

Ephesians 6

October 1, 2023

SEC: Introduction to the Counseling Ministry and Child Training

I told you that something we have needed to do in this church, and I really struggled with when to do it. I wasn't sure how exactly to do it. It needed to be done. I look at Sunday morning as a prime time where we cover and really showcase our church to many people. Then Thursday night and our one-on-one time together, and all the other things that we do, kind of support that. There are a number of things that I'm trying to accomplish as we speak in our church. I've told you about these as we've gone through the year.

One of the things I want to do, and this is the reason why I decided to do this on Sunday morning, is because sometime toward this fall or the first of next year, I want to take a group of you who I have been working with, and we have been kind of working together to get ready for this. I want to develop a counseling ministry. Not something humongous, but something that I can take a core of people, and that we can begin to reach out to a network of all the people that are obviously hurting. You come in contact with it every day of your life. It's a touch where there's a lot of hurting people out there, and a lot of them are lost without Christ, without hope. A lot of them are saved and on their way to heaven. Of course, the pain and the agony of life, we're not spared that just because we become a Christian. But in both cases, they don't know how to deal with it.

I promise you, 75% of your issues that you're going to deal with people in their lives are going to be around their kids. If they have kids, they're certainly going to involve their kids. So I want to accomplish that. I thought, "Well, I have an opportunity to cover a bunch of things here all in one shot." So for those of you that want to be part of that, then you have to approach this, and you may have kids, you have to approach it from two aspects. You have to approach it from the aspect that you are going to learn it for your own child first—we'll get to that in a moment—but also how you are going to have to use this and learn this material if you are ever going to get to the place where you can help somebody else.

Another reason I wanted to do it is because just about all of you have potential people you meet every day of your life. People that you work with, people that you just come into contact with, maybe they're your family, and they are concerned about their children. I can really appreciate that. They have questions. Here's a place where on the spot, like we've been talking about, the right man, the right place, in the right situation, God can use you if you will take this material to heart.

The most obvious reason why we need to do this is because if you look around, 80% of our church are young couples, and young couples with kids. That is a really healthy thing. If you go around to many churches, you're going to get a friend of mine that moved down to Arkansas someplace down there, and he's trying to find a church. He's been down there now two and a half years and cannot find a church. He tells me, "When I find a church that's got young people in it, it's a charismatic gobbledygook that's one big mess. When I do find a church that really teaches and believes the Bible and preaches it, everybody in the church is 80 years old or older."

Nobody has targeted the most target-rich environment in the world today. If you're building a church and have just a little smidgen of sense, it's obviously the young couples that are out there. Everything that we do, we try to reach them. I have to be honest with you, it isn't just because we want to reach them for the cause of Christ or we want them to come to church. That's obviously part of it because we feel our church is good for young couples. But the real issue is, there's a lot of heartache in raising your children. A lot of things are going to come up, a lot of things you're going to go through. The bottom line is, the difference between your child going to heaven and going to hell may just simply be what you take out of what you get today. We want to help you with that.

I firmly believe this with all of my heart. It bothers me sometimes that I don't think anybody else really understands this great concept, but I'm telling you, the greatest commodity this church has, the greatest single commodity outside the Bible, the greatest single commodity this church has is the children in our church. If we lose them, we've lost everything. They are, outside the Word of God, to me, the single most important thing in this church, our single most important commodity.

SEC: The Church's Role vs. Parental Responsibility

At the same time, you need to understand that it's not the church's responsibility to raise your child. We provide an atmosphere here. In our Sunday school workers and all of that, we have a concept which is different. In most churches, you'll find that you have one set of people that always work in the elementary or always work in the nursery, and they just do that. That's their ministry. I don't ever want to get to that. I don't think that's healthy.

➤ When you have the same people working week after week after week, they never get to be part of the main church and see what's going on. They always have to be a half a step behind. I don't necessarily want that. I don't think that's a healthy environment.

➤ When you don't have a responsibility to work down there with those kids, you lose sight of the vision of how important the kids are.

Some of you teenagers, I got flak from your mom and dad because they didn't want you to be in here instead of being down there. You never learn responsibility that way. If you're a young teenager in this church or you're in your early twenties, you need to be down there and share responsibility in this church just like everybody else. That's the way it has to work. Everybody does the same. When we start dividing it up, "Well, you don't have to because this is more important than that," we're sending a message that they are not the most important commodity down there.

I want you to understand, to me, that's why I come to your kids' birthday parties. That's why I'm there. The food's not that great, let's be honest. The highlight of it is they have pianos. He always has little fireballs in them, and I love those fireballs. It's one of those things where I want to be there because I want to be an intricate part of your child's life. Sometime down the line, your son or your daughter is going to come up against something that they're going to struggle with. If I

can buy a little time in their life right now of being their friend, not just their pastor, somebody that they look at that they can call me Bob, they can call me Uncle Bob, they can call me whatever they want, but they know that they are important in my life. It isn't just you, that I genuinely care about them and genuinely want to be part of their life. If that will buy me five, 10, 15, 20 years down the line what I need to have with them, then that's what I'm going to do.

SEC: The Impact of Early Investment

I have to tell you a story. We have a website, and one of our men put that website up, and it's been a great blessing. I get phone calls and stuff from it all the time. I have to tell you, Steve Senior and Steve Junior, you are definitely going to appreciate this because you knew who I'm talking about. The three or four most guys that are propagating our website, remember the McGinnis's from over there? Your boy, Steve Senior, ran into Mark McGinnis, who's got a restaurant down there somewhere on the canoe trip. Evidently, you told him about our church or whatever you told him, he got onto the website. He called me the other day, and he was telling me, basically, he was saying, "You know what?" He says, "I asked him about his family," and he was telling me all the things he's done wrong in life, which I'm not interested in that. I said, "You know what? We all have to go where we have to go and do what we have to do." He said, "But I want you to know," he says, "that website is all our family has. We sit down as a family, and we go to church at your church, and we sit down there, and we hear, we all we got." He says, "I just finished this tape series." He says, "Our whole family just sat down, and that's where we're at with it." He said, "You know what?" He said, "I know I didn't do what's right when I was young, but now that I've got my head screwed on straight, or straighter than it was," he says, "I have to tell you, Bob," he says, "you're the only man that I remember in my life that preached the Bible." He was in my high school class, what, in the 70s, '76, '77, '78. He says, "You're the only man in my life that I remember genuinely cared about me when everybody else thought I was a jerk." And he was a jerk. That part of it, right? He was a kid. He was a problem. But you know what? Loving him and taking him paid off. Now the guys, and his own three or four other ones that I won't get into their stories, but now the guys that everybody wrote them off are propagating our website everywhere.

What a great verse comes back into mind, back in Ecclesiastes, when he says,

Ecclesiastes 11:1

Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.

What a great principle and a great concept that is. So your children are important to me. I'm going to try to cover all the areas that you need to know. I'm going to try to provide a biblical model for you. I want to accent that by obviously Thursday night.

SEC: Practical Steps and Addressing Concerns

Here's what I want you to think about, you young couples, or really anybody, I don't care. Here's what I want you to think about. I want you to think that as I'm going this week, next week, and then starting after the third week, I want you to get a good foundation. It's going to take me two

weeks to lay out a foundation. We have a context of where we're at and what we need to accomplish.

