

# What Should Headship Look Like: Caesar or Christ?

by Paul Washer

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*Biblical headship is redemptive, leading the wife to salvation, sanctification, and glorification, based on God's ordination and Jesus' work of salvation.*

**Duration:** 1:52:49

**Scripture:** Ephesians 5:22, 2 Timothy 2:15

**Topics:** "Headship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the role of a father as the head of the family from a biblical perspective. He emphasizes the importance of fathers teaching their children in the ways of God and morality, rather than leaving their education solely to schools. The speaker also discusses the negative impact that a lack of knowledge and instruction can have on future generations. He uses the example of a seminary student who becomes angry upon hearing about a celebrity's childbirth, highlighting the need for parents to prioritize teaching and guiding their children. The sermon emphasizes the importance of learning from God's wisdom and living according to His teachings.

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## Transcript

For more media content from Grace Community Church in San Antonio, Texas, go to [gccsatx.com](http://gccsatx.com). Media used by permission of Heart Crime Missionary Society. Visit us online at [heartcrimemissionary.com](http://heartcrimemissionary.com). Paul Osher starts preaching about four minutes into this service. Almighty Father in heaven, we thank you that we may come before your throne.

We thank you, Lord, that we are here together again this morning. Lord, to hear your word again. Lord, we want to thank you for giving us this day.

Lord, but we also want to speak to you. Lord, we are dependent on you. Lord, give us an open heart and open ears.

Lord, that we hear the message and that it may come into our hearts. Lord, do you want to touch us this morning? Through your spirit. Lord, do you want to bless the message? Lord, may it really be spoken to you, from you.

Lord, from you, from the throne, Lord. So that it can really come into our hearts and work deeply. Lord, not only here, not only in this gathering.

Lord, but we also think of the children. Also those who are being taught right now. Father, you also in the young children's hearts.

Lord, sow your word. Lord, that they, already young, may make a choice and serve you. Lord, how wonderful that is, Lord.

That our children already from an early age. Lord, be taught in the word. Be taught in your truth.

And that they learn to grow from an early age. And learn to walk with you. Lord, thank you for that.

Lord, thank you that you gave us that. Yes, all those gifts, Lord. All those gifts are from you.

You are so good to us, Lord. And we also pray for the 12 to 18-year-olds. When they come together.

Lord, maybe there are a lot of boys who have questions. Where a difficult period of their life is. Lord, you want to give that they will let go of everything.

And will throw themselves at you alone. Lord, we all need that. Lord, and also when it comes to marriage.

About being alone. Lord, about how you lead us in our lives. Lord, then we know.

Everything you do, you do with a purpose. Lord, because you want to save us. Whether we have a marriage.

Or whether we are alone. Lord, you know it too, Lord. For some it is so enormously difficult when they are alone.

Lord, you know that too. You know it too. Lord, and you hear the prayer.

Lord, thank you for that. That we can make all our needs and all our worries known to you. Lord, but that you always have a plan.

Lord, and that we can rest in it. Lord, thank you for that. And that is why we want to express all our trust in you, Lord.

It is good what you do. Lord, it is good how you lead us. Lord, learn to let go.

Give us that, Lord, that we learn to let go. Lord, and to expect everything from you alone. Lord, because you are the made God.

Lord, and you never do it wrong. And we want to thank you for that. Lord, and we want to hear your voice tomorrow.

We ask of you. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

All right. We're going to continue talking about the man as head of his home. When we talk about authority, we have two models.

Christ. And Caesar. When we talk about being the head of our home, we are talking about following Jesus Christ and not Caesar.

Let's look at some of the characteristics of the authority of Caesar. It was self-serving. It was self-promoting.

It was demanding. It was merciless. And it was destructive.

It was a God-like rule. It was a rule where everything was centered on Caesar. Everything was an extension of Caesar.

It was all about his person. His position. His place in history.

And his vision. That's not what we're talking about when we talk about a man being head of his home. Look in Daniel 7, 7. I have known religious men who ruled their house this way.

You see, that's why teaching on this subject is so dangerous. An ungodly religious man will use it to subject everyone to his own will. And he will act like a tyrant or a dictator.

Even Jesus said that the Gentiles, when they were reigning, they would lord over everyone else. And that's wrong. That's not what a husband is supposed to do.

Now let's look at the rule of Christ for a moment. It was self-giving. It promoted the welfare of others.

It sought to bring others into harmony with the will of God. It was merciful and life-giving. There's a good description of the reign of Christ in Romans 14, 17.

