

Couples Altar

by Gbile Akanni

Gbile Akanni emphasizes the critical importance of establishing a family altar to nurture godly offspring, build strong spiritual bonds, and ensure the family is founded on the unshakable Word of God.

Duration: 50:48

Scripture: Genesis 1:27-28, Malachi 2:15, Genesis 18:19, Isaiah 8:18, Matthew 7:24-27, Exodus 1

Topics: "Spiritual Foundations"

Description

In this devotional sermon, Gbile Akanni explores the biblical foundation and spiritual necessity of establishing a family altar. He draws from scriptures such as Genesis, Malachi, and Matthew to highlight God's desire for godly offspring and the role of the family altar in nurturing faith and unity. Gbile Akanni challenges believers to be intentional in guiding their households in the ways of the Lord, ensuring that God's promises extend beyond the individual to future generations.

Transcript

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Telephone numbers 0703 03636 59, 0703 76811 98. Email address lsmediaatlivingseed.org or visit our website at www.livingseed.org. Let us sit back and listen as the servant of God brings forth the Word of Life. So please can we pray before we take our devotional challenge this morning.

Our Father, we give you the praise and we thank you this morning for your faithfulness. When we came here on Wednesday, you began to speak to us. And we had expectations.

And we are so glad to you that our expectations are not cut short. You have really come down to speak to us in diverse ways. Lord, we give you the praise.

This day is the last day of this meeting. And we know what you usually do on the last day. Even as you went to that feast.

On the last day you cried. That those who are thirsty shall come to you. Lord, this day we are coming to you.

And we ask you, O God, that you quench our thirst. As we begin this meeting this morning with this devotional challenge. May your spirit walk amidst us.

May your spirit help us. May, O God, your spirit grant us understanding. As we pray together in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen. Now, this is the third devotional challenge we are going to take today. If you remember those of us who were around on Thursday.

We looked at how to build personal altars. And then yesterday the Lord brought us to look at Corpus Altar. Corpus Altar.

And this morning, by the grace of God, we shall be looking at the family altar. The family altar. We shall be raising issues within the time that God has given to us this morning.

And trusting the Lord to guide us and to help us until we come to the point to pray. Now, as we are going through the meeting. One of the scriptures that God brought to us was Genesis chapter 1. Verse 27, 28.

Which was dealing with the fact that God created man in his image. And in his own likeness. And in verse 28, we saw how God commissioned the man and the woman and said, be fruitful and multiply.

Which means God expected them to reproduce. And as they were going to be the progenitor of the golden rest that God was looking for. And as we're looking at some of the scriptures that came.

One of the scriptures that jumped in my spirit was Malachi chapter 2. Malachi chapter 2, verse 15. Let me read it from the Living Bible. Malachi 2, verse 15 says.

You were united to your wife, but to the Lord. In God's wise plan, when you married, the two of you became one person in his sight. And what does he want? Godly children from your union.

Therefore, guide your passions. Keep faith with the wife of your youth. So when God commissioned Adam and his wife to multiply, to be fruitful and to multiply.

What Malachi is telling us the fact that God was looking for a godly offspring. A godly offspring. That the children that they are going to bear must also be in the image of God.

And as we look at the family altar, we shall be looking at what is God looking for in the family. And I want to first say that a family altar is a time that is created for the entire family. Where the father, the mother, the children and everyone that is living with them gather together to pray to the Lord.

To learn the word of God. And to see how that family will become what God is looking for. I believe that for every one of us sitting here that have children, they could be spiritual or biological or both.

Even if you don't have biological children, as I'm going to be looking at the scripture in Genesis. God expects that all the people he is committing to your hands should sit down and to learn his ways in the family. And as our brother Simeon, you know the first day he took his illustration from the life of Abraham.

Which was very interesting. And he was showing us Abraham's personal work and communion with the Lord. And it was so interesting that we saw how Abraham began to work with the Lord at every point.

We saw that Abraham, his work with the Lord, was building personal altars on his journeys. And all that Abraham was doing, it was in communion with God. And we saw how God helped him.

And as my brother Simeon was talking, my mind was going beyond Abraham's personal work and communion with God. And my heart, my mind jumped to a scripture in Genesis chapter 18. Let me read that scripture.

Let's turn to the book of Genesis chapter 18. Genesis chapter 18. I'll read from verse 17.

But what I'm looking for is verse 19. Yes, 19. Genesis 18, verse 17.

And the Lord said, Shall I say that Abraham has surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? So verse 19 now says, For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the law of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he has spoken of him. Now, the first thing that struck my heart is the fact that God himself testified to the fact that he knows Abraham. As Abraham was practicing in his work and communion with God to know God, to experience God, God also knew Abraham.

