

Proverbs 13:22-25

Sunday 12/6/2015

If you have your Bibles this morning, I want to invite you to turn to Proverbs 13. We are going to finish out this great chapter today, hopefully, and we will pick it up in Proverbs 13:22 and bring it on down to the end of the chapter, I think around Proverbs 13:25.

Remember that last week we contrasted in our study the wicked messenger versus the faithful ambassador. We looked at two great examples in the Bible, probably the two greatest contrasts of that you could ever find. The wicked messenger being Judas, who brought the wicked message to Christ and betrayed Him. Then the faithful ambassador was the Apostle Paul, who was faithful in the ministry that God gave him to establish the Gentile churches.

Today we will look at another great truth in the next section of Proverbs here in Proverbs 13, and hopefully, as I said, we will close out the chapter.

I. The Depth of God's Word

When it comes to the Bible and knowing it and learning it, you will have basically two types of Christians. You are always going to have the ones who do not care to get involved in it at all; I am not really talking about them. When you find people who in their mind and their heart begin to say, "Okay, I am going to get into the Bible," they basically will fall into two categories.

There are those who will just never get past the surface of the Bible. They will never get past just the common, basic things of the surface of the Word of God. Then you will find those who have a depth to them when it comes to the Scriptures. All of my life I have been associated with churches. I have seen men who were Sunday school teachers, who were deacons, even pastors. People who had been certainly saved for 20 or 30 years who should have had a great insight into the Bible. But after all of that time of being saved—and I truly believe they are saved—after all that time of being saved, going to church, their knowledge of the Word of God is absolutely minuscule. It is absolutely just surface. Basic things that in most cases they probably have never even studied and got into, probably just heard the preacher say or somebody else say.

But then you find people who really have a depth to the Word of God. Thursday night we talked about Ephesians 3:17-19, where it says:

Ephesians 3:17-19

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

I talked to you about the fullness of God. I think it is a tragedy for a child of God to be saved and go through life and never experience the fullness of God. You are going to find out, if you do not

know this already, God did not give some of you the ability to learn the Bible and others you just do not have that ability. You may have some God-given abilities with what you do in sports or in your job or what you do in life. But when it comes to the Bible, when it comes to having a relationship with God and learning the Bible, you can have all that you want. There is no limit to that. The only limit will be you yourself.

That Bible says that most Christians, from that verse right there, most Christians are basically just what I call three-dimensional Christians. They just see things in life around them without any real perceptiveness. They do not have any insight. They will see a situation and they will see it as it appears, but they will never have the ability to see it as it really is. There has to be a depth at some point in your life with the Word of God to have the fullness of God. The fullness of God just does not happen because somebody gets saved and gets into the Bible. There has to be a process, an understanding of where you want to go and what you want to do.

II. Surface Swimmers vs. Deep Sea Divers

I always thought of it like people who like to swim. There are two extremes in swimming. You have one guy who likes to swim and he is basically a surface swimmer. Sometimes they are not very confident in their ability. Other times they are very good swimmers, but they basically limit their swimming to swimming on the surface. They stay on the surface in all of their swimming activities; they never go down very deep and they never get too far from shore.

Then on the extreme, you would have what we call the deep sea divers. They are affectionately called the hard hats. They wear the special big brass hat that you are so familiar with that you see. They go down to the very depths of the sea. They will go down and do work on wrecks. They will do salvage jobs seven or eight hundred feet below the surface. They have the ability to go way beyond the surface and delve into the depths of the oceans of this world. Because of their ability to go deep, they will see and experience things that the surface swimmer will just simply never see.

The Bible is just like that. On the surface there are some great things to see. There really is. You just get a basic little outline of the Bible, books of the Bible, and there are some great things that you can see on the surface. But when you really go down deep, the book, like the bottoms of the ocean, becomes absolutely spectacular.

I had a friend of mine who was a pastor. His name was Rod Stuchel. Rod was a nice guy. He really knew his Bible. But Rod was an incredible diver. He loved to dive. He lived up in New York State up there and he would dive with teams of guys. They would actually, most people do not even know this, but off the East Coast, just maybe on the land side, down maybe two, three, or four hundred feet, there is a whole bevy of wrecks. The U-boats were sunk during World War II, and these guys would go down two or three hundred feet. They would have to mix their oxygen with nitrogen and balance it out because of the depths.