Then what I want you to do is this: You have two options. You can come to me as a couple one-on-one and let me help you with the struggles or things you don't understand or break them down for there. What I would really like to see is some of you couples, and you can begin to think about those already, getting into little parenting groups, getting four, obviously four or five couples coming over to my house without your kids where we can sit down and talk about these things. I can get more done with five or six of you than I can one at a time just by the space of time. So I want you to think about that. My door at my home is always open to you, and you're always welcome to come over one-on-one with me, and I will spend whatever time it takes. That's what we have here. But I'm just saying, I want to give you all the options.

Now, some of you are probably sitting here and you're saying, "Well, I'm 85 years old. I'm not going to have any kids." Don't be surprised. Sarah was 85 when she got pregnant. So don't throw everything out the window. But at the same time, obviously, ladies and gentlemen, these principles, some of you may be grandparents, these principles will help you with your grandchildren. Even if you have absolutely no kids at all, you're still a child of God, and the principles for that work here. So it's a win-win situation. It all depends on your attitude about it, like everything else. Saying, "Well, I don't have any kids, I don't really relate to that," would be like saying, "Well, I can't work with an alcoholic because I've never been an alcoholic." It is ridiculous. The principles are the principles, and they'll help you wherever you're at.

I understand basically where you're all at this morning. I've watched you now for the last, really for four years and everywhere in between that. I want to say this to you: Most of you young couples are all in the same boat. You're good people. I don't want anything that I say this morning, or even next week, to be taken as a criticism against you. I understand that the majority of you, even though you're not doing things the way you should do them, I have to honestly tell you, you're doing it with the best you know how to do. You're really trying hard. Your problem is, nobody's ever given you a biblical model for this. I waited especially this long because we had to go through the marriage stuff. There's no reason getting into the children stuff or the family stuff until we get your marriage. Some of you did with that what you should have done, and some of you didn't do anything with it, but then some of you won't do anything with it. I can't be responsible for that. My responsibility is to help you.

I understand that some of you, most of you, are in the same boat. You're good people. You love God. You love the Word of God. You want desperately your children to find their way through this maze called life. I would dare some to say that if you're, I don't care how much of a Christian you are and how much you love God and the Word of God, I'm saying that it's okay. Some of you are legitimately concerned. You're worried about the future of your child. You may see some things that you don't know how to deal with. You may just be afraid of what's out there. I want to try to cover everything that I can and then help you individually. I think that, like I said, most of you are doing the best you can do with where you're at.

I have to be honest, though. Some of you, very frankly, if you don't make some very radical decisions and choices very quickly, you're going to lose your children. I don't say that to scare you. Anything I say throughout this course is not designed to scare you. I'm just telling you the truth. I've been in this business almost 40 years, and I've seen every catastrophe that you could ever imagine in families between children, moms, and dads. I'm telling you, I'm not saying it to scare you. You can do whatever you want to do with it. I am your friend today, and I am not here to belittle you, to speak down to you, or castigate you. I'm here to help you. But I'm telling you, if you do not make some radical adjustments very soon, you're going to lose your child.

Then I want to take it one notch up. Some of you already have lost your children. Some of you have already lost your children, and they were children in your home. They're not married yet. You're out from under the responsibility of it, so to speak. They're in your home, and you've lost your children. Some of you understand that. Some of you don't understand that. Some of you don't want to understand that. I can't speak for where you're at, but I'm telling you this: Wherever you're at in the scenario of life and with your children, there's always something to do. But I'm not going to kid you for a moment. The longer you wait to do what's right, the harder it becomes to do and change the course of the things the way they are in your children's life. Yes, I'm afraid to say this, but it's an absolute truth, and I don't want to pretend that it's not. There comes a point when you reach the point of no return. There certainly does. There certainly does come a time in your child's life that because of the, and the Bible says,

Galatians 6:7

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

There are consequences in your child's life of not getting into a biblical format and a pattern by which you can train up your children. That's another concept that I'm going to bring up over and over again that I want you to ingrain in your mind. You raise chickens, you raise hamsters, you raise rabbits, you raise corn, you raise cabbage, you raise beets. You train children. Children have to be trained, and that's what we're going to talk about throughout the concept of this, of the right training. Allow me to help you today.

The first thing we need to do before we try to lay out all this thing, and I've had people come to me the last three weeks, "Tell me, tell me that, hey, look!" You cannot use the material I'm going to give you without a context. If you as a parent, or even as a young Christian, this is great material for a young Christian. You've just been saved a short time or just plugged back in in the last year. This is invaluable material to you to help you figure out your own life. But I'm telling you that you cannot effectively be where you need to be to your children until you understand the context and what you're up against and what you're dealing with.

So what I want to do today and next week is I want to very simply give you and lay out for you from a Bible model what you are up against, not only as a parent, but as a Christian. If you're a young Christian or somebody that's just getting back into this, you're really up against this. There's never a time that you're not up against it. But if you've been in the Word of God for a while and you've grown for a while, then you have a better handle on things. Information is

power. Information through the Word of God is the power to be wiser than your enemies, the Bible says, for they are ever with you.

SEC: The Devil's Strategy and the "Evil Day"

You know and I know the plan of the devil. It's real simple. In its most basic form, the devil wants to get everybody in this room in hell. If you're here this morning and you're saved or unsaved, I don't care. The devil's plan for all of us was the same: He wants to get you and me in hell. He'll work at it in everything that he can to get you and I in hell. Some of you have been shown grace by God, and you exercised faith in the promises of God, and you became a Christian. At that moment, you cheated the devil out of you spending eternity in hell. So then the devil just switches plans. If he can't get you in hell, then he'll get you to not follow the Word of God, live your life the way you want to, call yourself a Christian, but do whatever you want to do and justify it, thereby getting a whole circle of people around you that you may have had an influence in to get them into heaven, and he'll use you as a child of God to go to hell.

The greatest single strategy I can think that is going to befall every young couple, and this is why I have such an urgency about this, this is why I get very passionate about this. Most of you, you're going to heaven. Most of you, you got in under the wire, but your children aren't there yet. The tragedy is, because you got in, now you think that you can do what you want to do, and you're oblivious to the fact that there's somebody working behind the scenes to undo everything you do.

Next Sunday, I'm announcing my next Sunday sermon before I even get through this introduction to this one. Next Sunday, in context with this, I'm going to show you one of the most tragic concepts in the Bible: Why God visits the iniquity of the fathers on the third and fourth generation. Why the cycle of sin in a family will go, well, the first, the second, the third, and the fourth generation, and everybody in that generation is lost. God visits the iniquity of the fathers on a third and fourth generation. That's next week, but you need to understand this in context.

Today, I want you to grasp one concept, and I want you to go home with it. This is what it's all about today. The concept today is simply the concept of an evil day. I want you to leave today understanding that you are in a battle with time. You are in a battle, and the clock's running against a day in your child's life. I want to take this series, once we get through the introductions, and I want to show you how to prepare that child for that day. But today, I want you to leave here completely, totally, understanding that day and what you're up against.