His kingdom is described as righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Now listen to me. How can you tell when a husband, a father, is truly using his authority in the house in a biblical manner? How can you tell when a husband, a father, is truly using his authority in the house in a biblical manner? How can you tell? Then there will be righteousness.

Correct actions before God. There will be peace. And there will be joy in the Holy Spirit.

Now just think about Jesus for a moment. King of kings and Lord of lords. He says, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.

The husband does not take authority in order to serve himself. But he uses his authority to serve others. His wife and his children.

I want you to go to John chapter 13 for a moment. Verse 12 through 17. Now, he is specifically talking in the context of being a teacher and being Lord.

He is talking about authority. He is saying, when it comes to sovereignty, I am Lord. When it comes to scriptural authority, I am the teacher.

He says, now this is the example I'm going to give you. I'm going to take the lowest position in the house and I'm going to wash your feet. I'm going to serve you in the position of the lowest slave.

Now when Jesus had to stand up and exercise authority, there was no question who was in charge. But when there was a need for a servant, he was there first. It's like a man who walks into the kitchen and he

sees some sugar that spilled on the floor, and he says, honey, there's sugar spilled on the floor.

How does that compare with what Jesus did? Jesus would have never said, honey, there's sugar on the floor. He would have got the broom and cleaned it up. Do you see that? You say, but I'm too busy.

No, you're saying you're too important. Just look at this model. This is not only a model for family, but spiritual leadership in a church and a movement.

There was a very famous Christian woman who became very, very loved and respected throughout the world for the things that she did saving Jews in Nazi Germany. And so people would ask her all over the world to speak in their church. And she was afraid of the pride.

So the first thing she would do when she went into any church was to clean the toilets. She wanted to constantly remind herself what it really means to be a servant. So when we talk about biblical headship, we're talking about being like Christ, not Caesar.

Now, another truth for us men, biblical headship is redemptive. Salvation has several aspects, past, present and future. The man of God will lead his wife with the goal that she be firmly grounded in the following things.

He will work and pray that she have a strong biblical assurance of her salvation. He will work that she grows in sanctification. And he will work so that she rejoices in the hope of her future glorification.

Now, let's look for a moment at the foundation of Christ's claim as headship. Now, let's look for a moment at the foundation of Christ's claim as headship. You mean of the church? His own headship of the church.

It was based on two things. God's ordination or God's decree and his own work of salvation. The Bible says in Ephesians 1, verse 22 that God put everything in subjection to Christ and that God made him head over all things to the church.

So, by right of what God has decreed, Jesus Christ is head of the church. But also, Jesus is head of the church because he is the savior of the church. This is a principle throughout scripture.

In the Decalogue, God said this. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.

He said, I saved you. Therefore, you are mine. And I am your Lord.

Now, let's look at the husband. He is head of the home also by God's ordination or decree. Look at 1 Corinthians 11, verse 3. It's very clear.

It's what God has decreed. Christ is the head of every man and the man is the head of a woman. How is a man the head of the woman? In the same way that Christ is the head of every man.

In the same way that Christ is the head of the church. In love and self-sacrifice for her benefit. So, God has decreed that the man be the head of the home.

But this is also redemptive. The husband's leadership serves to advance the work of salvation in his wife. Here are some of the things that the husband is working to promote in his wife.

Christ's likeness. The fruit of the Spirit. Power over sin.

Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Now, I have some questions for the husbands here. As a result, of your activity, your ministry in the life of your wife, is your wife more confident now in her calling and election? Is she more confident in her salvation? Is she growing in her love for God and for others? Is she making greater progress in sanctification? Especially in a modest and respectful behavior? 1 Peter 3, 2 Is she growing in a gentle and quiet spirit? 1 Peter 3, 4 Is she growing in sensibility and purity? Titus 2, 5 Is she growing in modesty and discretion in her appearance? 1 Timothy 2, 9 Another question.

As a result of your relationship with your wife, is she making greater progress in her own work and ministry? Is she a better homemaker? Titus 2, 5 Has she greater capacity to teach what is good and to instruct other women to love their husbands and children? Titus 2, verses 3 and 4 Does her adornment consist of outward fashion or of good works? 1 Timothy 3, 10 Is she looking more and more forward to the coming of Christ and her future glorification? 1 Thessalonians 1, 10 And is she blossoming as a person in her own right? Is she growing before God? You only have to look at a woman for a little while and listen to her for a little while to know what kind of husband she has. If she is wilting like a leaf during the winter you know she has a neglectful husband. Or she has an oppressive husband.