He told me one time—and I have always been thrilled with that kind of exploration and guys that did that; I could never do it, but I would ask him about it—he would tell me, "You know what, Bob, when you get down there about three or four hundred feet and you look up and you can

barely see the light of the sun, and you are down there and there are fish that you have never seen before. There are wrecks from years gone by, hundreds of years." He even talked about a Spanish galley that they found that sank off the coast back in the 1600s. He says, "It is the most spectacular thing you have ever seen, and Bob, it is another whole world."

But you see, when you just swim close to the surface, close to land, you never see things like that. Many times the person will swim close to the land because they always want to be close to the world in a biblical sense. It is like Abraham, when God called him to go out to Ur of the Chaldees, he started to go, but the first problem he had, he ran back to Egypt. Surface swimmers never get too far from the land, the world, because when things do not go right, that is where they always head back to.

When you study the Bible, it is like a head of lettuce. I think the biggest rip-off on the planet is buying a head of lettuce, because you have got to throw half of it away before you get to anything that is good. You have got to start peeling back the lettuce. You can eat the outer layers, but you know as well as I do, the more you peel it back, the better the lettuce gets. If you want the sweetest, tenderest part of that head of lettuce, you have got to get down into the core of it.

It is the same with the Bible. You can digest all of the Bible, and there are some great things from the surface aspect of the Bible. But if you want the sweetness of the Bible, the tenderness of the Bible, and the really depths of the Word of God, you have got to go down deep. You have got to get into it. When you start to peel back the layers of the Bible, God will reveal to you the depths of His Word, and you will come to the place in your life where you understand the fullness of God.

III. The Deep Truth of Proverbs 13:22-25

Now I want to show you something this morning that is really deep within your Bible. Proverbs 13:22-25 is one of the deepest passages in the Word of God. Obviously, at first glance, by a surface swimmer, that crowd, it just looks like a general truth in Proverbs. Nothing special about it. Nothing that would jump out at you. But when we peel back the layers, you have one of the most sobering and vital truths that a Christian could ever unearth within the Scriptures of the Word of God.

I want to read for you now Proverbs 13:22-25.

Proverbs 13:22-25

A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that destroyeth for want of judgment.

He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want.

At first glance, that verse is just like every other verse in Proverbs. It has got some good things on the surface, some things that we can look at and say yes to, amen to. But when you begin to look at this through the depths of the Scriptures, when you begin to add the other things in the Bible that take this passage and begin to peel back the layers, you get one of the greatest and, I must add, most sober principles found in the Word of God. I must add this: that most of God's people unfortunately never see and never understand today.

Most of you are young and many of you have no kids of your own. Some of you are older, you have kids that are teenagers, some of you have kids that are grown. Many of you have just gotten married and you have just started your family. You have drunk of the profound water fountain in this church; that verse across the top is "be fruitful, multiply, and replenish the earth."

Most of you are young, and many of you, as I said, have no kids of your own. The bulk of our church is the best the church could ever be, and that is a lifeblood of young couples that will grow and mature, the older ones helping them along, bringing them, everybody working in concert just as the Word of God says. My kids are, as you saw, Kelly is 40, Jamie is 36, 37. It is a thing where you have kids, many of you who fall into that category. Single people and young married couples, you are a while away from starting a family even if you just got married. Some of you will wait two or three years before you have a child, and some of you will not, but that is okay. Some of you are single, you are not really seriously dating anybody, some of you are and you are thinking about getting married, some of you have proposed, and she said yes. We find everybody in all kinds of scenarios and situations.

But even in that, you always want to think in a proactive, long-term concept. I think that one of the missing elements today in Christianity that has been sorely lost years ago is the concept of what marriage really is. We look at it in such a shallow concept. We look at it in such a surface concept, and that is not always your fault because Christianity from churches today and the pulpits today, they approach everything from a shallow aspect. There is a lot of God's people that just kind of want to be an inspirational, surface kind of guy and gal.