Turn to Ephesians chapter six. Ephesians chapter six is a great passage, and we know it as the great spiritual warfare passage. In fact, when you pick it up down around verse 10, it talks about the spiritual warfare and the spiritual battle that we're in. It shows that there are seven pieces of armor. We know that these seven pieces of armor, because the Bible says we wrestle not against flesh and blood, we know that these seven pieces of armor are for our spiritual warfare. I've used it this way, a thousand other preachers have used it this way, and there's certainly nothing wrong with it, because that's what the passage says. But if you really want the context of Ephesians chapter six, you must come back to the beginning. Though it's okay to take episodes out that apply in both scenarios, and you want to use it for this versus this, that's perfectly okay when it

comes to teaching or preaching the Bible. But today, we want to look at Ephesians chapter six in the context of the whole chapter.

Ephesians 6:1-4

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

2 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The context of this doesn't just deal with you and I in our spiritual warfare. The context of this deals with your children. It starts out with your children. It winds up down in verse 10 saying, "Finally, my brethren," but the context of this chapter is your children. I want to show you today what you're up against and why you're up against a clock that is ticking against you.

Look at verse 10. This is where we normally pick it up.

Ephesians 6:10-13

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Now, the evil day for your child is real simple. Every child is going to face this day. Some of your children have already faced it. The evil day in the Bible is the day that your child has to stand by himself without his mother and his father being around him. He has to stand or fall on his own two feet based on what you've done in his life. Everything you're doing with that child from the time he's born till he hits that day is in preparation against that day. That day is coming. In some of your children's lives, it's already here. In some of them, it's already passed, and they have failed miserably. It's a situation where when the evil day comes, Ecclesiastes chapter 12, Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, said in verse 1,

Ecclesiastes 12:1

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

This is where your child, male or female, is faced with the world and everything in the world without you being there to protect them. You can only protect your child so long, and then they're going to have to face it on their own. The clock in your life as a young couple in this church, or

sitting under the sound of my voice, or listening to this CD wherever you may be, you're up against that time element. That clock is running, and every day of your life, that day comes closer to your child. You need to understand what you're up against.

The greatest example of this is found in Genesis chapter 3. You can say that Adam and Eve were basically the first two children in the Bible. They're also the first two men and women in the Bible, and they're also the first marriage in the Bible. But they represent, in their childlike innocence, they represent your child. Did you ever know the character between Adam and Eve? You know that Adam and Eve ran around naked, and it didn't bother them? You know it doesn't bother your child to run around naked? They'll run down the street, bare naked. They won't even think a thing about it. You know why? Because they're like Adam and Eve. They haven't been told yet that nakedness is wrong. They're in innocence. They don't know any difference. They're just like Adam and Eve were back in the garden.

You ever notice when your child does something wrong, they'll always run and hide? When you finally catch them, they'll blame it on somebody else. You ever notice the affinity that little children have for putting things in their mouth? You put on your kid's table a bowl of fruit or a bowl of vegetables, they'll take the fruit every time. The characteristics of Adam and Eve are the characteristics of every little child in this world to every parent. You know what Adam and Eve was? In Genesis chapter three, there came a day when they had to stand on their own, and they both fell. Eve fell first, and Adam second. You know what the issue was that they fell over? It'll be the same issue that your child faces when they hit that day. That evil day will be about one thing in your child's life. Down the line, it'll become drugs, alcohol, and everything else. But on that evil day, the devil starts very, very subtly. It'll be about one thing, and it'll be the exact same thing that the devil came with those little kids on their evil day, and it will simply be, "Yea, hath God said?" with a question mark.

The first thing the devil is going to deal with them on that evil day is about, "Does mom and dad know what they're talking about, or do your friends know better?" That's what you're up against. The devil came in, and he says, "Oh, that be no God." He said this, this, this, this. "You hang out with me, and I'll give you all the real life that there really is." When your kid is in the world today, and that daughter or that boy is out in the world, I'll tell you how they got there. They got there because somebody else got more influence in their life than you got, and you gave that to them. Somebody said, "Whatever the world has is a lot better than God has," and down they went. You'll not put off that evil day. You'll not put off that evil day.

When you go to bed tonight, and I suggest this, I really do. I suggest that this next week, and I fully understand it, some of you probably won't come back. This is going to be, you thought it was going to be a Dr. Spock thing, didn't you? We were going to have Big Bird up here, and acted out, "Now, don't do what your mommy said. Now, don't shoot me with that gun because Big Bird dies. He won't be around the other kids." I don't care. No, no, no, no. We're going to deal with it in its reality. I'll tell you why. You may not come back next week. You may say, "I don't need that." That's fine. But I want to tell you this, at the Great White Throne Judgment, when you have to point your finger in that child's face and say, "In everlasting fire and brimstone, prepare for the devil and his angels," you'll have to look at me on the way there, and

you'll realize that I told you the truth. If you want to make me your enemy because I told you the truth, that's between you and God. If I take the eternal soul of your child much more than you do, shame on you. But that's the way it is. It is what it is.

But I suggest you get a picture of your child or children, put it in your Bible for the series, so you have a point of reference here. Or tonight, do this: When you put them to bed, and you walk in after an hour or so, and they're all sleeping, and they look so angelic, and they look so innocent, and they look so pure as little children are, you remember that in that little encased, little angelic, chair-like being in your bed, lies an old sin nature that can become the most worst, godless sinner the world has ever seen. The clock, my friend, is running against you against that evil day. I suggest that you do that.

SEC: Isolating vs. Insulating Children

Now I want to give you a biblical model here today to help you understand how this evil day works, how you can prepare your child for it, and as I said, information is power, and how you can protect him from it. I'll tell you one of the biggest mistakes parents make. The biggest mistake parents make is they try to isolate their kids from the world instead of insulating their kids from the world.

I think, and you may not like what I'm about to say, that's fine. I don't really care one way or the other. I think the biggest concept laughed out of the pit of hell in the last 50 years, that damned more kids to hell than any other thing the devil could think of, all the bars and drugs in the world, here it comes, was the Christian school movement. Here, I'll just, everybody just close your eyes for about 10 seconds. We'll give you a chance to get out of here. One, two, three, four, five, six. Caught you, didn't I?

Let me tell you why that is. First of all, the Christian school movement was built on a farce. It was hatched in the minds of some of the great spiritual Christian leaders. I was in some of those meetings back in the 70s. I was in some of those meetings. The young pastors were taught that if you want to build a church, start a Christian school. They had no care for the kids themselves. They had no care for the quality of the education. They had no care for the quality of the teachers. It was all about building a church. Get in your town, preach against the public school system. For a while in the 60s to 70s, that's all you heard. Then announce that you're going to start a Christian school and give the appearance that if your child comes to your school, they are guaranteed to turn out right. I'm going to tell you what, it wasn't built because they wanted to turn kids out right. It was built because pastors wanted to take a shortcut in building a church, because once they sign up for your school, then you put in the hidden print, "Oh, I'm sorry, you have to be a member of this church for your kids to come here." In football, that's called the old trap play, left center nickel back up the middle. Think to the left, but run to the right. That's exactly what they did.

