

How Satan Destroys a Church - Part 2 (How Satan Destroys by Dividing)

by Don Courville

The enemy's goal is to divide us from God, and we must submit to God's authority and prioritize the centrality of Christ in our lives, homes, and churches.

Duration: 55:05

Scripture: Genesis 3:8, Judges 7:19, Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:37, 1 Corinthians 15:55, Ephesians 5:21, 1 Peter 1:7

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of unity and agreement in relationships. He uses the analogy of a car engine to illustrate the need to address any issues or disagreements immediately, as they can lead to bigger problems down the road. The preacher also discusses the concept of rebellion, stating that any disobedience or non-submission is considered rebellion against God. He then delves into how Satan tries to destroy the church by dividing believers, using the example of the enemy's tactics in the Genesis account. The sermon concludes with a prayer expressing gratitude for God's love and the hope that comes from experiencing trials and hardships.

Transcript

Going along with something that was just said, there's a March 8th reading of Morning and Evening by Spurgeon that is so good on looking at both sides of the picture. And he goes down through here, To every matter there is a bright as well as a dark side. Rachel was overwhelmed with the sorrow of her own travail and death.

Jacob, though weeping the mother's loss, could see the mercy of the child's birth. It is well for us if while the flesh mourns over trials, our faith triumphs in divine faithfulness. Samson's lion yielded honey, and so will our adversities.

If rightly considered, the stormy sea feeds multitudes with its fishes. The wild wood blooms with beautiful flowers. The stormy wind sweeps away the pestilence.

And the biting frost loosens the soil. Dark clouds distil bright drops, and black earth grows gay flowers. A vein of good is to be found in every mine of evil.

Sad hearts have peculiar skill in discovering the most disadvantageous point of view from which to gaze upon a trial. If there were only one sloth in the world, they would soon be up to their necks in it. And if there were only one lion in the desert, they would hear it roar.

About us all, there is a tinge of this wretched folly. And we are apt at times, like Jacob, to cry, all these things are against me, and then this statement. Faith's way of walking is to cast all care upon the Lord, and then to anticipate good results from the worst calamities.

This is really a good one. Like Gideon's men, she does not fret over the broken picture, but rejoices that the lamp blazes forth the more. Out of the rough oyster shell of difficulty, she extracts the rare pearl of honor.

And from the deep ocean cares of distress, she uplifts the priceless coral of experience. When her flood of prosperity ebbs, she finds treasures hid in the sands. And when her sun of delight goes down, she turns her telescope of hope to the starry promises of heaven.

When death itself appears, faith points to the light of resurrection beyond the grave, thus making our dying Benoit and I to be our living Benjamin. Let's pray. Father, we thank You that we have a God like Thyself, one that loves us, that cares for us.

And now, Father, we thank You through our trials and our calamities and our distresses and all of the hard things that You allow us to go through, that we have hope and that the experience that we get gives us hope that God is working. And if we get enough experience behind us in some years, we begin to see some of those things that You have worked together for good. And it encourages us the more.

Now, I ask Your blessing on this message as we continue on in our series of how the enemy tries to destroy Christ. And we thank You that You will encourage us in the Word now, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Okay, this will be our second in our series of how Satan destroys the church. Actually, the whole thing is Satan trying to destroy Christ. And we just happen to get in the way.

And if you will become like Christ, you will become a target. Last week, I took off with some introduction and some things that introduced us to this. And I'm not going to go into that because of time, but I did make this statement that the basis of the home is marriage and the basis of marriage is a lifelong relationship.

And this key thing, that the basis of a lifelong relationship is agreement. And I explained that to you from Matthew 18 and 19. Agree is the word where we get our word for symphony.

It means to sound together, to make beautiful music. Now, we're going to continue on today. And if you want to listen to the other, you'll have to get the tape.

But I want to keep moving because I actually have quite a bit to do today. And I'm not sure I'll get through with this. But we're going to continue on how Satan destroys by dividing.

And again, I'll just pick up right here. I'd love to go back over some of that other stuff I shared last week, but I just can't because of time. But we see our basis of operating in this study was to go back to the Genesis account of how the enemy penetrated the first home and how he destroyed that and how he brought in the destruction.

And I'm laying this out because a lot of this is going to be simple, basic stuff. But these messages may go out all over the world anymore. You don't know what's going to happen, especially if something gets out onto some major website or something like that.

And so we're operating out of Genesis chapter three and also Ephesians chapter five to lay the foundation of how Satan destroys the church. Very basic thing is if you can destroy the family and that family is in the church, you can work from that advantage point to destroy the church. And so we're going to learn some key things.