I put together—we have been doing it on the people ministry yesterday morning and some of you have showed up for that—I put together a set of lessons that I want to begin to use for premarital counseling, and I taught it to the people ministry because I want people to be able to have those if they want to use that, because when people want to get married, I want everybody to have that ability to be able to do that. I basically built, I basically took the seven pillars of marriage in the Bible, just seven basic fundamental pillars that marriage is built on. We have talked about understanding marriage. We have talked about all of the aspects. Yesterday we talked about the husband's role and the wife's role. I cover all the different aspects. The last lesson is understanding the dangers that will confront your marriage, because I think this thing is really, really missing today, and I think most of God's people have a very shallow understanding, and I think that they need to begin to look long term.

IV. The Three Generations

Now let us look at our first verse here, Proverbs 13:22. The first part of that verse says, "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children."

In our passage today, I simply want to focus on three words, three concepts. They are all found in this verse, and I want to draw your attention to these three things.

1. An inheritance. What really does that mean?
2. Your grandchildren, your children's children. Some of you are not even married yet. Some of you do not even have a wife or a husband or have any children. Some of you have married and have a wife and a husband and have children, but you have no grandchildren. Yet some of you, like myself, have children who now have children, and they are your children's children, and they are your grandchildren.
3. Generations. In particular, the third one. There are three generations here in this passage in Proverbs 13:22. There is the man, then there are his children, and then their children, children's children.

When I started to take the Bible apart some 30 or 40 years ago, I guess by now, and I really wanted to learn it, one of the great deep aspects to the Bible came through the understanding of generations in the Bible. Generations of how God looks at them and what they really mean to me and really mean to all of us.

I have told you many times that the book of Genesis is the key book in the Old Testament for unlocking the rest of the Old Testament and even unlocking the New Testament. I have told you many, many times you have two key books: one in the Old Testament, Genesis, and one in the New Testament, the book of Acts. You get those two books down and understand them and learn them, the rest of the Bible pretty much falls in line because they are the two key books.

As I looked at those two books and how vital they were, I began to see how they really pulled together all the things that I needed to understand about the Bible. As I looked and laid out Genesis, I saw that the whole book was built around families and the generations of those families. It hit me like a ton of bricks. I must have read the book of Genesis through 40 times before I really started taking the book apart. It was one of the most amazing things that God ever taught me. There it was right in front of me. I had read it, I do not know how many times, and when I looked at it and it dawned on me, right in the middle of that book, I was trying to build the book around this, build the book around that, divide it up here, and suddenly it hit me. The whole book of Genesis is simply built around eight different generations. The first book in the Bible puts the emphasis on the importance of the generations of families.

➤ The Generations in Genesis:

- Genesis 2:4: The generations of the heavens
- Genesis 5:1: The generations of Adam
- Genesis 10:1: The generations of Noah
- Genesis 11:10: The generations of Shem
- Genesis 25:12: The generations of Ishmael
- Genesis 25:19: The generations of Isaac

- Genesis 36:1: The generation of Esau
- Genesis 37:2: The generations of Jacob

The whole book of Genesis, the key book, is built around families and the generations connected with those families. For God to do that, He has something for us to see. He could have laid out the book of Genesis any way He wanted it. He picked the concept of generations and the families within those generations.

I will tell you something else. You take each one of those from a practical standpoint and start going through those generations of each one of those, and you see the men in that family, how that family, what they did for God or what they did not do for God. It is one of the most important things that you could ever go through to understand about your own family. Generations are absolutely imperative to unlocking the Scriptures.

Did you know that the key to the Second Coming of Christ is nothing more than the generation of Israel becoming a nation? He says in Matthew 24:32-35:

Matthew 24:32-35

Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

It is right there in front of you. Yet you would spend thousands of dollars, hundreds of dollars anyhow, buying somebody's taste, buying somebody's books, getting somebody's chart that all focuses on the Second Coming of Christ, when it is going to happen, when it is going to get. You get some idiot up there in a pulpit talking about the blood moons and how they figure in. You get some other idiot talking about the ashes of a red heifer and how it works in. Yet the Bible told you that the key to the Second Coming of Christ is a generation. Generations are vital in the Bible. Surface swimmers.

V. The Significance of the Third Generation

Now in our verse, we have our first key word that we want to look at: "children's children." That will be our grandchildren. Your family will be you and your wife, hopefully someday your kids will be your children, and then down the line your grandkids. Three generations of your family.

I want to tell you something. Our verse today, "inheritance to the third generation" or "children's children." I want to make a statement and then I am going to come back and take you through the Bible on it. But with God, there is something really important about the third generation of your family. When you see Exodus 20:5 or Exodus 34:7, you know what He says? He says, "I will visit the iniquity of the fathers on the third and fourth generation." It starts with the third one.