Parents now, it's like going to the vet. I don't like going to the vet. You know why? Because the vet wants to, the vet knows we love our pets, so they play on that emotion. I walk into the vet. Every time I go, I cry. You know why? There's a poem. There's a poem about your dead pets. I know it's the absolute most stupidest poem in the world. We're ludicrous. But I cry. You know

why? I have three dogs: Sham, Sham, and Japeth. I love them to death. I read that poem, and I don't remember the whole thing, but it talks about how you basically get, you're going to love this, basically your doggy heaven. First question she asked in Bible study the first time she showed up, "Do dogs go to heaven?" I didn't know how to answer. I said, "No, she'd go to another church." So I cut her in the middle. I said, "They go to purgatory." But I read this poem, and it comes down to the point where that you're dead, and you're walking across this beautiful field, and you're walking, you're dead now, and you walk across this bridge, and suddenly you feel a cold nose, and you look down, and I cry. I cry. It's the stupidest thing in the world. I know when my dog dies, it goes down on the ground, and that's all there is to it. I mean, eat it if you want. They do in Thailand. But I cry. I love my dogs. Sometimes they're the only friends you have, and they don't care what you do. That's why the more I'm around people, the more I like dogs.

You go in there, and there's a picture of an old dog, and it says, "Help your child, help your dog," I almost said child, "help your dog through his senior years of life." There's the most pitiful picture. "Have a senior dog checkup today." Now, what in the world is a senior dog checkup? I'll tell you what it is. You go pay \$120. He says, "Your dog's old." That's a senior dog checkup. They prey on every fear we have. Pastors and churches do the same thing with your children. The exact same thing. You know what? Their motive is crooked. Their motive is because they want you in church, and they want your, they look at people as money. They want your bucks. No buck, no Buck Rogers. They can't do all the great ecstatic things. So that's how they do it. That's what they want to do.

Now the parents, "Oh, give human nature an inch." It's like somebody said one time, "You give an inch, you give the devil," you're going to like this, "you give the devil an inch, he'll become the ruler." You give the devil an inch, he'll drive an 18-wheeler through it, man. So you give some parent the opportunity where they can go to Christian school. When a guy is saying, "You put your kid in here," and you know what? Parents drop their kids off. Human nature kicks in, and you know what? They say, "I don't have to do it now. They'll do it."

Then there's a third mistake parents and preachers make. They think that the moment you have a Christian school, God puts up a sign. You can't see it with the naked eye or the visible eye, but it's in the third, fourth dimension. But the devil sees it, and across that Christian school, right under the name, is a big sign: "Devil can't come in here." Nothing farther from the truth. Nothing farther from the truth. There's a Christian school in this town that I wouldn't mention the name. It's right over here in Independence. No, no, you don't know which one. There's four or five of them over there. I had spoken there 15 years ago. A year ago, a lady in our astronomy club asked me if I would speak at her school. Well, I had no idea what school it was. So she told me, and she says, "You can talk about God." Well, I said, "Well, that's fine." I still didn't know where it was. So she called me up. She says, "Is this good for you?" And I said, "Yeah." Well, she told me it was a Christian school. Now it boggled my mind for a second when she told me it was a Christian school, because I knew that Christian school. I had been there a number of years ago, and I had preached. But this woman was a Mormon. Seven-day Adventists or something like

that. A Latter-day Saint. Real ladder. In fact, a ladder with the rungs all off of it. You can't even get to heaven.

I thought to myself, "That's strange." So I go to this Christian school, which is a Christian school. I asked the woman around the thing there, and I talked to some of the people, and I say, "Now, where do you go to church?" And she said, "Well," she says, "I go to Mormon church, the Latter-day Saints down here over in Independence." And I said, "Oh," I said, "Do they have any conflicts between the Mormon church and the Baptist church?" This church, this Christian school was run by a Baptist church. And she says, "Oh, no, no. We came to a conclusion a couple of years ago that we needed quality education. So we all got together and said, 'As long as we believe in God, that that's the fundamental thing, and we can have our different beliefs.'" The moment I hear her saying that, I know what the real issue is. You see, out the door goes doctrine, and now comes "ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching." We can't make it financially with what we have. So we're going to bring in everybody else under the concept of God. We're going to let unsaved people mess with your kids, teach their doctrine to your people. Then you're going to think that it's okay because you're as stupid as everybody else is coming here. Let me give you a principle. You ought to know this:

Galatians 5:9

A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

But that's the Christian school movement. It was started for the wrong thing. Now, I'm not going to say even for a moment that there aren't good, there isn't somewhere out there, a good, honest-to-goodness, bonafide, right-the-way-to-do-it Christian school. Not going to say that. Not going to say they're all bad, but I am going to say in 40 years, I never found one.

SEC: Daniel's Example of Insulation

Now in Daniel chapter one, I want to read this chapter for you here. Let's look at this. I want to talk to you about isolating your child or insulating your child versus isolation. The Christian school mindset, or many parents, is to keep your child away from the world as long as you can. That sounds good short term, but it doesn't put off the evil day. Every kid who went to Christian school had to hit that evil day. I'm not saying you shouldn't send your kids to Christian school. I'm just saying you better do the work at home and not count on the Christian school to do it. We'll get into all that when we get into that section of it.

Daniel 1:1-21

1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it.

2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.

3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;

4 Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

5 And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

7 Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.

8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

9 Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.

11 Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12 Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15 And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat of the portion of the king's meat.

16 Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

17 As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king.

20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

21 And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

Father, we do thank you and praise you today. We ask you to take this time, prepare our hearts, thank you for the Word of God that gives us the model for everything. I know that there are men and women in here that they want to do what's right with their children. I know there's some that have failed, and their children are out there in the world, and I know that there's some that are about to lose them. Lord, help them understand today that wherever they're at, they can do what needs to be done if they're willing to do what they need to do. Thank you, Father, and we praise you now in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it, Amen.

Now I want to talk to you here about Daniel chapter one. The book of Daniel is an incredible book. I guess if you mention the book of Daniel, the first thing that comes to your mind is not child training. The first thing that comes to your mind is a great book on prophecy, and there's no doubt about that. The book of Daniel is one of the greatest books in all of the Bible that deals with prophecy, and it's an incredible book. But at the same time, it's a great book that shows you and gives you the greatest definition anywhere in the Bible of this evil day. It shows you what's coming for your child and how to deal with it.

There are a number of things I want to see here, but I want to start coming down through here. Let me give you how this thing works. Let me give you the cast of characters. In the story that I just read, you've got a number of characters. We need to get them straight in your mind.

➤ First of all, we've got Babylon. That's not a person, that's a place. Babylon for us is going to represent the worldly system. Babylon is going to represent for us in our study on how to train up your children as the unbiblical system, the worldly system that wants to destroy your child.

➤ You're going to find a man in there, his name is Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar is a type of, one of the 18 types of Antichrist in the Bible. He's a very wicked king, and in our story here, he's going to represent the devil who really runs this ungodly kingdom called Babylon, and this whole system that wants to destroy your child as typified by the world.

➤ Then we have the four Hebrew children. Those four Hebrew children will be any children. They'll be your children, my children. They're exactly what they appear to be here, and what you've got here is a picture of what the devil wants to do with your child, and how you can undo what he wants to do if you do what you have to do.