Now, last week we learned the lesson of how important it was for the wife to be in submission to her husband. And some of these things will overlap again as we go through it today. I'm going to work from this verse today, Genesis chapter three and verse eight.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. Let's pray again. Now, Father, we ask that again Thy Spirit would open up to us.

Lord, that we could hear. We can't pray enough because we cannot fellowship with You enough. But we do ask that our eyes would be open to these truths as so much damage has come unto Thy church and our lives have all been affected by the damage of the enemy.

But we thank You that we are more than conquerors through Christ who loves us. We thank You that You give us the victory. We thank You that we overcome by the power of the blood of the Lamb.

And now we ask that the Holy Spirit would open up our hearts and our minds, our spirits to hear what You have to say to us in Jesus' name. Amen. The thing I wanted you to notice in this verse was that they had been accustomed to fellowshiping with God.

Fellowshipping, if you may put it like this, with Christ. He would come. It looks like He would come in the cool of the day, maybe in the evening.

The day's over and they've been working. And then He would come and they would fellowship. Who knows, maybe they would have a meal together with God, fellowshiping.

And it was just a wonderful time. We do not know how long it went. But there was a day when the serpent slithered up and deceived Eve.

And we looked at all of that last week. Some very important stuff, but we can't go back into it. But how she was beguiled by the serpent.

And she lost it all. And we're going to go into these things today. Now the thing we want to be moving into, and I'm going to say some things first, is how God wants the husband to love, the wife is to submit.

Now what the enemy wants to do in destroying us, he wants to divide us from God. Eve was taken out of fellowship with God just with one bite. She was into darkness.

She had been in light, and just like that, she was into darkness. And so he wants to divide us from God. And this is where the gospel comes in.

God is in the business of bringing us back. And all things are of God who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation. If God has brought me back to Himself through Christ, through the shed blood of Christ, then my duty is to continue on this ministry of reconciliation.

Many have the professing title of being a Christian, but have no burden in their heart to consider others that are lost. I'm saved. I'm in great shape.

That's too bad about you. I don't care about you. The question comes back then, are you really saved? Because the Scripture says, Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us.

We pray you in Christ's dead, be you reconciled to God. For He had made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Once man fell in the garden, God's plan has been to get us back into fellowship with Him.

So the enemy wants to divide us from God. And this is where the gospel comes. And remember we covered that sin in Romans 5.12, sin entered into the world through this move.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, the responsibility went on to Adam's shoulder. And death by sin, where did death come from? This is where it came from. And so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned.

What we do sometimes can have such devastating effects. We're going to see that today. Not only does He divide us from God, but He divides us from each other.

And we'll look at this later on. I've got several different topics that we'll go into. And as we go into, from time to time, I'm going to go down and share some deep spiritual truths.

And as we lay the foundations, then we'll come into deep spiritual truths once in a while. Things that we need to understand that are vital for our continuing to operate as a husband and wife, as a family, and as a church. Now He divides us from each other.

And He's got tools. These are some main tools. Gossip, slander, envy, jealousy, backbiting, whispering, rebellion, self-will.

Those are eight main things. But I want you to notice the first thing the enemy came in. When he's attacking Christ, he has slandered Christ.

He slandered God right there. And we went through the process, the tempting process of how he drew her into a conversation with Him. And God tells us to resist.

Don't carry on a conversation. Don't fellowship with the enemy. But he slandered God.

Now in Ephesians 5, our basic operating passage in the New Testament in 21, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. We're going to be focusing on this this morning.

There's these stories as I shared after all these years and picked up all these stories. And I'm going to use a lot of them that I've picked up around the country. All these different states and even some other

countries.

Just the tragedy goes on and on. But we can't solve everything out there, but we can try to guard our own tragedies. I know a man and he wept before me when he lost his family.

Where did he lose his family? He lost his family in church. You say, in church? Yeah, churches can be dangerous. A lot of war goes on in church.

A lot of things go on into the church. If Christ is not the head and the Holy Spirit is not operating, it can be a very interesting place. But how'd this go about? Well, it come about like this.

There come into this man's life some understanding that something was not right in this church. And so, in his understanding, he decided he was going to leave. But in this process, his wife and his children, especially his wife and his daughters, I think it was.

I don't know if there were any sons involved. But were convinced that they needed to stay in the church. And they were afraid to leave because of the things that would be said about them and if they left.

Well, the father said, no, we need to leave. Let's go. And they said, no, we will not.