It was not just Abraham knowing God, trying to know God. God also testified to the fact that I know Abraham, I know him. That brings a very strong challenge to my heart.

And to all of us. To ask a question, does God know me? Does he know me? Of course, we are God's children. But this knowledge of God, this knowing God and God knowing us is not a big trial.

It is when there is that communion with God. That fellowship with God, that work with God. As he tries to through different experiences and exposures, that he come to say, yes, I know him.

Abraham went through a lot of experiences with God. And God saw his obedience to him. But that is not what I'm going to.

But first, I want you to know that God knew Abraham. And the next thing he says, that he will command his children and his household after him. He will command his children and his household after him.

Very interesting. So Abraham was not only interested in his work and communion with God. He was also interested in bringing the entire of his household.

Those who were within, even his servants, his maidservants, all who were living with him. And we are going to be checking what happened. When Abraham decided to take this step.

Not just to have fellowship and communion with God. But also that his entire household to also come to the knowledge of God. God says, I know him.

That he is going to command his children and his household after him. And this is the cry of God for every one of us. I just pray that God will have the liberty to give a testimony concerning even our family.

Our homes. How I wish God will come and say, look, I know this brother. I know him.

I know him. And I'm seeing how he's commanding his household, his children and his household after me. That would be a wonderful testimony.

And the end result of what God is looking for. It says, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. The children shall keep the way of the Lord.

We're going to be looking at that from scripture. The children will keep the way of the Lord. The family altar is a place to show our children how to keep the way of the Lord.

Without a family altar, even when you are doing your personal, you build your personal altar. You are doing your couple's altar. But the family altar is absent.

I mean, the family altar is absent. Honestly speaking, you cannot, your children cannot obey the word of the Lord. We are going to be seeing it very shortly.

So God's desire is that, as we read in Malachi, for our marriages to produce a godly offspring. To produce a godly offspring. And he said, to obey the word of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.

That the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he has spoken of him. You will realize that the promises that God makes on your personal life, as a couple, is kind, even to your family. Whatever promises God is making, you know, is giving you, as a family, as a couple, I mean, as a father, or as a mother.

All of this is tied to the relationship that God, I mean, is going to be built in the family altar. And as I study scriptures, especially the life of Abraham, I realize that all the promises that God made to Abraham were not going to end with Abraham. The children, right from Isaac, and all others that will come from Isaac, and all of that, are supposed to carry that eternal purposes of God to fulfillment.

So the promises of God on your life is not supposed to end with you. The children God is giving to you are supposed to, you know, progress with those promises. Because what God is looking for is to re-crop the whole earth with godly seed.

So, my brothers and sisters, there are promises on your life, but those promises are not to end with you. What God has begun in your life is supposed to be a continuum. It's supposed to be something that will progress until the Lord Jesus becomes, I mean, comes back.

And your children are supposed to be the one to enter into those promises as they will pass it on to their own children if the Lord carries. So I was looking at another man who had this understanding, and that is Isaiah. Isaiah chapter 8 and verse 18.

Look at what Isaiah said. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given to me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts which dwelt in Mount Zion. The children which the Lord, Isaiah said, Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel.

Isaiah knew that God was looking for a godly seed. Therefore, he was deliberate about this, that I and the children that God has given to me are for signs and wonders in Israel. May I inform all of you that the children God has given to us, they are meant for signs and wonders in the body of Christ.

They are meant to please God and to also carry out God's purposes in the body of Christ. You know, when I came across these scriptures years back, even when our children were still small, this scripture, the one in Genesis we read, and this one we read, became a very serious concern and burden for me. And me and my wife kept praying, and we were very deliberate about it.

We told God, we said, look, there is no point giving us children if those children are going to serve the devil. It is not correct, O Lord, for you to grant God's children and will donate those children to the devil. It is very painful that I had children, instead of doing great things for God, they are serving the devil.

They are doing great things for the devil. That became a hard cry that we keep praying to God all day today. So I would like you to know that all the children God has given to you, whether they are biological or spiritual, they are meant to do things, they are meant to serve the purpose of God.

It is unfortunate when we have children, and those children are only there to fulfill our own ambition. Those children are there to fulfill societal expectations. It is not correct for us to have children that are even living to please the world system, dressing to please the world system, doing things to please the world system.

That will not be correct. And that is where the family altar comes in. So as we are looking for the rationale for family altar, I want you to take this thing very seriously, that even if we have children whom you did not bring to know God, and you were not deliberate about it, honestly speaking, we need to cry to God to recover such children.