But if she is flourishing like a fruitful vine you know she has a neglectful husband. You can pretty much discover that she has a biblical husband. Now I want to talk about biblical headship how it highly regards the human dignity of the wife.

This is extremely important. The woman was created as a suitable helper for the man. I must realize that I cannot be what I was called to be without my wife.

She is absolutely necessary When I was a little boy my father and I built a very large barn. Now I was about 8 years old and my father and I built a barn. Now I was 8. Did my father really need me? He made me think that he needed me.

But he was just doing that for my sake. Some men treat their wives like they treat their little children. I don't really need you but I let you have the privilege of being with me.

No, she is essential. You need her. If you tear at her it's like tearing at your own arm.

If you wound her, cripple her you are wounding and crippling yourself. The prosperity of my entire body depends upon the prosperity of my members. For this reason no man tears at his own flesh.

Your wife is essential. Indispensable. Now, a woman is a person in her own right.

She is not merely an extension of her husband. She was not merely created to do his will. She is not to be swallowed up by his personality.

She is not to be swallowed up by his vision for life. She is a unique individual before God. Now, just look at a few things about your wife.

She has been given the right to become a child of God. John 1, verse 12. She is a fellow heir of the glory of God.

She is a fellow heir of the grace of life. 1 Peter 3, verse 7. Now, her uniqueness her individuality her separate identity from her husband can be seen in this one major point. There are aspects of her life and relationship with Christ that will remain unknown to her husband throughout eternity.

She has a special relationship with Christ. You see, Christianity has one mediator. Men have one mediator.

Women have one mediator. Not two. It's not God, Christ, husband, wife.

If you say it is, you're moving right back to Catholicism. My wife is a person by herself before God. Let me share with you a verse that Brother Charles Leiter gave mentioned to me years ago.

Revelation 2, verse 17. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna and I will give him a white stone and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.

Your wife will receive a white stone from the very hand of Christ. Men, Christ will not give that stone to you so that you can then give it to the wife. And there is a name written on that stone which you do not know.

And what does this teach us? Your wife is her own person before God. That's a beautiful truth that would destroy a lot of teaching on marriage today. Another truth I want to point out is that your wife is a daughter of God.

For the wayward and neglectful husband this should be terrifying. 1 Peter 3, verse 7 tells us that our prayers will be hindered if we do not care for our wives. If we mistreat our wives.

Let's go for a moment to one of the most terrifying verses in the entire Bible. Matthew 18, verse 5 through 7. And so, whoever does such a thing and receives a child in my name, he will receive me. But if one of these little ones who believe in me grieves, it would be better for him that a millstone was hung on his neck and that he sank into the depth of the sea.

Woe to the world because of the grievances, for it is necessary that the grievances come. But woe to the man because of whom the grievances come. If your hand or your foot grieves you, take them off and throw them away.

It is better for you to go into life crumpled or mixed, than to be thrown into the eternal fire Until nine or eight? Until seven. Oh, sorry. Heavy millstone literally means a millstone turned by a donkey.

A millstone is a large stone with another of equal size on top of it. And they are turned against one another. To grind grain.

This is a millstone so large it requires a donkey to move it around. Imagine just a 20 kilo weight around your neck and trying to swim. Imagine it pulling you down until it drowns you.

Now imagine a 400 kilo millstone. The Bible says it would be better for you to have a millstone around your neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea than to cause a child of God to stumble. Now, this can mean neglecting your wife mistreating your wife or leading your wife into ungodliness.

I heard an illustration on the Amazon River one time by a preacher who lived there He said that a man outside of the will of God was like a drunken man driving a boat down the Amazon River a boat full of dynamite with his wife and children sitting in the back. You see, when you were single, if you destroyed yourself, you just destroyed yourself. But now you have the horrifying possibility of destroying a wife and children along with you.

That is why it is necessary to be a biblical man. And this is where we're going to end this morning. Do you remember in Luke chapter 7 verse 8 a powerful centurion soldier said this to Jesus He said, I also am a man placed under authority.

With soldiers under me. Are you happy about being in authority? Do you think that grants you unlimited freedom to do whatever you want? It does not. As a husband you only have authority to do what your authority tells you to do.

Yes, you have authority in the family. But it's according to the word of God. According to what God has said.

All authorities that are appointed authorities by God are required to be saturated with the word of God. When Joshua was to lead the people into the promised land at the very beginning of the book what do we find? His authority is to be guided by the word of God. He's to meditate on it day and night.