What had happened was that it's the same old thing back to the garden. The wife was not in submission to her husband. She was in submission to the leadership of the church.

She moved at that point out from under her God-given biblical authority. The order is Christ, the husband, the wife. That's the authority structure.

And it's a sad thing. He goes to a church. The last time I met with him and talked to him, he would go to another church.

And his wife and daughters would go to the church. They were so full of fear. And so, there are real dangers.

Now, the church destroyed his home. But his wife destroyed their oneness of spirit by not staying. Now, this is the thing the enemy wants to do is divide.

Divide if he can do it in your home, if he can do it in the church, whatever. He's going to get it. The Bible says, can two walk together except they be agreed? That word has the idea of being assembled.

Being agreed. Amos 3.3. Can two walk together except they be agreed? And whatever stops our being agreed or whatever stops us from being one accord needs to be fixed immediately as soon as it can. Experience tells us that if you hear a knocking in your engine, if you don't stop and take care of it, you're going to maybe hear more than a knock.

One day you're going to hear an explosion. Boom! You're going to be going down the road and all of a sudden, you're just out there with your thumb sticking out. Why do we take care of other things more quickly, with more urgency, than we do our own homes and our own relationships with our families? So, it's just the same old story.

Now, here's a couple principles in this study. Any disobedience or non-submission is rebellion. That wife was in rebellion to God by being in rebellion to her husband.

She needed to trust Him and stick with Him. Now, maybe everybody doesn't agree with that, but listen to this statement by William Law. He said, it is rebellion against God to think that your will may ever differ from His.

And so, when God says, Why submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord? For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and He is the Savior of the body. Now, we're moving on in to take care of the husbands today, but we're building up our little background on this. So, the first test in the garden was, who's going to be the boss? And so, the test comes and Eve says, Satan, you're going to be the boss.

I'm going to choose to let you be the Lord of my life. And she moved away from letting her husband lead her, and letting God be the boss. And so, who's going to be the boss of your life? Who's going to be the boss? You know, self doesn't make a very good boss.

One of my teachers in school, he taught us this song. He taught our family, and we've sang it around different places. And I'm not going to sing it, so you don't need to get ready to leave.

But it's a Jonah song. Because Jonah decided one day he was going to be the boss. And the boss had told him.

God told him what he was going to do. I'm not going to do that. I don't like Ninevites.

They've done some horrible things. But God loved them. And He wanted them to be saved.

He wanted them to repent. And we get this little song. When God tells you what to do, you better do it.

You better do it. It doesn't pay to disobey. And it goes on.

I was almost tempted to sing there for a second. But it's not going to happen. Okay.

Satan can use anyone in the church who is in rebellion to authority to destroy the church. He works on that principle. These are basic principles.

You remember about... Here they are. With Samuel. Not Samuel.

Saul. The king. Where does he go in and trespass? Right into the temple.

Right into the worship site. He is going to make an offering. He's going to make a sacrifice.

He just wouldn't wait. And he took upon himself to do this. And when he was cornered about it... This is an amazing thing.

And Samuel said, "...that the Lord is great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as is obeying the Lord." God would rather have you, Saul, obey Him, than to get this sacrifice that goes against His Word. "...Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft." I looked up that word, sin.

And that word, sin, could be used sometimes. It's an offense. But it's the habit of it.

Saul, do you have the habit? Does the Saul that lives within you have the habit? Well, I don't know about your Saul. But my Saul, he's just made of everything evil and wicked and would just love to control me and

get me into the habit of sinning and stubbornness. That arrogance and that presumption that was there and iniquity.

That living in vanity. And iniquity has also the idea of planned deception. And what about idolatry? That covetousness.

You know, he was idolatrous. After he'd done this, and he got pinned down, and he said, I feared the people and obeyed their voice. And I pray thee, in verse 25, and I'm in 1 Samuel 15, 25.

Pray thee, pardon my sin and turn again with me that I may worship the Lord. And Samuel said to him, I'm not going to do it. He said, I will not return with thee, for thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord.

You know what Saul did? He had the audacity to keep pressing in on him. And Saul told him, the Lord has rejected thee from being king. In 27, Samuel turned about to go away.

He laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said unto him, the Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine that is better than thou. And in 29, here's what he gets.

Here's what Saul says. I have sins, yet honor me now. Did he deserve honor? No.

But Saul went ahead and honored him. He was covetous of that honor and that prestige. What good did it do him? He should have been on his face, weeping before God and confessing before the people.