Now I want you to notice here, and the first thing I want you to see here is down here in verse three. It says,

Daniel 1:3

And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;

The first thing I want you to see here is the attack is specific. It's not a general attack, it's a specific attack. I want you to notice that it's an attack on the children of the king's seed. In other words, the devil is trying to destroy a couple of things here. These Hebrew children are from Judah. Judah is the tribe that Christ comes from. These Hebrew children are in the line of Christ either directly or indirectly, and what the devil wants to do is he knows if he can corrupt, he knows that these Hebrew children, these guys right here, are the link between what happened back in the Old Testament and getting us to the first coming of Christ. Daniel himself writes the book of Daniel, which without the book of Daniel, the whole Bible would be worth nothing. So the devil looks at this, and he's not interested in just anybody. He wants to destroy those children, and he specifically attacks those children by which God has a plan through and for.

I want to tell you something. What the devil wants to do is destroy the line of Christ in your family spiritually. He wants to get you as a mom and dad to have children and then not do what's right with them, and then start that cycle of visiting the iniquity on the third and fourth generation. He wants to begin to break that thing down, that the line of Christ and doing what's right. When mom and dad dies, nobody else carries on that line. That's what he wanted to do physically here with the line of Christ at the first coming of Christ, and that's what he wanted to do. He wants to do spiritually in your family. He wants to stop your family and stop the spiritual line of Christ that flows through your family. You were to God's plan was for you to get married, find a Christian wife, find a Christian husband, enter into a union together, and then be fruitful, multiply, and replenish the earth. That you would train up children and that you would win those children to Christ, and the legacy of the line of the spiritual line of Christ would go on down through history. The devil wants to stop that. There's a need to say if Daniel and these three children here along with him would have fallen in this thing and not carried it through, there would have been no first coming of Christ. The devil knows that. He also knows what God has for you down the line, and he knows that we can break that line in your family. So the attack is specific.

Now the next thing I want you to understand is this: These kids were ripped from their homes. These four Hebrew children here are somewhere probably between 12 and 16 years old. You don't know for sure, but that's probably what they are. You know that because of what takes place here and how in the ages where you can really, and they may even been younger than that. But they have been ripped from their homes. They're probably never going to see their parents again. In many cases their moms and dads were killed in front of their eyes because if you know anything about the Babylonian captivity and what Nebuchadnezzar did when he came down, it's horrendous. It makes what Adolf Hitler did to six million Jews that out Treblinka and Buchenwald and Sobibor look like a kid's picnic. He absolutely butchered the Jews. Women with child were ripped open and their babies dangled in front of them as they died. Little babies were stripped from their mothers and the Babylonian soldiers threw them up and it was a contest who could impale it on the spear. That's Nebuchadnezzar and his crowd. Of course, many of these

have probably seen their parents die, moms and their dads. Many of these have come to the place where they've seen their brothers and sisters separated from them, and they and now they are faced with the most wicked system the world has ever seen.

But the thing that I want you to understand here in all of this, somebody prepared them. Somebody looked behind, looked around, and looked ahead and saw this evil day coming. Somebody built a value system in them because when they go to Babylon, that is their evil day. One of these days your child is going to be faced with it just like they were. The same thing that Nebuchadnezzar, typifying the world system through Babylon, did to them is what he wants to do to your child, and it's the process by which he'll do it. You have got to see this.

The Bible says that they are of the king's seed. That means they had real potential. The Bible says they were skillful in wisdom. The five wisdom books in your Bible are Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job, Psalms, and Song of Solomon. Somebody taught on that. The Bible says in verse 4 that they were cunning in knowledge, so they knew how to use the Bible that they were taught. The Bible says that they had an understanding in science. That means they knew Job, Exodus, and Leviticus and all of those books. Yet when I look at that, I find a free common thing that the Bible says in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes and Psalms that you have to have to survive. You have knowledge. Knowledge is facts. Then it says they have wisdom. Wisdom is facts applied. But then they have understanding. Understanding is how God fits into the equation. Somebody had built a value system into these kids. Somebody had prepared them against the evil day of their life so that when mom and dad weren't there, big brother or big sister wasn't there, they were on their own standing before the most wicked godless king and the most wicked godless society, that they would have what they need to stand.

SEC: The Devil's Plan to Corrupt Children

Now let's look at this for a second. I want to show you what the devil wants to do to your child. Look at verse 4.

Daniel 1:4

Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

The first thing the devil wants to do to destroy your child's value system, if your child has one at all, let's take for granted that you do. The first thing that he wants to do is he wants, and notice the end of the verse, he wants to teach them. Teach them. See, teach them. Either you're going to teach them or he's going to teach them. Somebody's going to teach them. He's going to teach them the learning. Let's talk about that. The learning of the Chaldeans is the thought process. We don't have time to get into all of this, and we've talked about it in a marriage class, but you know the concept of attitude and action. We are what we think, and we do what we think. You develop an attitude about something, that is your response to it. You're supposed to take your child and develop the right attitude so we have the right response. We're going to talk about how to do that in the weeks to come. You as a Christian, as a young Christian, you know why we have

discipleship? You know why we spend one-on-one? You know why I'll put three or four people around you in a group to help you to develop the right attitude so you can get the right action. The first thing the devil wants to take to these kids that have been grounded in the Word of God is he wants to teach them the learning of the Chaldeans. He wants to change their thought process, whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. The second thing he wants to do is teach them to talk like the Chaldeans. You see, basically it is this: You think like the world, you'll talk like the world.

Now I have to say this, some of your children are already on this road. Some of your children are already there. The majority of your children, you're right where you can change it if you want to. You know what the number one problem is in this world? It was the number one problem in Genesis chapter three. The number one problem in this world today as we speak is the number one problem with your child. It'll always be the number one problem. It'll be the issue that comes up on that evil day, and it'll be the single most important thing your child struggles with all down through life, and it's so basic and so simple. You don't need Dr. Spock. You don't need anybody else to figure it out. You just need a King James 1611 Authorized Version. The number one problem in the world, the first problem in the Bible, will be your child's problem: Authority. Authority. Authority.

If there's any number one problem I see, and I say we're all in the same boat, if there's anything that we have one problem that is so glaring to anybody that can see it, it is the fact that your children, the little kids, they don't listen to authority. I'll tell you what you need to do. Ask your kids, excuse me, ask the nursery workers how your children perform there. Use them as a help. Now some of them, I'm going to, most of them are here. We got one team that's not here, but I'm going to fill in on it. Most of you don't want to tell the truth because you know how it works. They ask, but then when you tell them the truth, then they get mad at you. Happens to me all the time, so why should you be any different? Be kind, be loving, but tell them, tell them, tell them your child is terrible. I've watched them not listen to the, and it comes back to what you're training them. They don't respect other adults, and I promise you, they don't respect you.

I was sitting over here one day, Nicky was there with me. We were talking about something. One little kid came up, they say hi to me. I'm like, he kicked me. I went down to the nursery this morning, and down there, I always go down. Somebody was holding a little kid. I walked over to the guy, he slapped me. You say, "Well, was that my child?" You know, you know he has no front teeth. My only sorrow in it, I missed him the first time he hit the lady who was holding him, so she doesn't have any either. Incredible. They bite other kids, they hit other kids, they won't listen to other adults. Hey, when they get 12, 16, 17, 18, and 19, you're going to have some problems on your hands. Now you can deal with it now. You can stop it now, or you can just stick your head in the sand and say, "Oh, not my child." I'm telling you, yes, your child. The number one problem that you're going to face with your child is the number one problem I see. They will not respect authority of adults. They'll do whatever they want to do. I even had one parent, I was down there. Parent corrected a child, she gave him in there, the guy came in to pick him up, and he said to the kid, "You don't have to listen to her." That'll be 18 or 19 years old. You say you'll have to listen to that police officer. Incredible. Incredible. Incredible.