In Deuteronomy 17 the scripture looks to the time when Israel would have a king. That king would have to write all the words of the law in a book. And he would have to read it every day.

So that he did not turn aside to the left or the right. You see, he didn't rule according to his own passions or desires. But according to the will of God.

In the United States we have something called common law. It means no one is above the law. No one.

The president is not above the law. No one. That principle comes from scripture.

The king is not above the law. In the pagan countries the king is the law. But in Israel the king had only authority to do what the law said.

Many men say in the name of scripture I am head of my home. But they do not rule according to scripture. Or with the same purposes that scripture has.

That should be terrifying to you. Now remember what I said. Most men who claim to be Christian have totally neglected being head of the home.

They will have to give an account before God. Other men have really taken this seriously. But they are not filled with the Holy Spirit.

And they are not saturated meditating, reading, studying the word of God. And they either use their headship for their own purposes. Or with their headship they lead their family into foolish and dangerous things.

They will have to give an account before God. We find out even in 2 Timothy 2.15 that we are to be diligent to present ourselves approved to God a workman who does not need to be ashamed accurately handling the word of truth. Imagine this scenario for just a moment.

You're sitting down with your wife and you say, I'm the head of this home. We're going to do what I say. You need to submit.

Then all of a sudden the door of your house opens up. Jesus walks in. Sits down at the table.

And he says to you, open up your Bible. Explain to me what it means to have authority. And you're ashamed because you can't even find the place in the Bible.

Open up your Bible and tell me what I told you about loving your wife. You're further ashamed. You don't know.

Tell me what I told you about your children. See, you will be ashamed. Now wife, listen to me.

If you're a biblical woman and you're sitting there at the table with them and every time Jesus says something and he becomes more ashamed, your husband, you should not grow. You should not think to yourself, oh good. Jesus is really getting him.

Jesus is showing him. It's about time. You need to pity him.

You need to be afraid for your husband. Do you realize what's going to happen to your husband one day? He is going to stand before God. And he is going to give an account for everything he did in your family.

Do you know what a responsibility that is? When everything goes bad in the business, it's the leader who has to give an account. And that's what's going to happen. You need to pray for your husband.

You need to have pity on your husband. You need to realize the terrible position he is in. As the leader of the home.

Now we're going to talk, when I come back, we're going to talk about love. We're going to look at how it is self-giving. Sanctifying.

How it is nourishing. Cherishing. Free from bitterness.

Full of understanding. And honoring. Gives honor to the other.

Now wives, you want your husband to hear this. This will be good. The husbands are probably saying, but you're telling us all about what we should do.

What about our wives? I'll tell you what, here's what we'll do. You do all this stuff for the next year and then I'll come back and tell your wife what to do. The next year, you men are going to do all these things that I'm teaching now, and next year we'll come back and talk about the wives.

Let's pray. Father, I pray that you would use your word to help your people. To help them, to advance them.

In Jesus' name, amen. We'll begin by just answering a few questions. And I'll have to do that briefly because I want to get on with our study.

What should you do as a wife when your husband does not, out of himself, do things in the house and takes care of the children. Does things in the house and takes care of the children. When he is in bed and he is covered with the blanket, get a needle and thread and sew him into the blanket.

And then beat him with a very large stick. Now, I'm just kidding. Well, each situation is very different.

I don't know exactly how your home is. If a man works full time and his wife stays at home, she should carry the responsibilities at home. When he comes home, he shouldn't have to do a lot around the house.

His responsibilities are primarily relational. And that is spending time with you and spending time with his children. And teaching.

Now, if both the man and the woman work because they have to, not because they want to drive a nicer car, but because they have to, then if they assume, if they share responsibilities outside the house, they must share responsibilities inside the house. I know several cases where the man and woman work. They both have jobs.

And then when they come home, the woman is supposed to do everything. We all realize that's terribly wrong. Now, here's something I want you to think about.

These types of things happen all the time. The husband's not involved as he ought to be. But most pastors never get involved in this.

They never teach on this. In our fellowship at HeartCry, we hold each other accountable. We talk to each other.

Are you spending time with your wife? Why not? What's the problem? Are you being a father to your children? Tell me about it. You see, we hold each other accountable. Now, if I get time before the week's up, I'm going to teach on how the wife can be an instrument of change in her husband's life.

If the husband mentioned here is a Christian, he probably has never been taught on what it means to be a biblical man. Or maybe there are other problems. Each situation is different.