But that old rebel that lived in... You can tell when rebellion is there, because rebellion doesn't repent. It keeps on going and it keeps on destroying. Then what did he do? He took off after David.

And he was told that David was going to be the king. This rebel of not submitting. Now, let's go into this.

Satan destroys the home through the non-submissiveness of the wife and through the husband not loving his wife. I'm going to share some general principles. I'm going to share some general spiritual principles.

And then at the end, if we make it there, I'm going to share some general practical principles on a husband loving a wife. Now, Satan can destroy the headship, the centrality of Christ. Remember, we're to be focused on Christ.

The whole authority structure of God is talking about centrality of Christ, the preeminence of Christ in my heart, in my home, in my relationship with my wife, with Christ being the central authority in the church through the leadership of the Holy Spirit. If Satan can destroy any part of it, he can get in and destroy the church. So, if he can destroy the headship of the father, the husband in the Christian home, he can weaken and destroy the churches.

And the next session we're going to this, we're going to leadership. How Satan destroys churches through leadership. And actually, the leadership of this man, I believe, was out of order to allow the church to destroy his home.

I don't think that was right. Some people might disagree with me. But the church, which is the bride of Christ, if removed from these two things, if the church, which is the bride of Christ, is removed from the practicality of the working of the Holy Spirit in the church, in the home, and if Satan can remove the practicality of the working of the Spirit of God by also removing the purity, he can destroy us.

Remove the practical headship of Christ, and if we can be seduced from our purity, he can destroy us. What is that purity? That purity is oneness of Spirit. It is agreement.

Agreement. We stay in agreement. Once we are not in agreement, the unity is lost, the enemy is in, and he will work.

You know, he is willing to wait for years before he cashes in on his investment. He's very patient sometimes. Wow, Genesis 3, 6. I don't believe she checked with Adam.

I don't know where Adam was. I think he's somewhere around. If not, then he didn't stop her.

But I would say, and my opinion would be, that she didn't check. The Bible says in 1 Timothy 2, 12, that a woman is not to usurp authority. That means to act on her own authority.

When she did, she acted on her own authority. She acted on her own authority. In Genesis 3, 12 and 16, when God came back and He told him what was going to happen, He's laying out their punishment and everything, He told Adam that this woman was going to have a desire, a reaching out towards Him, a yearning, a stretching out.

And He said, you need to rule. And the experience of this world is that women do want to stretch out and take over and rule. Look in our political system right now.

May God have mercy on us. But the woman in her heart desires for a man to lead her. She needs that.

And the man needs to help me. But this was in Genesis 3, 16, and you've all read that. I can read it to you again.

Some actually believe that this means that she's going to desire to rule Him. That's going to be the tendency. Well, here's a lesson on love, some lessons on love.

Let's look at these things. For the husband to love his wife, he has to, and these are going to be going into the spiritual. He has to be that husband.

The main solid foundational point is the husband has to remain in his position to love his wife. I've done a lot of flying, but not near as much as another father in our church who flies just every month. But I've done quite a bit of flying, enough to where I don't care to even do it that much anymore.

Got to where I didn't like their landings. Especially if you get with a Navy pilot. But suppose, and I'd like to, sometimes I'd talk to a pilot.

I'd come in, I'd see him standing there, I'd talk to him. Suppose I walked in one time, and this never did happen. But suppose I walk in and there's a pilot there.

I said, Hi, how you doing there? How are things going? Things ready to go? Are you the pilot? He said, Yep, I'm the pilot. And I hear another voice back behind him said, Wait, I'm the pilot. And that first pilot says, No, you're the co-pilot.

I'm the pilot. And so a little thing develops. They begin to argue.

No, I'm the pilot. And the other one says, No, I'm the pilot. And I'm standing there listening.

Who's going to fly this plane? They both turn to me and say, I am. Well, I tell you what, guys, you just go ahead and work it out. I'm going to go find me another plane.

A plane has to have one pilot. A woman has to have one head. A man has to have one head.

The woman's headship is under Christ, under her husband. If her husband crashes, she still is under Christ. Now, let's go to these principles on loving by the Father.

These are general principles on a husband loving his wife. Ephesians 5, 25, Even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her. There's the principle of the Word of God.

We're to love our wives as Christ. How did Christ do it? He gave His life. Greater love hath no man than this.

And a man laid down his life for his friends. That's the basic principle. And here's the thing now.

When Adam ate the fruit, did he love his wife? He said, Nobody's ever asked me that. Nobody may ever ask you that again. I'm going to take you into something you never thought about.

Because I never thought about it until I got into this. But when Adam ate, I can see he did at least four things. Along with maybe four million things that came along with it.