And let me proceed because our time is fast running. What is the rationale for family altar? First, I want us to look at Matthew chapter 7. Jesus was dealing with a physical building, but I'm looking at it as a principle. A principle which we can embrace and apply it in our family altar.

Now, in that, after Jesus has finished speaking, you know, on the mount, he now came to conclude in that Matthew 7 verse 24, Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and built upon that house, and it fell not, but it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and built upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it. As I mentioned earlier, I'm using this as a principle.

But what Jesus was doing was for the fact that it is the word of God that has the capacity to build a life, to build our individual lives, and to build us as a couple, and to build a family. It is the word of God that has the power to even bring our children to understand what God is looking for in our family. It is the word of God that will help us and our children to know exactly our position with God here on earth.

So, when you don't have a family altar, even though you have a personal altar, you have a couple's altar, but the family altar is lacking. Honestly, according to the words of Jesus, you are building that family. The foundation of that family is sand, and it cannot stand.

Whatever floods, whatever winds, whatever rain that comes to that family, that family will crumble. We need to know this. It is only as we build our families with the word of God that they will have the strength, the capacity to withstand any rain, any wind, any flood that comes even along their way.

I want all of us to know that we are living in a world that is very fast, very confusing. We are living in the world of internet, and what the devil has done deliberately is to direct his warfare with the children, to the young people. When you go into the internet, you see things that he designed to recruit the young people and to deal with them.

But as we sit together with our families, and as we are looking into the word of God, what the word of God says concerning our own personal world within, what the word of God says concerning our position in this

world, what the word of God says concerning even their own future, why they must not jeopardize their future with what the devil is offering to them. If we don't do that, honestly, that family cannot stand the taste of dying. So we need to know that.

What else is the need for us to build a family altar? Now, family altar builds a bonding between family members. That's what it does. As we sit with your family, looking into the word of God, praying together, it binds them together.

It brings a bonding because even the little, little challenges they have amongst themselves, the word of God is able to sort it out. And it's in the family altar that everybody is free to speak his mind. So it unites the family.

In the family altar, I mean, offenses could be looked into, and apologies could be given to whosoever is offended. It unites the family. It binds the family together.

It brings a very strong intimate relationship between your children. They know that they are one. They know that even whatever offense has come in, they sort it out among themselves.

The family altar does that. That is one of the reasons why we must not joke with the family altar. Otherwise, you will keep judging cases.

You keep beating the children. You keep doing whatever. You keep shouting.

But the word of God, once it comes, it settles every confusion even in the children's life. When I'm talking about children, please note that I'm talking about biological and spiritual children. Because perhaps you will say that, oh, me, I don't have biological children.

Those living with you are your children. God has given them to you as your children. And your responsibility is to guide them, to give them a direction in life so that they will know the purposes of God concerning their lives.

So that is the language in which we are using children. So once we are talking about children, please note that it's both biological and spiritual. Now, what else is the need for family altar? It's so that it gives a family a direction.

It envisions the family. Look at what Isaiah said. That I and the children the Lord has given to me are for signs and wonders in the body of Christ.

So he was making his family to know that this is why we are existing. This is why we are existing. Honestly, if there was space, I would have given you some practical experiences and practical benefits that we have derived from family altar.

Very interesting. For instance, let me just give you one. Years ago, we had a family altar and we're looking at the book of Exodus chapter one.

I'm going to be showing you how to do family altar so that we're not confusing our children. We were just telling this family about our devotion. Exodus chapter one, as we're reading it, and studying it, and I think we jump to chapter two.

And we saw where God said, because the Hebrew woman obeyed God, God was going to build houses for them. One translation says that. God is going to build houses for them.

So as soon as that came, the thing jumped into my spirit. And the Holy Spirit said, I will build a house for you. But, you know, I kept it to myself.

And we were just going about, we finished the devotion. And after several months, the word of God kept coming to me, kept coming to me, kept coming to me. And one day I just told my wife, because one of the reasons why I didn't share what I knew was because I was afraid.

Let it be something that is myself. You know, it's something that is jumping into me that is not from the Lord. So that day I just told her, I said, excuse me, man.

Remember that day we're doing this devotion. And what we're doing, that scripture, and this word jumped into my spirit. And the thing has been on for months.

So I said, let me share to you. And she said, yes, that actually being her, that word jumped into her spirit. But she didn't want to talk about it.

And we now say, ah, this may be the Lord. And we prayed. And that came to pass.

Now, in the family devotion, don't underrate even your children who are breaking their share roots. God, through them, could say something that will give a direction for the whole family. Something that God himself, you know, the Bible talks about learning wisdom from the mouth of babes.

