way to hell.

[15 : 56] It couldn't be more sobering. So what is, what are our children seeing? You know, what are they learning about dependence on God and our habits of prayer?

What are they learning about marriage and the way we relate to our spouse? This principle is searching, but actually this principle is so releasing as well.

Children are not after a show. They're not after a performance. Fathers and mothers who perform lose their children's respect. I remember one night, I think I've told this story before, but I remember one night just being royally drunk, if that's an adverb, and was woke up when we, I was woke up, I was in the car and I was waked up, I guess, when we pulled into the driveway, still trying to wake up, we sprung forward.

I was waked up when we pulled into the driveway to go in, you know, just, so we were not in a good disposition. and I remember walking into the house and my dad walking towards me like he would any other night just to greet me and his face getting, you know, sadder and sadder and then angrier and angrier as he saw me and he greeted me with something normal like, you know, how was the night or whatever.

And he saw that I was drunk, really drunk, and began kicking this chair in our kitchen and just, and I just like walked by it with a snicker and a sneer and walked up to my bedroom and laid down and more fell down basically but the next morning before dad went to work at whatever, 7 a.m., he came in my room and I was not even fully ready for bed undressed, you know, so that just kind of fell in there and he apologized to me for getting angry.

[18 : 16] Now, he was, he did say we have some stuff to talk about when I get home from work but he apologized! And, you know, yeah, if he was doing reverse psychology, that was actually a really good move but I know he wasn't.

He did that a lot and nothing makes me feel, made me feel lower than the snake's belly and then here 30 years later, 28 years later, I'm still talking about it because he showed me that he's going to own his own sin regardless of what I do and that is powerful.

It's huge religion. So, it's searching to think our children are watching our example more than they're listening to our lips, listening to our words. But it's also freeing because if you've been born again, you don't have to fake it.

You know what I mean? I mean, it doesn't mean you don't put forward effort in the Christian life but they want to see you not perform. you know? And so, that's where conflict can be one of the biggest gifts to your kids.

So, don't avoid it, you know, or don't fake it. So, any, I'm rambling now. so, families where godliness is first seen, families where godly wisdom is first taught.

[19 : 33] Fathers and mothers, teach your children the wisdom and the fear of the Lord. You know, first you have a baby and it's all fun and game but parenting gets overwhelming quick.

You got into parenting because you loved your wife, you know, you loved your husband. You didn't get into it to be a family, man. What in the world? How did this happen, you know? And so, parenting, I think in that process can become so distracted by other things.

You know, the simplicity of parenting can be distracted by what do our kids need to be well-rounded? What do they need to be properly athletic? Which you don't find very much in the Bible.

You find, you know, bodily training is of some value. So you need enough athletics to be helpful for the kingdom. You need social skills, but all these things.

And then we talk about diet and sugar and, you know, gluten and all sorts of things, you know. And so it can be distracted, but at its core, parenting is to teach your children the way of the Lord.

[20 : 35] Psalm, or Proverbs 1.8, Hear, my son, your father's instruction. Forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck. So the idea is you are a teacher.

That's what you're called to do. You know, right now when my kids get in my car, it's music appreciation, because I don't want that nasty, or there's just a terrible music that's being played everywhere going into my ears over there.

So I'm trying to train the palate for something good, and it's not Taylor Swift, you know, there's other things out there, you know, but the idea is instruction is what you do.

What do I do? I'm a teacher. I'm explaining life all day long to my kids. Yes, they might get sick of my voice, but this is the way it's done.

You know, parents, you're the primary disciples of your kids. You have a calling that no one else has in relation to your kids. You're called to train them, to teach them, to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

[21 : 39] The Puritans used to say that every father is the pastor of his household, and I think that's right. You're the pastor. You're the one who's called to train them in a unique way, not without relationships within the local church and the authority of the local church, but it's meant to be your calling, and so this is a wonderful thing.

Embrace your calling. You know, there's a funny cartoon of a mother in a crime scene as her son is arrested and handcuffed, and the mother's crying, oh, son, oh, son, where did your youth pastor go wrong?

Yeah, it'd be nice if we could blame it all on Taylor, you know, and blame it on our youth pastor, but it's not true. It's our responsibility. Several years ago, we watched Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory at the Movie Palace, and I didn't like the movie very much when I first saw it, but it was striking.