But it can be resolved when the pastors are teaching on marriage, when they're living as an example, and when the Bible is truly being followed. We'll hopefully talk about this in a day or two. How could this man be the head of his family in a biblical way? Was this biblical family wrong to be away so often? He had to work so much because the children had to be fed and educated.

And we had to do all kinds of other things in order to have enough money. How could this man be the head of his family in a biblical way? Was this, from the perspective of the Bible, wrong to be away so much, so often? The answer is yes and no. The answer is yes and no.

It appears your father was in a situation where he had to work to keep the family fed. There are times that unusual circumstances require unusual actions. It's possible that your father was a godly man and he did what he could.

But here are some questions that are very important. When your father was a young man, was he instructed with the wisdom of Scripture by his elders and by his father? Now, I want you to think about this for a moment. Let's say that I am your grandfather.

The father of this father here. If I had been biblical, I would have taught him from his youth. And I would have taught him and I would have said things like this.

Son, you are very young. One day you will have to go to work. One day you will have a family.

You need to begin to think now about that. Son, if you get a job as a truck driver, you are going to spend most of your time away from your wife and your children. And you are not going to be able to invest your life in them.

Let's look at other professions. I will do whatever I have to to help you. You see, we are not... Each generation has been adversely or wrongly affected by a lack of teaching.

A lack of parenting. A lack of instruction. In the United States we have a saying, live and learn.

That is directly the opposite of what God says. God says, learn and live. A young person says, well, I've got to go out and experience everything for myself.

I can't listen to the advice of my parents, I need to learn it for myself. That's absolutely absurd. Let's say I have a .357 Magnum handgun.

One of the most powerful handguns in the world. And I tell my son, this pistol will blow your head completely off your shoulders. And he picks it up and he says, Dad, thanks for that advice.

But I'm a person in my own right. I'm an individual. And I need to learn things for myself.

So I need to see if what you're telling me is true. He's only got one chance to do that. Generation after generation of people have been hurt because of a lack of knowledge.

Don't you see in the Old Testament he talks about that the sins of one generation has a great effect on another generation. In the first verses of Deuteronomy 6 the fathers are taught and they are commanded to teach their children the wisdom of God. Most fathers, even Christian fathers never instruct their children in the wisdom of the Lord God.

In the Bible or morality. The only time they talk about these things is when the child has already disobeyed. Our children are raised by the kindergarten by the grade school high school and university.

But not by us. And therefore their minds eight hours a day are filled with the very things we do not believe in. Let's go to the next question.

You said in your teaching that sometimes you go shooting arrows instead of taking care of the children. Alright, stop there. That's not what I said.

Sometimes everyone needs free time. You're not neglecting your children because you rest every once in a while. I encourage my wife to take free time.

To do things she wants to do. If a wife doesn't get out of the house sooner or later she's going to go crazy. I encourage her to go out and take a coffee with her friends or go out to eat with her friends.

Or to do something like that. Or sometimes it is very necessary for the husband and the wife to go out and to leave the children with a responsible adult that they trust. Children can cause great problems in a marriage.

Your home should not be child-centered. It's not all about the children. It's all about the Lord.

And it's all about the husband. And it's all about the wife. And it's all about the children.

Now, when I go out and do these things, many times, most of the time, my children do the same thing. They all have their bows. And they love to shoot.

My wife has just asked me to buy her a new bow. So it's things that we do together. And that's something that is really special.

Try to cultivate things that you can do with your entire family. So try to establish traditions in your family that are similar to this. Yes, yes, yes.

This is the last question. Housewifely duties. House... taking care of things in the house.

Like preparing the meals, washing, cleaning the house. That it is easier for her to do those things because a man takes at least half an hour longer to do things like that. That's pretty sneaky.

My wife says two things about her husband. I have selective hearing. I hear only what I want to hear.

And she says, I act like I'm useless around the kitchen so that she will tell me to get out and do it herself. She says, you know how to build a house but you can't wash dishes. Sometimes I'm washing dishes and she comes in and she looks at me like this.

She goes, you're pitiful. Pitiful. But pretty soon your wife's going to figure out this is all just a big trick on your part.

Now, again, let me say this. My wife has chosen to be a stay-at-home mom. She's not involved in the ministry a lot.

She says she has two ministries. Her husband and her children. And she dedicates herself to that.

She manages our home so that, like the man in Proverbs 31, I do not have a care. She manages the house. It's clean and orderly.

She manages the finances. She spends money on the groceries, pays the bills. We have both made major decisions on how the finances are to be spent.