I do not know what you know about the Bible or where you are at, but the number three in your Bible will always stand for the completeness of something. When something hits three in the Bible, it is complete and it forms a balance. Proverbs 11:1 says:

Proverbs 11:1

A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.

So that number three in God's mind will always be something that is now complete when it comes to your Bible. That Bible says that the Bible has a doctrinal application, a historical application, and an inspirational application. When you have that down and you understand it, you have now a balance and you have a complete understanding of how the Bible goes together.

You take man. Man is a body, soul, and spirit. Man was incomplete. He had a body, soul, and a dead spirit. When he got saved, he has a body and a soul and now a living spirit, and now the Bible says you are complete in Christ. Three is the number of completion.

You want to study God's Son? You can talk about the Lord, you can talk about Christ, you can talk about Jesus. His complete title that gives Him the balance of everything that He is in His completeness is the Lord Jesus Christ. Three.

You want to study God? You want to understand God in His completeness? It is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

You want a complete breakdown and work out of the Old Testament? It is the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. Three.

You want a complete balance of the New Testament? It is the Gospels, it is the Acts, it is the Epistles.

In our own life and everything we do, nothing is complete without the third part.

- In time you have past, present, and future.
- In matter you have source, generation, and position.
- In reality you have time, matter, and space.
- When God made the earth, He made the land, the air, and the sea, and there is nothing else.
- When He made the kingdoms of the earth, you have the animal kingdom, vegetable kingdom, and the mineral kingdom.
- When God gave us music to praise God by, the complete concept of music is harmony, melody, and rhythm. Take one of them out, you have got rock music.
- It is the Army, it is the Navy, and it is the Marine Corps.

The family is complete when you have a father, you have a mother, and you have a child, and there is a reason for that. God did not put you on this earth just so you could find the love of your life and then go do off whatever you want to do, pouncing through the daisy fields. Like the commercial you see, the guy's woman is over here looking at her flowers, and the guy is over here, and they turn and look at each other, and they are immediately struck with each other, and

he starts to leap toward her, and she starts to leap toward him. They miss each other, go off the cliff on either side of the end of the story.

Nothing on this planet will be complete without the third part. Two plus two is incomplete until you get the answer: six. In God's mind, my dear friend, I am telling you right now, there is something about that third generation of a family ministering together, a father bringing his family up through his kids, them bringing their kids up to the third generation that completes something with God. Because the verse says, "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children." That is the third generation.

VI. Children as God's Heritage

Along with that, we want to develop this. In the Bible, it says that your children are a heritage of God. Psalms 127:3-5 says:

Psalms 127:3-5

Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

Psalms 127:3 says that "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD." Most people teach that and take that verse that children are **your** heritage. That is not what it says. The children are not your heritage. God gave you your children that they would be a heritage unto Him. The fruit that they produce is not your fruit; it is fruit for Him. There is something about this third generation. There is something about the concept of a family that we have lost today, that when couples get married, they have no idea of what they are getting into.

That Bible says, "As arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, so are children of the youth." When you get those kids, they are not your heritage, they are God's heritage. They are not for your reward, they are to bring about His reward. You take your kid just like a man takes an arrow and you shoot it at a target, and you will launch your kids through life at a target called Heaven or a target called Hell. You will launch your kids through life at a target for serving God or a target for serving the world. You will launch your kids on a target of going out and doing things for God and doing the ministry of God or being in a bar someplace on Friday or Saturday night. You launch them. "As arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, so are children of the youth."

Proverbs 17:6 says:

Proverbs 17:6

Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.

There it is again: "Children's children, the crown of old men, the glory of their fathers," that third generation. Proverbs 13:22-25 says that your family will not totally be established in the ministry of God and not totally be complete and functioning until that third generation.

VII. The Good Man and His Inheritance

Now Proverbs 13:22 says, "A good man." I love that. I hear it all the time, "Well, he is a good man." I always ask myself, "Compared to who?" The fact that somebody says, "You are a good man," does not really mean anything, or "I am a good man," does not really mean anything until you really focus on "compared to who or what." A guy said one time, "Well, he, but a pastor, he really did a good job." I said, "Compared to who?" "Well, he is really a good man." Compared to who? Joseph Stalin? Saddam Hussein? What does that mean? It is a relative term unless you have an absolute standard.