I was struck by how terrible the kids were. The kids were terrible, disobedient, disrespectful, disorderly. The movie did not applaud them like Disney did and talk about their feelings on the inside that are coming out or something like that.

They were whisked away from the factory and lost the prize when they disobeyed, separated from their parents. Then the movie took it a step further when the Oompa Loompas got up and they said, Oompa Loompa, I have a puzzle for you.

[23 : 03] If you are wise, you'll listen to me. Who do you blame when your kid is a brat, pampered and spoiled like a Siamese cat, blaming the children is a lie and a shame.

You know exactly who's to blame, the mother and the father. Wow. Willy Wonka, the Oompa Loompas, taking us to task.

So this is your calling. Devote yourself to the task of parenting. Proverbs 27, 23, Know well the condition of your flock. Give attention to your herds.

Devoting yourself to parenting will cost you, but you won't regret it. You'll learn and you'll win your child's heart. You know, you're trying to find ways to make it very clear that this calling is something, you know, besides your relationship with your wife, this calling is one that is above everything else. You got to make that clear to your kids. You know, my dad was very busy and one of the things, you know, he started his own practice and one of the things when I was in high school, probably around those days when I was drunk like that, we found that we both love basketball.

[24 : 20] We're going to a basketball game this week. We both love basketball and there was not much we loved together, you know, not much. Yeah, my relationship with my dad was tough, my relationship with my mom was worse.

And, you know, he bought, I guess, home season tickets to Wake Forest basketball, which is about 75 miles from our house. And so we went to just every game or something, those home games, junior and senior year.

So for my dad, those 9 o'clock games meant we got home like at 1 and he got up at 5 to go to work. Now, I love my sleep, but it just affected me years later thinking about it.

All of that, he didn't care about the basketball, really, though he didn't get animated sometimes in the stands, but he wanted to do something.

He wanted to just be around me where we weren't in fisticuffs, you know, fighting every time. And it was just powerful to think back how much time. It's a busy calendar, it clears the calendar, it says nothing's more important to me than you.

[25 : 32] And then money, you know, money, you're going to spend money on so many things. Spend it here, such a gift. So carve out time.

Thirdly, the family is where obedience is first required. Family is where, so there's quotes that I'm not reading because I'm a little worried about time, so you can check those out later.

Family is where obedience is first required. The family is where authority is first learned. As children created by God and in His image, children enter a world in which they are not the center.

Gosh, it's so important to get this, that the world is God's world and is governed by His authority.

And so you want your child to learn the authority structures of the world and the way they learn them is learning them first in your home.

Like how are they going to learn not to flip off the police officer one day or to be disrespectful to a teacher or to disregard an employer's requirement or command?

[26 : 37] They're going to learn it in the home. The home is meant to be a miniature world. How do these kids not just get weaned off their mother's lips, mother's milk, but weaned off of this authority to understand the authority of this world?

Most importantly, how are they going to relate to God in a proper way as an authority? Now, wonderfully, God is our Father, but God is also, He set His throne in the heavens, His kingdom rules over all.

You know, who's going to question the Lord? And so, the family is where authority is first learned. It's so right that our children should find unconditional love in our parents and unchangeable acceptance in our parents, but they should also find unquestioned authority.

And I feel like parents are just afraid to take a position of authority, you know? It's like we've all been, you know, we've read about, you know, all these people that abuse authority.

The vast majority of parents, in my opinion, are afraid to take authority. Authority is not a four-letter word. It's a gift from God. This is God's world, and it's so vital.

[27 : 49] And so, God puts you in a position of authority, not because of your education, intelligence, or performance. And that's a relief to us, but it's also important for you to understand that.

God puts you in that position. You know, sometimes your child may be smarter than you. Now, it is important. Most children are average. That's why there's average.

I love it. One, Randy Stinson, used to always say that, and I think that's very true. Everybody wants to talk about how their kids are above average. Well, maybe, but they're probably average, you know? Thanks, but no thanks.

They're average because everybody is, you know? You know, but you may, your children, you know, you hope they're smarter than you in some respects.

You hope they don't repeat your mistakes, right? And yet, you shouldn't be afraid to address them in the ways they need to be addressed, especially when they're young. And so, if children are going to learn to respect and honor their parents, well, in learning that, they're going to learn to respect and honor the authority of God and the authorities of the world.