But he disobeyed God. Two, he did what Eve suggested. Same thing Abraham did, didn't he? Adam got us into a lot of trouble.

Adam and Eve got us in a lot of trouble. Abraham and Sarah got a whole war going that's continued. And God said in 317 of Genesis, Because thou hast hearkened, that word means to hear with attention or obedience, to obey and give heed to.

There's times when husbands better not obey their wives. There's times when we should. And they shouldn't be commanding us, but they would say, Honey, I don't think it would be very good to do that.

And we need to be listening and say, You know, I think maybe you're right. But if she's going to command, that might be something else. But third, he chose to sin and go with her rebellion.

This has been suggested. This is something that's been brought out. That he chose to go with her and her rebellion.

Here's the way I look at it. Now I don't know if this is true or not. But she was in darkness and all of a sudden that glory of God was gone on her and he saw that something happened.

Now you say, this is a little while. But I just wonder if he realized at that point that he lost his wife and that he chose to go with her. You say, I've never heard about anything like that.

I don't know. Adam saw what he had done and chose to die with her and for her rather than to lose her. And I just wonder if this isn't the principle of giving himself for her.

Adam knew what had happened. Now we can have some arguments on this theory. But the principle is that he chose to sin.

He knew when he took that bite that he was disobeying God. Eve was deceived. She was told, nothing bad is going to happen.

You're going to become like God. You're going to know good and evil. Adam was really in rebellion.

Now let's go on and see if we can get some more hot water to jump into. If that is true, and we wasn't there. That's just my thinking on that.

And I could sure be off on that. But I'm saying that to make this point. I believe he loved Eve.

He was willing to die with her. It's the principle. Now when Jesus came down.

He came down and died in our place. Died for us. Ephesians 5, 26.

And a husband loving his wife. He is loving his wife. When he sanctifies and washes her with the word.

We're going to move on now at this point. He is to wash her with the word. In 26, God tells us, here's how a wife needs to be treated.

This is the way Jesus does the church. Husbands 25. Love your wives even as Christ also loved the church.

How did he do that? He gave himself for her. And that's what I see Adam did for his wife. He gave himself for her.

He decided to die with her. And then 26, that he might sanctify. Here's how Christ does it.

He gave himself that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water of the word. A husband is to love his wife by washing her with the word. This word, it means to sanctify and to cleanse her.

Sanctify is the idea of hollow. It means to separate from profane things. To dedicate her to God.

To purify her. To make her clean. Many husbands today do not understand how they're letting their wives get defiled.

Now here's some areas to watch that I see in loving her. To keep her home if at all possible. Keep her home.

And the daughters to whichever. And here's why. Because whoever keeps the home keeps the children.

Decides the direction of the children. And we see this has infiltrated the Christian world to such a degree that many Christians live their family lives like the world. And their wives and their daughters are under ungodly authorities that bring conflicting opinions and things in them.

Keepers at home means one who looks after the domestic affairs. And here's the lesson on loving. You know, our children, sometimes the children, Hey dad, can I do this? And hey dad, can I go there? And because of maybe some things that I see or the mother sees that they don't see, we say, no, we don't think so.

And they say, well, why? So and so's doing this. Or you let me do it last week. Or whatever.

We are guardians. We are watchmen. And as we teach our children, when their spirit is submissive, they say, oh, okay.

They will trust that God is working through the parent. And they won't argue. And they will have that submissive spirit.

Because they recognize that they are being loved. Submission and love go together. A wife that's being loved by her husband will not have trouble submitting.

If he's loving the way he should. Unless she has really got a rebellious heart. So, love will not let his wife, his daughters, or whatever, get under anything that's going to hurt them.

This direct control. And not allow any division to come in. To divide his wife from him.

Because of that oneness. Here's another principle. A second principle.

Let me just give you some practical principles here. Because of some time. Here's some practical principles.

Four. That I've learned. Before I married my wife, God showed me it would be my duty to keep her countenance happy.

I never heard that before. That's just something God told me in my spirit. He said it would be your job to keep your wife happy.

Because if she ain't happy, you're not going to be happy. Nobody's going to be happy. The wife is to be under her husband working in one accord.

And so, if something's not right, say she's not pleased or something, then we're to find out what's going on and get back in sync again. We are to be in agreement. Now, here's some practical things.

Love her by guarding them from competing authorities. Why? Why? Because God says no man can serve two masters. And you might, say if you've got a daughter in a situation where the conflict, the boss says she's working somewhere and the boss says, I want you to do this.