Good in the Bible, goodness in the Bible is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is God's goodness. When somebody says, "My goodness," down south, they say that, "My goodness," they are saying "My Jesus," because Jesus Christ is the goodness of God. For you and for me, when it says "a good man," there is only one standard to judge that by, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ.

It never ceases to amaze me how somebody—I remember when the Boston bomber killed all those people with that pressure cooker in the Boston Marathon. He obviously did it. He obviously was a terrorist. It obviously was with the Middle East behind it. He obviously did all of those things. He obviously deserved to die. He obviously killed all these people, maimed all these little kids. When they interviewed his mom and dad, what did they say? "He was a really good boy." Compared to who? Adolf Hitler? It is all relative. Unless you have a point of reference in your life that connects your goodness to Christ, it does not matter.

A good man will leave his children an inheritance to the third generation. A couple of things here. First of all, a physical inheritance. Leave them your money, your estate. Get your house, get your car, get your shotguns. Get all the stuff that you could not take with you, which is nothing. And a second aspect, that will be the Word of God that you put in their lives now, because the Word of God will go with them for the rest of their life.

But that is not what this verse is talking about. This is a verse that is talking very deep. This verse is talking way down the line. This verse is talking about what most of God's people who get into a marriage and raise a family never get to see because they are surface swimmers. They never get the depth of the Scriptures to realize that their father is to be an inheritance for his children to the third generation.

VIII. God's Plan Through Families

There are some things that we need to be aware of this morning. We know that God has a master plan to reach the world. What we do not understand many times is that the plan is through the family, the families of this earth. Most people will miss this entirely because they are surface swimmers.

In the book of Genesis, before you go three chapters, the devil launches two major attacks. In these two major attacks, he shows you his modus operandi for the next 6,000 years. The first thing he attacked was the Word of God when he says, "Yea, hath God said?" Then he changed what God said. Everybody gets that one. The second thing he attacked was the family, and the children of Adam and Eve and their kids.

We fail today to see the importance of the family. When God called Abraham out in Genesis 12:3, He prophetically told Abraham that all the families of the earth are going to get the blessings of God through your family. A little bit later on in Genesis 18:18, He told him again, "All the nations of the world are going to get the blessings through your family." God works His plan of redemption through the families and then takes it through the nations. He does it in the Old Testament. He does it in the New Testament.

This is why in the Old Testament—most people do not get this, this is why I wish all the kids were not here today, they could hear this—this is why in the Old Testament they have very strict laws for rebellious children. You sass your mom and dad back and get short with them or tell them this or tell them that and be rebellious toward them, and you get away with it many times. Many times you do not get a whack or you get this or you get punched up and taken away from you. In the Old Testament, it was totally different. In the Old Testament, they just killed them.

Dad would say the first time, "Son, that is not right." "You do not know what you are talking about, you old fogey, son." "I am going to tell you one more time." "Nah, you ain't going to tell me anything, old man." Took him down to the elders. The elders said, "Look, son, this is your father. You need to respect him." "You do not know what you are talking about." "No, we do. We do. We do. You ain't going to put me in some kind of harness." "No, you are right, we are not. We are going to put you in a hole. And then we are going to throw rocks down on your head." Sounds harsh, does it? Sounds almost like, "Would God really do that?" Thousands of times.

But you know why God did that? Because they are under the law. And you know what God knew? God knew that, listen kids, God knew that rebellion in God's sight was the same as witchcraft. It is in the Bible. God knew that if He did not discipline the children and keep them in the families, that the families would break down, the families would go bust, and God's plan would never get started. Getting your family ministering together and staying together to the third generation will complete the cycle for God. I do not fully understand it. I do not know what He sees. I do not know why it has to be three. But this is what He is telling us. The family is now set. The family is now established. In God's mind, they are complete.

IX. Three Parenting Patterns

In parenting—and I have dealt with parents all my life—in parenting you find basically three types of parents and parenting. You really do.

4. You find, first of all, moms and dads who completely lose their kid to the world. The kids are unsaved. The next generation are just as sure as I am standing here headed for the lake of fire. It is a tragic thing. I see it all the time. I deal with it all the time. It is something in the ministry that it is always there. Moms and dads who completely lose their kids. Then those

kids are not saved. Then their kids have kids. They get married. They marry Bozo the clown or they marry this guy or this girl, whatever. Then the whole thing is absolutely gone.