[28 : 55] You know, I always used to find this striking that several times in the New Testament, when Paul is talking about how crazy the world is, he includes disobedient to parents. I wonder if we get that on the list, you know, we're talking about what's going on in our culture, or we're talking about homosexuality, or we're talking about, you know, all these sins out here.

I wonder if disobedience to mom and dad is on that list. Well, it's a concern of God's. I wonder if it's one for us. Any rambling and ranting. The family is where authority is learned and where obedience is first required.

It's not enough for parents to teach their children godly wisdom. Parents are also called to have their children obey them. Obedience should be without delay, without discussion, and without disgust.

Now, some people say that's too high a bar for obedience. Well, I disagree. That's the biblical definition of obedience.

Paul gives that obedience even in a structure like slaves and masters. And so we should be warned. You know, if we use our authority and command obedience just to scratch our back and

feel better or even worse to serve us in our sin, then, you know, Paul would say what he says to the slave masters in Ephesians 6, know that you have a master in heaven.

[30 : 28] So be careful how you turn this. But the idea is obedience is meant to be full and total. So teach our kids that it's okay to be disgusted in their obedience to us.

It's to teach them something about obedience that's not true biblically. We're commanded to serve the Lord with gladness. And so obviously, you know, it doesn't mean every obedience is going to be perfect hearted, you know what I mean?

But the idea is you're shooting the arrow at full obedience, right? And you're trying to train them towards that. And so in the early years, you know, freedom is going to be limited, obedience required, with clear directions, regular reinforcement.

As they get older, more responsibility and freedom is given. When necessary, you pull back and do the training you needed. But we'll handle that in the next couple weeks. And then you discipline.

So you require obedience, you discipline for disobedience. So disobedience and disrespect are always big ones in our home. Or they still are. You know, the book of Proverbs clearly commands the use of discipline.

[31 : 40] Follies bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from them. Do not withhold. Look at Proverbs 23, 13, and 14.

I love this one. Do not withhold discipline from a child. If you strike him with the rod, he will not die. He's going to be all right. If you strike him with the rod, you'll save his soul from shield.

You know, now sometimes when I got older, my mom would strike me with the rod and I would just laugh at her. So, yeah, you can just imagine how my dad wanted to punch me in the face. I deserved it, but I never did get it.

So, fourthly, the family is where life is deeply and often unalterably shaped. The family shapes our lives deeply. In the South, we're pro-life, pro-family, pro-family values, three principles, God, country, family, but that doesn't mean we always do family right.

The family is meant to be a place where children find the path that will walk on the rest of their life, a path of safety and security in a world of division. Sometimes they don't. Sometimes there's no one to teach them.

[32 : 51] Many homes are missing dad and mom, or both. Sometimes they're both there, but they may as well not be there, because dad doesn't have time, or mom doesn't give herself to it.

Until other times they're there, but pull their children away from walking in the wisdom. And, you know, what's the Bible say? It would be better if your millstone was strung around your neck and you were cast into the sea, than to mislead a child.

It's a serious matter. You know, it may be the case with you. You know, it may be a mother who never found in you what she wanted to find. It may be a father who never had time to throw the ball. It may be a brother who humiliated you when friends were around and acted like things were normal when they weren't. It may be a mother and father who was always on your case. It may just be a family where loyalty to the family and family gatherings were more important than loyalty to something else.

So, family is this vital structure and yet because of sin, family is marred and mangled. You know, and I think one of the things that's so vital for us is understanding who we are and getting a right relationship with the Lord.

[34 : 05] I think in many ways, understand the fatherhood of God is the beginning of good fatherhood and the home. But also, wonderfully, in the New Testament, the Bible calls the church a family.

Isn't that fascinating? So, this wonderful structure, before any other institutions were in play, the institution of marriage and the institution of the family, before any other institution is at the beginning of our Bible.

but the New Testament, it pushes and expands that institution when it says the church is a family. The church is a household.

You have new brothers and sisters. The idea is the family is a temporary institution. As much as you love mom and dad, Lord willing, they will be brother and sister in the new heavens and the new earth.

So, don't miss the forest for the trees. In many ways, it's a tremendous gift. The church is a place where you find people to do what your family may never have done.