But she manages that like a steward. According to what we've decided together. She manages the education of my children.

She spends hours a day teaching them so that they do not have to go to public school. I'm out of the house for eight to ten hours a day. When I come home, I do not have to manage the house, clean it up, or anything else.

She's done that. But you know, every house needs maintenance. There are pipes that leak.

There's grass to mow. There's wild animals to chase out of the yard so that they don't eat our daughter. There's all kinds of things to do.

But what my wife wants most is for me to be there and have a relationship with her and to have a relationship with our children and to instruct them. Now, it would be different if my wife was working. If we both worked outside of the house, we would both clean the house and cook and everything else.

Before we had children, my wife was in the ministry with me. So if we were all day in the park witnessing the work of the house, witnessing the people, the house was just as much my responsibility as it was hers. That's all the questions? Yes.

All right. Can you be, as a father of young children, an elder or deacon in the church with the result that you are away from the home two or three evenings a week? Well, I'm supposing you also have a full-time job. And so you're away from the house two or three times a week also on top of the full-time job.

Now, obviously, I cannot give you a yes or no answer because I don't know your life. But there are some things that you ought to consider. Romans 12, 2, The will of God is perfect.

His will for you is perfect. So your ministry in the church is not going to contradict His commands with regard to your family. If you are honestly wearing yourself out physically, mentally, and spiritually, then you're going to have to restructure your life and you're going to have to cut some things out.

Now, your priority is this. First of all, your fellowship with God. I don't mean ministry.

I mean your communion with God. Second, your wife and family. And then from there, your responsibility in the church.

You say, now hold it. Church is more important. I don't even have to argue that.

Because even if it is, you must realize that according to the Bible, if you do not take care of your family, you cannot lead in the church. Both the elder and the deacon must manage their household well. But let me just hit a darker issue.

This is a perfect example of how the way we do church wrong. This is a perfect example of how we do church wrong. Church has become so complicated, so program-oriented, that the ministers of the church are busy doing things they're not supposed to be doing.

And that's one of the problems that elders have. So let me give you an example. All over the world, how many millions and millions of dollars are spent on Sunday school? It's unbelievable.

Sunday school. How many hours are spent, countless thousands of hours, training Sunday school teachers? And the same with youth ministry. Yet do you realize there's no place in Scripture where Sunday school or youth ministry is actually put forth? Yet the Bible does command fathers to teach their children.

And so we spend millions of dollars and millions of man-hours doing something that God never really told us to. But spend almost no time and no money training the fathers in the church to teach their own children. I'm not saying that Sunday school or youth things are all wrong.

But just look at what we're doing. The church is doing a lot of things that's supposed to be done by the family. But it's been relegated to the church.

And so the elders are so busy doing that, they don't have time for Sunday school. And they don't have time for their families either. And they don't have time to do what elders are really supposed to be doing.

Studying the Word. Ministering the Word. Living in prayer.

Because they're doing all kinds of program activities. And leadership meetings. It's a great problem.

But you have to sit down, you have to get your priorities straight according to the Bible, and you're going to have to cut some things out. Start at the bottom of your priorities and move up. The Bible is about family

planning.

When it comes to family planning... You've grown. When it comes to family planning, you really... I want to urge that you have caution. And that you have mercy.

Some of you are going to get mad at me. Because I'm going to go too far. And others of you are going to get angry at me because I don't go far enough.

First of all, if you are a biblical exegete, a student of the Scriptures, I believe that you will find it very difficult to come down on the side of never, for any reason, is it wrong... is it right to practice family planning. Now, the first question was, I didn't have children until I was married for eight years. That's true.

My wife had a brain tumor. And so we couldn't have children. But then one day it disappeared, and she's pregnant.

Now, here's something that I see in Scripture. Children are a gift from God. That's true.

People can practice birth control for nothing but selfish reasons. They don't want to have too many children because of their career. Or because of their lifestyle.

They don't want to have a lot of children because they just want to build their lives around themselves. Or they do it for economic reasons. Not because they're afraid they won't be able to feed the children.

They just realize if they have more children they're going to have to drive a cheaper car. Or not be able to have the economic power they would like to buy things for themselves. It's an inconvenience.

Children are an inconvenience to them. That is sin. That's sin.

I don't know any way to call it. I sometimes honestly question why people have children. You have a little baby and you go back to work six months later.

Your baby is raised by another woman. And is mainly raised by the other children. Why are you having children? If you just want to give them away for eight hours a day.