Family devotion can do that. What you and your wife, God cannot release it to you. He can release it through your children.

And that will be a definition of what God intends to do in that family. So let's not neglect family altar. Let's build it.

Because there's so much that God will release to us in our family altars. Now, what else can we get from family altar? Now, as I was looking at Abraham again, I saw something. And this directly related to what even Azar was talking about.

I saw that in the Genesis chapter 14, something happened. Let me show you what happened in Genesis 14. The time is fast running.

Please, can I request that you are able to hold the time. So that it's not as fast as it is now. Now, in Genesis chapter 14, I'll read from verse 14.

What am I trying to bring from here? Do you know that Abraham raised an army in his family to fight the battles of the Lord? Family altar, as I said earlier, is not just a vitrally. It shows the family. It gives a direction on where they should go.

And the Bible said that Abraham raised an army in his house that fought the Lord's battle. So, I could see one of the things that God is looking for in our families. Raising children to fight the battles of the Lord, as Azar did.

I was deliberate about it. I already said that elaborately when I was dealing with Azar 8. So, I will not go into that. But I want you to know that your children are an army that God wants to use to fight his battle.

Now, as you said all of this, and because I won't go further into that because of our time that is going. How do we conduct our family altar? How do we do it? Then finally, we'll look at how can a family altar be sustained without jeopardizing the personal altar and the couple altar. Then we'll pray.

First, in the family altar, there has to be a systematic study. Let's not be spurious about it. Let's not be jumping here and there.

When you are doing a family altar, now, there are tools which you can use. First, you can look at family, I mean, there are devotional guides that are good. That are good.

That are tested. And they give you the direction to know God. There are guides like that.

Of course, there are other guides that when they're talking about God, but their direction may be different. But God may help you to get some of those good ones. I don't want to mention names, but God will guide you.

You can use devotional guides so that you can be systematic. You can also use, you can take the Bible and get a book in the Bible. For instance, you can take Genesis and begin from Genesis chapter one.

Maybe every day you read Genesis, or maybe a chapter. And you are going like that until you finish Genesis. And then pick another book of the Bible, maybe in the New Testament.

And begin with it like that. In that way, that thing can be sustained, the other can be sustained. Even when you are not around.

Even when the couple is not around. I also want to mention that when your family knows the benefits of a family altar. When they know how important the family altar is.

Even in your absence, they can organize themselves. They will not stop because daddy and mommy are not in. Apart from their personal altar they are building with God.

They also see the need to come together and to pray together for the family. And whatever God is leading them to pray about. Apart from that, you can take a character.

Maybe you can take David and study David. And look into the life of David. Look at what to follow about David and what to discard about David.

You will be studying and seeing how David loved the Lord with all of his heart. But when it comes to the issue of adultery. You tell them this is not the way to follow.

You can pick something. You can pick any of the characters in the Bible. And you are studying it systematically with your family like that.

And sometimes you can deliberately tell any of them in the family to share their devotional notes. Why are you doing that? You want to know whether they are keeping with their family, I mean their personal altar. And when they know that any of them can be called and say, look, let's share from your notes.

Let's share the scripture God gave you this morning. And all of them will sit up. They will see the need not to miss their personal altar.

Personal communion with God. And they will keep to it. And they will value it.

Praise the Lord. And having said that, how can a family, how can family altar be sustained without jeopardizing personal altar and couples altar? Now, I know that there are difficulties around, there are challenges here and there. Especially those of us who are living in cities where time is of essence.

Those of us who are in places that you need to wake up very early, by 3 a.m., you are doing your personal devotional. And then you are now preparing to go to work because if you don't leave your house by 5 a.m., you cannot make it. You cannot make it to your office on time.

Those are some of the challenges. And the children need to be prepared to go to work. And the mother is there running up and down trying to fix their breakfast and do all of that.

How can we handle this kind of challenge? Now, one of the things, it was trying to affect our family altar. Then my wife brought a suggestion that now, instead of we can do our personal devotions in the morning, we can build our personal altars with God. But the family devotion for everybody to be around, we have to shift it to night.

And she said Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday. So Monday, 9 p.m., Wednesday, 9 p.m., where everybody must have returned. When they went to fellowship, they must have returned at that time.

And the Saturday, where everybody gathers, there's nothing to run around for. We do it in the morning. Then if it's that we have things to run around early in the morning, whether it's a meeting to run to or whatever, just like today, we needed to run early to the camp.

The family altar can be shifted to the night. In this way, we cannot miss it. So if you have in that kind of situation, please, you can arrange your family altar, I mean, devotion to go that way.