And she goes to her dad and her dad says, Boy, the boss wants me to do this. And the dad says, No, I don't want you to do that. And there's going to be a conflict.

Somebody's going to get, Well, boy, dad, I'm going to lose my job and get fired and I'm going to go do it. I'm sorry, dad. What has happened? She has been lured and seduced under another authority and she's out from under the protecting authority of her father.

So, that's the first one. The second one is this. Love them by understanding them and honoring them.

You say, Can you understand your wife? I'm going to say something to you that might shock you. But I understand my wife. I understand.

Now, sure, it takes 36 years almost to get to understand her. But I understand. I understand a lot of things that I didn't at first.

You know, when we first get married, Oh, boy, the things she had to put up with me. It was amazing. But now I understand.

Her conscience was a lot more sensitive than mine on things. And her spirit. So, I understand that I am to work together with oneness and her cautions.

And also, I understand that she needs sometimes me to be strong and stand there. So, it's a blending together. So, we love them by understanding them and honoring them because the Bible says dwell according to knowledge.

And by that, what that means is to know your wife by being able to perceive her spirit. Always understand. And I'm going to share some more things.

I'll just give you an illustration now. One time, we had bought a car. We had bought a car.

And it's just a car, you know. It was a nice car. And she liked it.

And she's not a materialistic type person. She, you know, whatever. But she liked this car.

And I liked it too. But I had a desire to have a diesel car. And so, one day, I'm driving down the highway and I've been noticing this diesel car.

And the other car we had was fine. It might get 17, 18 miles a gallon. But this diesel would get 27.

You know what I did? I whooped in there one day and I traded off that nice car that she liked for this other car that I wanted. I come back home and where did that car go? You didn't whoop. And the other was nice too.

But, you know, here's the principle. And she didn't care. It wasn't no big deal.

But it was sort of a joke to her that I would do this without even checking with her. Not that I had to. But I learned something.

That I need the cautions of my wife on my decisions. I need the cautions of my wife. And I learned something in that lesson.

I learned something that even though I'm making decisions in life, but we are one in Christ. And I should have just checked. What do you think if we would trade off this car for that car? She might have gone and looked at it and said, you know, I think that'd be great.

But suppose we'd done that and she said, you know, I just don't feel right about what we're doing. How many men have got themselves in trouble because they've made decisions without checking with their heart? They're the head, but we've got a heart. We need this.

Now, that's just sort of a silly little illustration, but this is important. Because the Bible is teaching in this passage that your prayers could be hindered. Just one little thing.

You know, nothing happened there, I don't think. You know, it was fine. But, you know, as I look back on it, I'm not sure that was the right decision to make.

But I did it because I wanted a diesel engine in my car. And it got 27 miles a gallon and we come out of that deal okay. But after I got it, I realized those things really didn't go that long.

That was 1978. You know, they'd just come out with those things. But here's the thing.

The Bible says that your prayers be not hindered. And what the principle is I'm teaching, we need to love them by understanding them and honor them. I didn't honor her so much.

I'm just going to do what I want to do. Woman, you can just, you know, tough if you don't like it. That's not loving and that's not honoring.

We have a respect. And also, too, there's been, you know, times if I might share this one time, I come home and find a curvy vacuum cleaner in the living room. I did it with a car.

But we got a salesman in there that really, you've never had that happen to you, have you? Well, we got rid of it. But these things happen. This is back in the beginning.

But, you know, it can create tension and friction. And this friction can lead into a broken relationship by agreement. And then pretty soon we're just not getting along too good.

And we're in the church. And pretty soon that spirit affects the church. Now, let me keep going here.

This is what happened in Acts chapter 5. These two both got off track. They both got off track with Ananias and Philae and they broke the spirit. Adam was told to keep the garden.

That means to guard the garden. Where is the husband? He's under Christ. Where is the wife? She's under the husband.

If she moves under another authority, like a serpent, it's dangerous and deadly. And it can also be, it can carry on. Just like, here's the principle again.

What did Abraham do when he went down south to Egypt? He moved under the authority. Husbands, we can do this too. He moved under the authority of King Abimelech.

King Abimelech understands that's just his sister. So the scripture says, King of Ger, he sent and took Sarah. All of a sudden, by disobeying God, not being submissive to God, Abraham himself had moved into another wrong authority area.

And he was usually going to lose something. But boy, he got out of there with the skin of his teeth. He got his wife back.

He got rebuked. And he went on. Now, let me do this one.