5. Then you have moms and dads who have enough insight to get their own kids saved. But they fail to develop them, and in time it winds up going nowhere. Though that kid or kids may be saved, because there is no self-structure, no discipline, nothing accomplished in their life, no vision, no understanding of this third generation concept, they may go to Heaven, but they get kids, they raise their kids, and that cycle spirals downhill from there, and its third generation is gone. A complete breakdown of family structure.

You know, we talk about the violence in Chicago. Talk about the violence in New York. All the major cities. We talk about the violence in Chicago. We talk about in St. Louis, a very violent city. Kansas City has its violence, but it is lame compared to St. Louis. You all remember the Ferguson deal out there and what happened out there. Everybody, everybody wants to blame the police officer. I get it. There are police officers that are bad, just like there are bad preachers. There are. But you know what, every time a kid—I mean, and I do not even remember the kid's name, and I am not, nothing against him, I do not think about it—but let me tell you this. I always ask myself, I always ask myself when I hear this guy out here, he broke into this store, went in there and manhandled this little guy over here and took this, took what he wanted, took what he wanted. When a guy came after him, he, big bully like King Kong, was going to push him back. You know that kid has got a chip on his shoulder. If he would do that, do not you kind of think he is probably got an authority problem someplace else in this world? So the radio dispatch goes out, a police officer sees the description of the guy, comes up there, and it all ensues. I do not know what happened other than the fact that guy gets shot. I do not make judgments who is right or who is wrong. You know what I simply say? If mom and dad would have had that kid in church or Bible study that night, we would not even be having this conversation. We want to blame the cops. We want to blame the kids. Did you see the specimen of a father he had? It is families, broken, busted families.

In the inner city, you have women who have sex with any man who comes along and have nine or ten kids by twenty different fathers. That is a chore. You have got to see how that works. She has all these kids, no father, nobody paying any child support. You are paying for it on welfare. The guys are out there just, they have got Genesis down. They are populating the whole world, man. No responsibility to the kids. She cannot raise them all. She cannot work. They are running wild in the city. They get absolutely nothing from the father, and it is white and it is black. And you know what? The whole family system breaks down.

Now let me ask you a question. This is my whole point. Why would a saved set of parents that go to church every Sunday, when they see the child having an issue with their spiritual things, not do everything they can to fix it biblically? I mean, please do not tell me. I know a little bit about my Bible, and I know that there are five stages of discipline that you have to enact in your child. I also know when you lose the child, there are five steps to restore that child. The Bible just did not say as a parent, "You go this far and you lose them. Whoopsie daisy." There is a plan to keep them from getting out there. When you fail and they get out there, there is a plan to bring

them back. Why will not parents do that? Why is it always blaming it on somebody else or this or that?

The answer is so simple. We have failed to see and understand that God's salvation to the world through the nation comes through the families. We never focused on our families from that aspect. Never got to that depth to see the first two attacks in the Bible by the devil were the Word of God and the families. Their families, the families from this aspect, have completely broken down. The path for the next two or three generations is now in full swing mode, and that would be disaster mode. There will be no heritage for the Lord. There will be no fruit for the Lord. There will be no crowns. There will be no inheritance passed on to their kids. By the third generation, there will be no knowledge or understanding of God.

The grandparents will try to do the best job they can. You are a bad second-stringer for a parent, as good as you may try to do. I commend you for it. I am not saying you should not. I have never seen in my life where a grandparent could ever undo what a parent was doing wrong without dealing with it biblically.

I told you yesterday when we came through these two, I know of a friend of mine who was probably one of the greatest, best preachers that you would ever hear. I watched his life, and it was a good life. I do not question. I do not have any answers. I do not make any judgments on it. I do not. But I watched his kids, and his kids were good kids. But those kids, after a period of time, one of them got messed up in a heresy. The other one quit going to church altogether. They had children. Their children may be saved. I would not want to bet my children on their salvation. They may have gotten saved, I do not know. You could not tell it by the way they lived their lives. Now we have entered into the third generation that some of them have married, and they married girls or guys who were completely out of the world. No question about them not being saved. Now they are going to produce a third generation of children. But that third generation, one of the best, most powerful Bible teachers, Bible preachers, and families, will cease to exist. Gone. Gone. Completely evaporated by the third generation. There is something about that third generation in the Bible.