Some serious changes need to be made in the West with regard to our view of children. Now, some people will say because of this women should never work or have a life outside the home. And there's some sound arguments to a degree in that.

But when I look at the book of Proverbs I see something very interesting. I do not see a woman who is limited. What I see is a woman in the different stages of her life.

Many of you women probably hate the Proverbs 31 woman. She's super woman. My wife one day I was talking to her about it and she said, no, you just don't understand the passage.

She said, this is not a day in the life of this woman. This is the entire life of the woman. And this is how my wife has chosen to order her life.

When it was only she and I for eight years. She was doing all kinds of things outside of the house. She was witnessing and ministering.

She's an artist. She was making things and selling them. When times got really tough, she cleaned houses for people.

Well, let the little children come unto me. They're not a convenience. This is what life's all about.

So when we had no children, she was doing things like the Proverbs 31 woman. But then children came. A blessing from the Lord.

Someone has to raise them. Do you see that? Or they're going to be raised by a secular society. And so my wife said, this is what I do now.

And so she dedicates herself to the home. Just like there was a time in the life of the Proverbs 31 woman when she dedicated herself to the home. As our children get older and they are taught to take care of one another, my wife will have more and more freedom.

For example, now our son Ian is eight years old. He can really do a lot of things. He watches his sister and his little brother.

He reads to them. He can even teach his little brother how to read. And so my wife has more and more freedom.

Now she doesn't leave them at home. But she's able to go down to her computer and do some outside translating work. Because she loves to do it.

Without neglecting her responsibilities in the home. Everything in stages. One day when our children are gone, my wife will travel all over with me again.

Stages of life. Next year I'm going to travel a lot less. Because I'm more and more moving into a certain stage of my life.

Now let's get back to the question. If someone is practicing birth control for these selfish reasons, I would say without a doubt they've got some serious spiritual issues. But now let's go to the other extreme.

I have met Christian families, especially Christian women, who boast about how big their family is. And I've met some who have large families that don't boast. I have met some women who have 12 children.

And the house is full of joy. The woman is full of joy. She's not wore out.

She is just an extremely gifted person. In that area. And that's what she can do.

I applaud her. But there are other women who try to imitate her. Who have eight children.

Who do not have her giftings. Her energy. And their houses are a disaster.

They go to homeschool meetings and brag about eight children. But the house is a zoo. Now let me give you another example.

Charles Spurgeon could read hundreds of books a year. And he almost knew everything that was in those books. He could point to the page.

He could preach hundreds of sermons a year and write dozens of books. I can't do that. It takes me four years to write one book.

And when I'm finished, it's not the tenth of a book that Charles Spurgeon would write in a day. I'm not Charles Spurgeon. I'm just me.

I'm happy about that. I can shoot a bow better than he could. Here's that people have different giftings.

I was teaching in a church one time and there was a huge family there. And they carried a sign, we are a huge family. And therefore we're spiritual.

I mean it was all... You just knew, that was their claim to fame. And I was talking about Ian and I, we went fishing. And we hooked a turtle this big.

What did you hook? A turkey. Don't catch many of them in the pond. It's called an alligator turtle.

And it will bite you. And Ian had him on the line. And he couldn't pull him in.

He said, jump in the water, daddy, get him. And I was more excited than he was. I jumped in the water.

And then I said, what am I doing? Well, I'm still alive. But I was telling this story. And one of the boys of that huge family came up to me.

And he kind of hid from everyone else. And he was crying. He said, brother Paul, did you and Ian really go fishing? Yeah.

But you went alone? Just you two? I said, yeah. He said, I've never done that with my dad. God has given us wisdom.

Be careful of selfishness. That's very prominent in all of us. Children are a blessing from the Lord.

Be careful of taking a huge family to be a mark of spirituality. Also, I have a friend right now who, if she has another baby, she will probably die. Wisdom and righteousness requires that something be done.

Another question. And then another question that connects to that. How do you deal with the following? You are alone.

But you would like to go through life with a God-fearing life partner. But no one comes your way. No one comes on the way.

You get you a big stick. And a net. That's how my wife got me.

I was walking through the jungle one day. And I heard. And I kept hearing the sound of this strange bird I'd never heard before.

And so I walked over to these bushes. And I pulled the plants aside and stuck my head in. And a huge rock came down on my head.

And when I woke up, I was married to a Peruvian jungle woman. So all you single women need to have my wife come over and give you a conference on that. Anytime someone tells me they greatly desire to be married.

It is a wonderful blessing. It is a good desire. Especially in this world that hates such things.