Here's another practical area just for me. To love them, to try to honor them. Because one of the things I've learned by trying to respect and honor my wife, I have found that things go better for me.

A little smoother. I maybe don't get into as many jams. You don't get into jams, do you? And whatever.

And so this is why we do this. But the main thing is it could break our prayer. And that comes from 1 Peter 3.7. I'm sorry.

I should have went back and read that passage. But I didn't mark that. Love them by leading them in the church and the home.

And I'm going to cover that a little bit later on in the leadership section. And I want to ask you this question. Because I didn't want to go too long on this.

But why should we love them? You say, where do you come up with these questions? I ask the question first. Why should we love them? Why should we love them as Christ? Here's five things that I have for myself. Because a woman is a very special person.

She's a very tender. She's a very sincere. She's a very gentle person.

And I have these things. Because a woman expresses the mercy of God. Many times the husband doesn't have that mercy coming out of him.

It's ready for the judgment and the wrath of God to come down. But he's got that help meat. By the way, you guys who don't have a wife yet, and you're up there, you need to be thinking about it.

It's important. Because you have sometimes when your fire is getting lit and things are getting pretty hot, you've got this little thing that'll slither up next to you and say, Honey, do you think you should be doing this? And that's designed to turn your gas off, so you'll melt down. She has the mercy of God built within her spirit.

And something else, she has the sensitivity of God built in that sometimes we don't have. When God said it's not good for a man to be alone, He knew what He was talking about. But also, they've got that gentleness.

So when we are ready for the rough and tough and to let the axe fly and put them up against the wall and let's get the fire squad going here, they come along and they have the heart and the feeling of God and the mercy of God. And they have the love of God built within them. And they also have the complexity and the mind of God in there.

Can you understand God? No. But we can understand that God has given man something He really needs. And when this relationship of agreement does not work as a beautifully tuned machine, you know, a sewing machine, it just hums along.

Your clothes all go together and everything. But if that thing gets out of time a little bit, it's not too good. Things are rough and your clothes don't look the way they should.

If this gets out of harmony, if this gets out of agreement in the home, and then the home comes to church, that spirit spreads into the church. Well, you know, my husband, he just really doesn't understand. Do you know what he did to me? Do you know what he did? Oh, really, he doesn't understand you? Oh, what did he do? Oh, your husband did that? I'll see you later.

Say, you know what so-and-so's husband did to her? The next thing you know, you've got a riot on your hand. And the next thing you know, you've got a husband coming home. Guess what I heard today at work, wifey? Did you say that to so-and-so? The next thing you know, you've got a church split.

You've got a divorce. Is it important that we stay in agreement? Absolutely vital. Now, respect them.

Keep them. Guard them. Here's the last thing.

Love them by listening to them. I'm not by nature a very good listener. Mostly probably because I'm just already ready to do what I want to do.

But we do not love them if we do not listen to them. Do we love God if we don't listen to Him? No. So we need to listen to them.

We need to listen to their cautions. We need to listen to checking each other. We need to be careful just to be careful.

Because we're going to watch this Financial Freedom seminar tape after lunch today. And this man has all kinds of illustrations of listening to the cautions of his wife. Because he's got into some really big, expensive mistakes.

I even just heard something here just a few weeks ago about a wife. And something was purchased. And it didn't turn out to be too good.

And then all of a sudden it comes out the truth. You know, she said, I never did really feel right about that from the beginning. And a lot of problems come out of that.

So listen to them. But there are times not to listen to them. Should Adam? Well, you decide that.

What about Abraham? Well, no doubt there. God just said, you're going to have a seed. You're going to have an inheritance.

And the time had passed. And Sarah said, you know, this is just not working out. Why don't we try this plan? Bad idea.

Bad idea. Abraham should not have listened. She's just there.

She's not perfect. She's not infallible. And she can have an off day.

You can have an off day. Every time your trouble light comes on or your service, your engine light comes on in your car may not mean that there's a big problem, but it may mean there's something not right. So we should pay attention, even though we do ignore them most of the time.

All right. Let's close down on this. How much trouble can a man and a woman get into by not submitting and loving each other? A whole lot.

A whole lot. In the next session, I'm going to share with you a story. Maybe I'll just go ahead and do it because I can use it probably in different ways.

But like I said, I've studied pastors. I've studied churches now for over 40 years. And I was in one church when I was going through my schooling, and this pastor had been saved out of Roman Catholicism, and he was on fire for God.

He was a soul winning machine. Just full of the love of God and led people to Christ, and the church was just vibrant and alive, and a lot of college kids in there, and it was just a really neat place to be. And God was working there, and this pastor was just working his heart out.