Look at verse five.

Daniel 1:5

And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

Now, the wine and the meat here, a little extra significant. We're not talking about a good caviar with a little bit of fava bean. We're really not just crazy on Sunday, Mike. I'm just telling you, I didn't get my meds this morning, man. This wine and this meat was offered to the idols of Babylon. There's much more significant than just a plate of vittles and some muscatel or whatever it is. It's much more to it. These wines and this meat were offered to the gods of Babylon. They want him to eat it because it's significant of where they want these kids to go. Then he says down here that he appointed them a daily portion. I want you to know, as we speak right now, the devil has a daily proportion for your child every day of his life from the time he can begin to look at things around and understand. The devil has prepared a daily proportion for him. If you're not doing something to offset that, if you're not doing something that will turn that around, shut that down, keep that from happening. If you're not structuring what they watch, what they do, who they're with, oh, and the devil is so subtle.

Now, I'm not saying this is wrong, but I want to show you how subtle it is. The devil never misses a trick. I don't think you parents get that. The devil never misses an opportunity. You and I miss loads of opportunities. The devil never misses any opportunity. A number of years ago, when my girls were both little, we were sitting there on Saturday morning, and we were watching cartoons. We were watching those Saturday morning cartoons. I got looking at that thing, and we would go from one to the other to the other. I got looking at them, and I got thinking about it when I'm looking at that. I thought to myself, I didn't want to turn the TV off because it obviously wasn't, but it showed me a great concept. It showed me how that in everything that's out there, the devil wants to take it to destroy your child, no matter how subtle and no matter how unbelievably good it looks. I was watching Saturday morning cartoons, and I looked at that thing, Daffy Duck, the Road Runner, Porky the Pig, Heckle and Jeckle, Bugs Bunny, most innocent comic shivers saw your life. But you know what? Every one of those animals are unclean out of Leviticus chapter 11. Every one of them. Devil never, no, I'm not saying of course you watch Daffy Duck, your kid's going to die and go to hell. No, it's because he's got Daffy Duck for a mom and dad, why he's going to go to hell. What I'm saying is the devil doesn't miss a trick. I'm not saying you shut down everything in their life. I'm saying you insulate them.

Look at verse five, at the end of three years, they might stand before the king. Hey, that's exactly how long it took the Lord to train his disciples. It took God three years to get him to serve him for the rest of their life. It takes the devil three years to get him to serve him. But you know what the great concept is here? He wants them to stand before the king. Ephesians chapter six says he wants them to stand before God. Your child's going to stand one place or the other. You know who gets to choose? Unfortunately, not your child, you. Your child didn't ask to be born into this world. You and your husband, and you wife and your husband, you conceived them. However,

you conceived them. Your mindset was what you did. You wanted to be married. You wanted to have kids, and however it happened. The bottom line is this, having kids is easy. Having kids is real easy. The tremendous responsibility that comes along with having kids, another whole world, another whole world. That's the problem with parents. They want to have them, but they don't want to take the responsibility. They don't want to change their life. They don't want to make sure that, yeah, some of you got into heaven, you're saved. Well, what about your kid? Better put that picture in your Bible. You're going to need it next week. In fact, I just tell you some of you to go ahead, and I'll come back next week, stick your head in the sand, think it's okay. Have a free ticket right to the Great White Throne Judgment. At the end of three years, the bottom line is your child's going to stand. She's going to stand before God or the devil.

Now look at verse six and eight.

Daniel 1:6-7

6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

7 Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.

The next thing I want you to see is the devil wants to change your child from a sweet little loving kid that he is right now to a foul-mouthed, fornicating, cigarette-smoking, beer-guzzling, fornicator, dope head that just ruins his whole life. That's his plan for it. That's what he wants to do with it.

Now, I don't know if you know this or not, but these names are hard to beat. First of all, there are the children of Judah, and the names they got are like all the great names they get in the Bible. They always have something that deals with their relationship with God.

- Daniel means God is my judge.
- Hananiah means God is gracious.
- Mishael means God without equal.
- Azariah means God is my helper.

I'm just going to stop right there and preach the rest of the morning on this and forget the rest of the message. What a value system a kid needs. It is basic, formal concept. When we talk about a value system, I know there's a lot of parts to it. It's going to take us 10 weeks to get through it all, but I'm telling you, you want a basic outline of a value system in your child's life, just take these names.

- God is my judge. Teach your kid that he's not going to escape the judgment of God. Teach that child that God is going to take him into judgment for everything

he does. But don't just teach him that. You can't teach him the judgment of God without the grace of God.

- > The next boy's name means God is gracious. So you teach that kid that he won't get away with sin, but you're teaching that God loves him and died for him and shed his grace through his blood.
- > Look at the next name, Mishael, God without equal. Well, I don't stand up when he goes to school and they try to teach him evolution. I don't teach him when he can't stand up when he goes and face the world and somebody says, "There ain't no God." He'll have already ingrained in his heart that not only is God a God of judgment, but God is a God of grace and also God without equal.
- > The last one, Azariah, God is my helper.

See, the four points, the greatest thing you can train your children right now is to know them that they're not going away with sin. God is judgment, but He's love. He'll love them that there's no other God before Him. Yet He is their best friend. That's the value system somebody had built into these kids, and even so great that they named those kids based on what they were teaching.

You know what the devil wants to do? I'll tell you what he'll do.

- > He wants to take Daniel, which means God's my judge, and change it to Belteshazzar, which means "Bel's prince," prince of devils.
- > He wants to take Hananiah, which means God is gracious, and change it to Shadrach, which means "illuminated of the sun god Bel."
- > He wants to take Mishael, which means God has no equal, and change it to Meshach, which means "who is like Venus?" In modern times it would be "who is like Paris Hilton?" No, no, that's what I'm talking about. Venus was their god and worshiped. She got in that wreck and lost both her arms. Then they had to sell pencils down on the street corner, and then they named them after a while.
- > Azariah, God is my helper, he gets changed to Abednego, "servant of Nego," the great god of Babylon.

You see, the devil wants to change your kid's personality to get them to be somebody God never intended them to be. You want to know this? If you would go to the average pastor, go to him. If you go into another church, call him up this week. Just say, "I was thinking about this. Be harmless as wise as serpents, harmless as doves." Just say, "Hey, I heard something this week, I'm not sure. What were the three names of the Hebrew children?" You go to Sunday school class, they'll teach the names of the Hebrew children are Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Even in our churches, they take the devil's name over God's name. No wonder we're screwed up.

You go to your pastor, you do what you want to do. You ask him, "What are the Hebrew children?" If he comes back Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, take that man, put him on a golf tee or a football tee and drop kick him through the goal post of life. You say, "I don't like that." I can't help it. You like better your child growing up in that kind of influence? My God, people, we're talking about the destiny and the eternity of the soul of your child, not some guy you like.