Your desire to be married is important. And it is a desire from the Lord. If you do not have the gift of celibacy.

You should desire marriage. And it is better to marry than to burn. But there is also the work that God is doing in your life.

And that is conformity to the image of Christ. God knows exactly what you need to be conformed to the image of Jesus. Some of you need a wife or a husband.

And that is what the Lord has given you. Others of you who desire to be married. God has ordained that you still be single for a time.

Because he knows that you are married. And that is what you need in order to be conformed to the image of Christ. I know a person who is in their fifties.

Who greatly desires to be married. But they are not. And it is a great struggle for them.

But the Bible teaches us that God is using that in their life to conform them to the image of Christ. You should not make this an idol. And you should not waste your time seeking a spouse outside the will of God.

While you are single, dedicate your life to three things. Knowing God. When you have a wife and children, there are distractions.

Being conformed to the image of Christ. And growing into somebody who would make a good husband or wife. When a young girl comes to my wife and says, I want to be married so bad.

She'll usually ask them this. Do you know how to cook? And most girls go, no. Well then go learn how to cook and after that maybe God will bring you a husband.

The point that she's making is this. In God's providence he has not brought you a husband. Or a wife.

Spend this time in preparation. It's very important. And then also use your freedom to serve the Lord.

I did not go to Peru in order to find a wife. I went to Peru to start a church. While I was there, God brought me a wife.

You see, set your heart on him. Let me say something else that's part of this. It's important.

Bodily discipline or bodily training is only of little profit. But it is profitable. In the West, more and more people are becoming physically slothful.

Now it is wrong for you to want to look like some sensual supermodel. Or if you're a man, to look like Arnold Schwarzenegger. But I see a lot of single people who tell me, I want to be married.

But they do not take care of themselves at all. They do not take care of their bodies. They're just not making themselves presentable or attractive.

They're lazy. Now, there is a wrong preoccupation with the body and being in shape. And the ones who suffer from this the most are actually the women.

Because in most magazines, the woman is about two meters tall and weighs about three kilos. And so women are made to believe that's beauty. That's not beauty.

It's not even real. They've stretched her legs with the computer. God has given you a body.

And it is unique. Some of you are tall and thin. Some men are short and wide.

You can't change what God's given you. Spurgeon had a great mind. I can't find my socks in the morning.

But with what I have, I need to take care of it and cause it to prosper. Now, I know some of you are super spiritual. That none of this matters.

But God indicates that it does. We know about the beauty of Esther. The Bible speaks of the beauty of Esther.

Now, the woman of Proverbs 31, we don't know exactly what her appearance was, but we can learn from that chapter that she had a very pleasant appearance. Joseph and David were handsome men. If you're young, you're seeking a mate.

Also realize that taking care of yourself is important. It's just another aspect of what it means to be everything you can be for the glory of God. Now, some of you are probably really hurting about this matter.

I want to close by giving you an illustration. This really happened. There was a student and his wife at a certain seminary in the United States.

A wife and husband were students at a seminary. And they wanted to have children so bad. And she had something like three miscarriages.

And she had had a miscarriage that day. They had come home from the doctor. She was in bed.

And the husband had to go to the pharmacy to buy something for her. So he gets in the car, turns it on, and the radio comes on. And the announcer said, Madonna has just given birth to her second child.

The famous singer, who is so well known for being ungodly, and the seminary student became angry. I mean, really angry. He cried out to God.

He said, God, why? Here's a woman who hates you, who goes out and picks different husbands to mate with, to bring children into the world that she's not even going to teach about God. And you give her children. My wife is a godly woman.

She wants to raise this child in the fear and admonition of the Lord. And she's in there with a broken heart, about to die because she's lost her third child. How can you do this? He goes to the pharmacy.

And he comes back. And standing right there in the door of his house is another student. With a very serious look on his face.

And when he got out of the car, he goes to the pharmacy. The other brother, the student, walked up to him and said, I have a message from God for you. Now, he knew how serious this student was.

Though he was a little bit shocked about what he said. He said, this is God's message for you. Oh, no, sorry.

He was a little bit shocked because the student came up to him and said, I have a message from God for you. God knows exactly what you and your wife need. He knows exactly what you and your wife must pass through, suffer.

To be conformed to the image of Christ. I believe it was a word from God. And that's what I would tell you as a single person.

I know you hurt. I know you may be lonely. But I know God is good.

And I know God knows exactly what you must pass through to be conformed to the image of His Son. Let's pray. Father, I pray that you would use your word.

That you would bless your people. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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