But honestly speaking, if you have space, the morning hours are the best. Where you can gather them by 6 a.m. As they finish their own family gathering. And then you are doing your own family, I mean, devotion.

So if we could arrange things like that, the family altar will not break down. It will continue. Praise the Lord.

Now. I also want to add. The.

The other challenges. Other than what we have mentioned here. God will give you a direction on how to go about it.

But the most important thing I want to mention this morning is the fact that don't allow the family altar to break down for any reason. Otherwise, there will be confusion in that family. No matter how busy you are, brother, I beg you.

Let it not be your wife that is always arranging the children, the family members for family altar. As the head of the family, you have to be responsible as I was responsible. He knew that it is his own.

He is the one to make sure that the family, the children God has given to him, will come to know the purpose for which they existed on earth. When God was talking about Abraham, he said, I know him, that

he will command his children, his household after me. He was talking to the man.

It is only when you are not around that maybe your wife can come in. That does not. We're not saying that.

It doesn't suggest that the wife should be responsible. The wife should also be responsible enough to be able to gather the family, even when the husband is not there. But also, I want you to come to the point to know that, you know, it's so interesting that sometimes I may be doing something in my room and I forget.

If the children that are coming to knock at my door and say, Daddy, it's our devotion, it's our devotion, come out. And I'm saying, oh, thank you very much. I almost forgot.

When the children know the benefits of a family altar, they themselves will be eager to come and wake you up, even when you are sleeping. So I want us to come to the point to know that family altar is indispensable in our work with God. If we want to bring our children to the position to know God, to experience God, to work with God, to have communion with God and to know what God wants them to do here on earth, to be very, very interesting.

So I just want us to pray at this point because they already flashed. My time is gone. I would like us to pray and to tell the Lord, especially if you are in this meeting and your family altar has broken down.

Or you are in this meeting when your wife wakes you up, you say, Luke, go and gather the children and pray. That is a responsibility. That is a responsibility.

Azar didn't do that. Abraham didn't do that. So I want you to, I want us to pray.

If your family altar is broken down, please, as soon as you leave this meeting, I plead with you, I beg you. Go and restate it. Go and gather your children and tell them this time, this time, this time is going to be our family altar.

Some do it every day, which I don't have any problem with that. But it's okay. But you have to arrange it in such a way that is convenient for the family so that nobody will give any excuse that I missed out in the family altar.

So as we bow our hearts this morning to pray, I want you to plead with God. I want you to beg God and say, Lord, may you help me to build my family. By your word.

I want you to help me that your word will be the one, I mean, what we are standing upon in this family. So that whatever happens, I know family altar is very good. It brings the children closer to God.

When you begin to show them that, Luke, even your knees are made by God. That is the place that you pray, even for knees, student school fees, whatever it is, right? That's the place to pray. Even for your nation, for your environment, whatever the Lord is leading you to pray about.

And once the children catch that, they grow with it. That is the place for children to know that it is here that we collect our bread from heaven. It is very interesting.

So I don't want you to take family altar for granted. I want you to come to a position to know that family altar is what God himself has ordained. As he's looking for godly offspring from each of us.

Please don't allow the devil, if you don't do family altar for the children, the devil will do family altar for them. If you remember that your child, even as you are preparing to take him to school, and he's sitting in the parlor, he has finished and he's waiting for you. As he's waiting, you see him, he will just tune in the television, and the next thing he's watching is Cartoon.

Cartoon, why did he come to that point? I want us to know that our children know to know where we'll go. And as we pray together at this point, may the Lord help you to value your family altar. May the Lord help you to know that without the family altar and building this family on sand, that we still crumble.

The children will soon scatter, they'll start fighting among themselves. May the Lord help us in the name of Jesus Christ. So let's bow down our heads to pray at this point.

Let's pray together. Please, just one second, just talk to the Lord. Talk to the Lord, what you intend to do after here.

Plead with the Lord. If the family altar has broken down, ask him to help you. Say, Lord, show me mercy.

Maybe your wife was doing this and she got tired, because you were not interested. Now you ask God to help you to be a head indeed. Lord, we thank you.

In Jesus' name we have prayed. So Father, we thank you this morning. We thank you for showing us the necessity for our families to have family altars.

We want to bless you, God, that even as we're showing us the way to go in the whole of this retreat. Lord, you show us this way also. That we not take things for granted.

That the foundation of our families will not be on sand. But we build it on the word of God. As we progress with this meeting, oh God, we know that you have more to give us.

Even as today is the last of this meeting. Thank you for hearing us. We have prayed in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen.

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