But there, back behind the scenes, something was going on. He was being, and I wasn't back there behind the scenes to see what was going on, but I saw the result. One day, his wife says, I'm going to divorce you and leave.

And she was a beautiful wife and had beautiful children. Looked like a beautiful home. Looked like a beautiful marriage.

Looked like everything was great, and everything was great in the church. But all of a sudden, one day, there was a great crash. Crashes just don't happen.

There's a process that comes before the crash. A plane just doesn't crash. There's something happening before it crashes.

And there was something going on. He was getting some little signals. Honey, you're too busy.

Honey, you need to spend more time with the children. Honey, I need some more time. But he was busy.

And he lost his crop. Just like Adam. How much trouble can a man and a woman get into? We can get into lots.

We love them by guarding them. We love them by praying with them. By the way, we need to pray with our wives.

You have to. I think we went ten years into our marriage before I really understood that. But you know, before I started doing that, I was getting little squeaks from my wife.

We need to pray. We need to pray together. I'm too busy.

I've got to go here and there. But then God began to show me. You need to pray with your wife so you can stay in agreement.

So we guard them by praying with them, by honoring them, by leading them. And this one other thing. When they get quiet, because they should be talking all the time, communicating.

They're running the house and everything. But if they get quiet, find out why. If they quit communicating, find out why.

Now, I think my wife and I have a pretty good relationship. We communicate all the time. I love my wife.

God has just blessed me so much. I just can't get over it. But I've learned a few things.

To be sensitive to her spirit. And we communicate all the time, all day long. Sometimes in the middle of the night.

And we're to be like a machine. We just keep working together. All those parts in that machine are all hooked together.

And they're all lubricated by the oil of the Holy Spirit working. It's a beautiful thing. But if Satan can destroy the marriage relationship, he can destroy the home.

And if he can destroy the home, he can get in and destroy the church. I'm going to close up with this. And just tell you how important it is.

This little story doesn't have to do about the home. But it has to do about the principle of watching one another and guarding one another. I just found out last night that a friend of mine died.

He was about my age. Somewhere around 61, 62. This man in my sight was a hero.

He was an American hero. He served in the Vietnam War. He was in the elite forces, I guess, of the Green Beret.

If a general went over to Vietnam, they put him there to guard this general. He told me stories how he would infiltrate into the prison camps if there was somebody there that they had to really have. He would go in and live for weeks in the jungles and eat bugs and ants and other things probably.

And just infiltrate even into the camp and get this man out if they needed him. He was that type of a man. The old Rambo type.

And I don't remember when he got saved. But we were in Bible college together. And one night I come up behind him.

And I come running across the grass. And there he was. And he didn't hear me until I was right on him.

Do you know he was around in a flash and ready to kill me? He said, don't you ever do that. He said, just my reactions, just my reflexes would tear you to pieces. He was a trained guard.

He would guard the most important people that came over to that country. One night we were preaching at the rescue mission. And down in Denver.

I'm preaching rescue missions for six years. Last two out there. And I was preaching and a man came down the aisle.

He was bloody. He had a scuffle with somebody. They tried to keep him out and they couldn't keep him out.

He came down the aisle and he was coming for, guess who? The preacher. And me, I'm not exactly a fighter. And he came down there and he said, this is the way you guys teach.

You preach, you preach, you preach. And he's just mad and ready to come for me. And about that time the other guys got caught up with him and grabbed him and took him out.

Later on, I didn't know this. But my friend Gary, he shared this with me. And I never forgot it.

Because this is the way God is with us. And this is the way we are to be for each other. But he said, Don, you didn't know this.

But while you were standing there and that guy's fixing to tear you apart. He said, I had slipped up behind you. I was just to the side there.

And if that guy had made one move, he was going to have an experience he never had in his life. You see, Gary had arms as big around as my head. He was 240 pounds of ex-Green Beret Special Force, elite of

the elite forces, standing behind me just, what do you got to say, buddy? This guy would not have been able to touch me.

He was guarding me. This is how we are to guard our mates and to guard each other. Because this serpent is deadly, whom he may devour.

His power is great. His subtlety is beyond our understanding. But the damage that he does, we see all around us.

Let's pray. Oh Father, how much you love us. May we love each other that much to guard and keep what you've given us.

May we guard our marriages. May we guard our families. May we guard our church.

Because we are tired of all the damage and the destruction. Have mercy upon us. Thank you for teaching us these truths of how Satan destroys our church by destroying our homes, destroying our marriages.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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