[35 : 11] The church is a place filled with spiritual fathers and mothers. You know, one of the things I try to regularly tell my kids is that there are, you know, I hope there's a few things when you move out of my house that you think, ah, dad got it there.

Yeah, I know there's going to be plenty of things where you think, dad blew it there. And when you think those things right now, just know there's plenty of people in this church you can go talk to about the way I'm blowing up.

And you can get counts. I'm not afraid. I want you to be, I want you to have other fathers. You know, I'm not threatened by that. I consider it a gift from God.

You know, and so, my other dad's influence in my kids' life is a gift. gift. And they're going to, you know, they're going to embody godliness in a different way that my kid needs.

You know? And so, all that said, so, finally, family can leave a legacy for good that endures long after we're gone. I love that Proverbs, in the fear of the Lord, one has strong confidence in his children will have a refuge.

[36 : 19] Is there anything we want more than that? Don't we want our kids to have strong confidence, you know? Don't we want our kids to have a refuge? You know, have that.

Our children don't, you know, we don't need to have a good job or a good background or good education. We don't need to be well thought of in all the ways we'd like to in the community. We don't need to have a bunch of online followers or something like that. We need the fear of the Lord. That's where they'll find good refuge. They find refuge in our faith.

You know, Proverbs 17, 6, grandchildren are the crown of the age. The glory of their children is their fathers. Unlike our culture that discards older people and moves them into the margins of the society, has little homes for them to be in where we can hire nurses to train them, you know?

That's not the vision of the family. Grandchildren, our grandfathers, and grandchildren is meant to be this wonderful relationship. They're the crown.

[37 : 26] What does that mean? They're the pride of the children. Now, pride in a good sense.

They're the glory, the boast of their children. Fathers who fear the Lord, mothers who fear the Lord, give their children something to be excited about, something to be proud about.

It's so unlike what our culture says. It says you've got to have these things that give your son something to be proud of. You've got to have this house, you've got to have this car, you've got to have this job, or whatever.

That's not what the Bible says. What's going to make our kids happy? Dad was legit. He loved the Lord. You know, that's what makes them proud.

I'm proud to be in Alexander because of my dad. I want your kids to be proud. You know, the memory of the righteous is a blessing, but the name of the wicked will rot.

You know, it just pushes us to think one day, very soon, your children will be gathered around a meal after your memorial service. What will they say? You know, will they drive into town on the day of the funeral, drive out afterwards, pass around the lima beans and try not to make eye contact?

[38 : 40] Or will there be a smile on their face, pride in their heart? Man, I want to talk about dad. I want to talk about mom. Will the stories flow when you remember how dad took you on a date after that loser dumped you?

Or how mom used to get up way before the rest of us to cook and greet us with a hug? Will they remember how you worked long and hard at the office and fell asleep trying to share our hearts, you know?

What will they say? Your life will leave a legacy. I hate that word. It kind of drives me nuts. You know? Because in many ways, we don't get to shape it in the ways we think we do.

But the memory of the righteous is a tremendous blessing. It endures. You know? That's what you want your kids to take to the next generation.

So your children are the next leaders of this church, next leaders in this community. You're shaping generations right now. And so, welcome to the family.

[39 : 52] This is what God's called you to do. It's what he's called us to do. What a tremendous honor. I think about our culture with so much, you know, in case you don't know, people are getting married.

There's more adults not married than are married right now. just take that in. More adults in our culture not married than are married right now. It's just, you know, families in crisis, marriages in crisis.

And so, if you're married, if you have children, married with children, think about Al Bundy. Maybe don't think about Al Bundy. But, you know, if you're married with children, what a tremendous honor. What a tremendous privilege. You know, obviously, there's some people that just ripped apart their marriages, but a lot of these people that aren't married want to be married. They're confused. This culture said all these other things are more important and they're 35 and they're dislocated from family and relationships.

They don't know how to get married. Don't know how to find somebody that they can trust and walk with. So, it's such an honor. Run at it with all your heart.

[41 : 02] It's your calling. May God help us. Father in heaven, thank you for just a few minutes to think about this and the wonderful privilege of being married and having children.

Lord, would you come and shape these families? Lord, I pray just so much distraction and confusion in our culture. Lord, we want the heartbeat of our families to be the fear of the Lord and training them up and encouraging our children.

Lord, thank you for the privileged positions you've given us. Lord, help us as we work under you, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.