The devil wants to change your child's personality from being like God to being like the world. Some of you drink. I've never really drunk in my life. I've never been drunk in my life. I tasted beer when I was in the army. I tasted hard stuff, whatever it was. I've always been a guy who didn't care what people thought of me. Even as an unsaved man, I wasn't shamed when I was in the army, but I saw how stupid drunkenness was. They would make fun of me. I'll never forget this time. We were going out, and I'd go out with them. I mean, I'd go out with them. I just didn't get drunk. They used to kid me about how a real man drinks. They used to give me a tough time. "Well, yeah, you can't be a real man unless you're able to drink all this. You drink this and pass." I would. I'd have passed out. I smell a bar rag. I'd probably fall over. We'd go out all the time, and I'd be the only one sober. One time this guy got in my face, and he made fun of me because I didn't drink. I blew him off, and I said, "Yeah, let me tell you what, if being drunk is what makes you a man, well, I'll tell you what, you got some work then." Because you, and I never, we went out that night, all got drunk. I walked into the restroom after being in there about four or five hours. The guy was so drunk, he got sick from drinking. He was so drunk. Now, this is a man. He was so drunk, he threw up in the sink and was washing his face in the urinal. Now that's a man. I walked over to him and pulled him back by the hair of his head after I used the urinal. I think I'll get even with you. You may get me one point. I'll get you later. I pulled his head back, and I said, "Hey, Ralph, is this what a man is? Is this what a real man should be?" Left him there.

Now I've never been drunk in my life, but I'll never forget the first time I took a drink of hard liquor. Somebody poured me a thing of whiskey. I drank the whole thing down. You know what I remembered from that? I remember from that that my body instinctively told me, "It wasn't designed to drink this." You know what? If you like that stuff, you have to work at it. I don't think there's anybody in the world that ever took their first drink, just gulped it down and said, "Wow, that was really good." You have to work at it. You know why? Your body's telling you, "This does not compute."

I don't smoke. I've never smoked. I've tried smoking. I just couldn't see the percentage in it. Now when there's \$6 a pack, I mean, I watch over there, I get gas. Somebody's going to give me a carton of cigarettes. It's \$447. I'm not arguing with you. If you drink, I told you when we started. This is not a condescending thing. I'm making some points. I know some of you got saved. You still have problems with cigarettes. You're trying to kick it. God bless you. I know some of you have. It's, I'm not about that. It isn't about that. I take you where you're at. I'm just telling you. You know what? The first time I smoked a cigarette, and I took it down to my lungs, my body told me it doesn't belong here. When I got saved, I found a little insight to it. The only people who have smoke in their lungs are people in hell. I'm telling him, my body told me the moment I did that, that this body was not designed for that function. I had to kick that principle aside and make my body like it. That's what the devil wants to do. He wants to take your child and work

him through that daily portion where he gets used to it. He likes it. He desires it. Then he can't live without it.

In every generation, there have been children that grow up, and they're not satisfied with who they are. In my generation, we had the hippies. Remember the hippies? You know what hippies were? They never took a bath. They wore old clothes. Their whole thing was they were against authority. Society was one way. They were another way. They were making a statement by the way they dressed and the way they smelled and the things that they did that they were different from everybody else. The real issue was against established authority. Every generation has them. You see it around here today. Ball caps used to be worn this way. Now they wear them over here. Pants were designed to be worn here. Now they're down to here. What in the world? I better make some easy when you have to catch them or run them down, don't it, Joe? I was out there the other day, and I'm walking around, and this guy cut a whole line of them. He's hitting them down to his rear end. I don't care. But I have to know, how do you hold them up? Do you have metal props or something that goes in there? Did they make a down to your rear end pants holder up? That would be impossible. I tried it at home one time. I don't have the hip for it. Mine came down 10 out of 10, man. I'm looking at that, and I'm thinking, "What in the world?" You see, that's what Nebuchadnezzar wants you to do. He doesn't want you to look normal. He wants you to look like young Frankenstein, abnormal. He wants you to be different.

My wife and I are out at the mall. We go out and walk around, and see what we don't have, and those things. There came a guy and a girl walking in front of us. She had orange hair. He had purple hair. Now, I got what would make an 18-year-old kid, or 19, however old they were, what would make somebody want to make their hair orange and purple? It wasn't just orange and purple. It was, you know, it looked like he had stuck his fingers in the 440 volts and got a permanent. Then walking around arm in arm, and I'm thinking to myself, "What in the world?" Orange. I mean, it wasn't kind of orange. It was orange. It wasn't kind of purple. It was purple. I'm thinking, "What would make a kid just figure their hair to the place that they look like an absolute idiot?" Then walk around like, "Oh yeah, this is me. I'm bad. Oh yeah. Yeah, I'm bad." I walk around. A big and a bad, and I'm really a jerk. I'm walking around town just looking for work. I'm going to break. That gives me a headache even doing it. What in the world? I don't understand it. The devil wants your child to be just like that. Just like that. He's got a daily portion. He wants them to think like the Chaldeans. He wants them to talk like the Chaldeans, and he wants them to become one with all the filth of this world, and my friend, the evil day is coming in your child's life, and the clock is running, and you are up against it. He's got a whole smorgasbord laid out for them. They see it every time they go out the door.

SEC: Daniel's Stand and Lasting Impact

Oh, but here's my boy. Here's where you want your child to be. Look at verse eight.

Daniel 1:8

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Somebody had built a value system into that young man. It didn't matter now what the world threw at him. He had been established, and he wasn't going to stray from what God wanted him to do. Somebody had taken the scriptures that they had and shaped his will, developed his character, built God into his mind, and molded his spirit. Somebody had insulated him from the godless world of Babylon. Somebody had looked behind, looked around, and looked ahead and saw this day coming.

Yet, you know what the amazing thing is? Go back to what I said earlier. He was ripped from his family through no fault of his own. He didn't do anything wrong to be carried into Babylon. He finds himself in a circumstance and a situation where the bottom line is he's where he didn't want to be. If that was you and me, we would have rationalized our situation. We'd have said, "Me, oh God, he threw me into this thing. So you know what? I'm just going to live like him. When you're in Rome, do what the Romans do." He could have rationalized. He could have justified. He could have worked it out of his own mind. You know what the great thing is? He had no parents. He had no brothers. He had no sister. He had no mom. He had no dad. Nobody would have known except God. That's what you want, your child. You want in your child that they do right, not because mom and dad are there. You want in your child not because that brothers and sisters are around or somebody's going to rat on them. You want them to do it because when nobody sees, God sees. You want it based on the purposing of his heart that he won't defile the God that he had in his life.

You know the rest of the story here to make it short. You know the rest of the verse in story chapter 9 through 21. They come to him and they say, "Hey look, you got to do this." Prince of the eunuch says, "You're going to get me in trouble." They said, "Hey look, you know what? Just feed us pulse and water." Pulse and water.

Psalms 78:24

And had rained down manna upon them for to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

Isaiah 55:11

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

They're both a type of the Word of God in your Bible. "Just feed me pulse and water after 10 days. After 10 days. Put us back together and prove all things. Hold fast to that which is good. Prove us." So after 10 days they bring them back. You know what it says? It says that they're 10 times better than all that Babylon has to offer.

I want to tell you something. This is a great principle, and boy, you miss this, you miss a lot. Verse 20 says, the magicians and the astrologers, they couldn't compete with them. Now when he puts that in there and he tells me that they ate the pulse and water, type of the Word of God, for 10 days, and then he put them all together. What you basically got here at the end of the day, you've got your child being taught a value system versus the world with no value system. Yet there's a great concept in here that maybe some of you older people, you need to grasp this. Maybe some of you parents are here today, and you're not even saved. Maybe you'll come here

and you're listening to this, and you're thinking, "Wow, you know, I don't know about all of this." Well, let me, he put a great concept, and some of you older Christians are maybe sitting on the fence. Some of you young Christians that are maybe are struggling with things. Let me show you a great principle here.

You know the two kinds of people he used here to describe Babylon: magicians and astrologers. You know both magicians and astrologers both deal in illusions. Magicians give the illusion they can do magic. There's no real magicians. You think when David Copperfield makes a 747 disappear that he really made it disappear? You think when Houdini went down in the Hudson River and was down there for 20 minutes and got to see how everybody thinks, you think he can really do magic? You can't do magic. It's an illusion. What he's saying, you know what an astrologer does? They lie to you. They tell you that this, this, this, this, this. They tell you all the signs of the stars, and they make your life by the stars. While you can drive down 350 going downtown and you can see the astrologers in their little houses there. They can't read to predict your future. It's an illusion. They tell you what you want to hear. They tell you what you want to know. They pry on your weakness of your own instability of who you are. That's what the world does.

The world will do two things from this verse. If you're here and you're struggling on it, you're a saved young man or a young lady or a mom or dad, let me just tell you, the world will do two things for you. If you let them do it to you, you're stupid.

➤ The first thing the world is, it's an illusion. It isn't true. All you see out there that glitters is not gold. It's an illusion. I remember when they used to put cigarette ads on the TV and beer commercials. They always strategically put it where young people at a beach with guys and girls frolicking in the sun, having a beer. It gives you the impression that, "Wow, man, if you have a beer man out there, that's what you do at parties. You have beer and you get drunk and you stumble around and you have a good time. Oh, this is fun." They would never sell beer if they showed you an alcoholic ward or just took the cameras into the city union mission. "Have a beer," and some old guy with cirrhosis and liver down there with a shake so bad and his eyes blurry, lost his family, lost his wife, lost his house, lost everything, and said, "Yeah, have one on me."

➤ They have cigarette commercials. I used to say, "Oh, Marlboro. How come all men smoke Marlboro?" I'll tell you why. Because they used to have the best commercials. You get that out there, the Marlboro man. Now this is how stupid it is. He's on a horse in the middle of a cattle drive. 50,000 cattle, dust all over the place. Got his leather chaps on his hat vest. Lariat rope. He's a man's man. He's down there, and he looks over that thing and says, "And all the cows come to where the flavor is." Really? You ever smell 10,000 cattle? You have people down there, "Oh, that's a man. Give me some chaps. Give me a hat. Give me some boots.

Give me some spurs. Give me a horse. I want to go where the flavor is." Flavor is. You know what two 5,000 cattle do to lose three, four times a day? Flavor is. It's an illusion. It's either an illusion or as the astrologers, they play on your weaknesses and tell you what you want to hear. That's what this world does. The world knows what you want. So it'll play to your needs and to your weaknesses because it knows you don't know the truth. Let's face it, all this world will follow. Why do you think there's so many screwed up things out there in the world of people follow? Everybody's looking for something. They just don't want the truth. That's why.

Then I'll show you another great concept. Look at verse 21.

Daniel 1:21

And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

You know how long that is in your Bible? That's 70 years. You know what you got? What a great principle.

Psalms 90:10

The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

That's 70 years. You know what you got here? Great principle. What his parents did for him before that evil day, not only got him through the evil day, but it sustained him the rest of his life. It got him through the rest of his life.

Now, I have to tell you, Daniel wasn't perfect. A couple chapters later from chapter one, he makes one of the biggest bonehead things he ever did in his life. Got him wound up in the fiery furnace. He wasn't perfect, but he always came back online. Nothing ever distracting to the place where he never came back. He never let the things of Babylon change who he was. He never let the King of Babylon get it out of his heart.

SEC: Conclusion and Call to Action

Now, mom and dad, that's what you're up against when the clock is running. You see what I want to do for you, and in the Bible we're going to lay out the next couple of weeks, there's four kinds of parents. Four kinds of parents, and all of you that are parents are in one of those four. Some of you have a mixture of those four. But what I want to do, and I said it when we started, I don't want this to be, I try to make it fun. I try to make it light, but at the same time, I tried to show you what you're up against. Anything I said today, I didn't say to castigate you. I didn't say to make you feel bad. I said it because it's the truth. The bottom line is this, the most precious commodity you have in your life is your children. I want to help you with them.

I want you to think over the next couple of weeks, some of you maybe can begin to talk about, I don't want any more than five couples in a group, maybe six at the most. Start thinking about who you want to line up with, who you want to come over. Maybe once a month or every so

often we can get together, come over to my home, sit down, and we'll talk about your fears. You can say, "Bob, you laid this out. I wasn't sure how that went. Bob," and what will happen is not only you'll learn from me, but you'll learn from each other. We've got to learn to help each other. This is no one thing that one person can do. You've got the people in the nursery that love your children who will never get stale, and your children just become because of the fact that we're rotating them in every week. We will do that till Jesus comes back or God shows me different. The bottom line is you've got people there to want to help you. They'll be honest with you. They'll tell you, take it in the right spirit. Don't be afraid to ask them, let me help you get these lessons down, which you don't understand.

Today all you got was a good foundation of what you're up against. We're going to go through every detail. We're going to cover the six parenting principles that you have got to have, and we'll break those down in one-on-one, and you put the whole package together, and you begin to start. I'll show you, I'll show you no matter where you're at with your children, how you can go back and you can regain some ground. It's just that simple. Now how they respond to it after a certain age is another whole world, but certainly you ones with young children, you still have time. Time's running out, and you're up against the clock, but we have time to do what we need to do. I know this is where you're at. I know you're all in the same boat, and we'll get through it. For me this next week, you think about those groups, you think about, and that's why I want to give you a couple of weeks before we get to that point. I want to give you a couple of weeks to lay a good foundation. I want to get into the first lesson about starting the concept of building the value system in your child, and then we're going to start those classes from there. You can come over at will. If I have to put everything else on the side, I'll do that. That's the most important thing. We've got to get that point of it done. You pray about it. You make this series, you make this series like it's the most important thing you ever heard about the Bible, because I promise you when it comes to your children, it is. Don't make the mistakes that so many parents have made where they lose their children never to get them back again. Don't let them get into that world system that all you do is just beat your head against the wall because you passed the point of no return. You kid yourself, you say, "Oh, they're going to come back this time," or "I'm going to do this," or "I'm going to do that," or "I think I'm making progress," and all it is is your own illusion that it ain't ever going to happen. I'm not saying it couldn't happen, but what I'm saying is most parents continue to make the same mistakes they made way back when, and that's why nothing ever changes. I don't want that to happen to you. I want you to have those children, and I want you to raise them up that the legacy of the Lord Jesus Christ spiritual in your family goes on and on and on because that's what God intended. Every head bowed and every eye closed. Father, we thank you and praise you for the Lord Jesus. We love you.