6. Now the third parenting pattern will be the ones who have a depth to them. This is what they try to do, or I try to do for you. This is what our church is really all about. I understand this concept. I never look at you as a single and do not see you productive down the line in this concept. I do not look at you young couples who want to get married or do get married without trying to give you everything I can to help you understand what you need to do. You need to realize what the family is to God, and you need to do whatever you have got to do, whatever you need to do to keep it on track.

When you have children, you need to hold them to an accountability line, a value system, and you have got to keep it biblical. You have to find out those five stages of dealing with a child and training them up, because I am telling you, "as arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, so are children of the youth." They will not land where your neighbors shoot them. They will not land where their friends shoot them. They will not land where the people at school shoot them. They

will land, listen to me, they will land, listen to me, they will land where mom and dad shoot them. It is just that simple.

I have spent my whole life discipling young people, kids. Many of you or other people in this church have disciplined you, and I do not mean this in a bad way, but your own parents could not disciple you, and yet they claim to be Christian. They could not disciple, would not disciple you. I do not know how they look their kids in the face. I really do not. I mean, I am just speaking from my own personal day. I would never be able to look my kids in the face if I had not been able to sit down with them and teach them the Bible. My kid did not always like what I did with them and how I handled them, but I understood the long-term process. I do not understand everything about the third generation. I really do not. I wish I understood it better. I do not need to understand it really. I just see the concept. There is something special about that third generation in a family, and I am told, I am told by the wisest men that ever lived, to get an inheritance to my children's children.

You say, "Well, I do not like this." But that has been your problem all along. Do you know that? You cannot take rebuke. You cannot see when you are wrong. It is always somebody else. You live in a world of denial. We will see more about this third parent here in a little bit as we move on through here.

X. The Father's Responsibility

Now let me put it into a perspective for you, for all of us. Many of you young men and ladies, you come from non-biblical homes, no real Bible instruction. I get that. But I want to tell you something. God saw something in you that He brought you to this church. He brought you to people who love you, understand you, and have a little bit of knowledge of the Bible. I will tell you why He did that if you have not figured it out yesterday. I told the people yesterday, I am telling you now, you came from a family that had no Bible, maybe no salvation. If it would not be for what God did in your life, your whole heritage, your family would be in a lake of fire. But God saw something in you, and He took the time to bring you and get you where you needed to be so you here could get what I am saying today and get whatever I am laying out down the line, that you will be the one who breaks that cycle in your family. From your life, from your wife, to your kid, to your grandkids, when you bear the last name, you will put that thing back on track and get it where it needs to be. You have got to see it. You will break the generation cycle. You will get your family, your future family, your grandkids, back on track. It will all start with you: you, your children, and your grandchildren to the third generation. You will learn and grow and get a depth to you and see your marriage, your life, your family as God sees it, and will work to ensure that the inheritance gets passed on to the third generation. That is what you have got. And brother, it is one powerful concept.

I want to tell you something, all you future fathers or you are already a young father, it is on you. It starts with you. Numbers 14:18 says:

Numbers 14:18

The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.

It starts with the fathers. If you do not see it and you do not understand it and you do not take the lead in your family and you do not do what needs to be done, no matter how hard it is, no matter who you make mad, no matter who you have got to get out of your world, it will break down.

XI. The Wealth of the Sinner and Lack of Judgment

Now look at the last part of Proverbs 13:22: "and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just." That is a great verse in principle. The worldly Christian who does not follow God's plan, who thinks he gets it all down here and he does nothing with his family and gives them no inheritance. When the Lord comes back at the judgment seat of Christ, God takes what that guy would have gotten if he did what was right and He gives it to those who do what is right.

Let me show it to you in the Bible, Luke 19:12-26, the story of the pounds. You have got ten servants. He tells them in Luke 19:13, "I am going back to the far country, Heaven. I am going to give you each one of you a pound. Now what you do with that pound is you occupy till I come back." In other words, you do something with what I gave you, and when He comes back, you have got people in various stages of making an investment with what God gave them. God gave you a pound. He gave you something to invest. Some of you will invest it, some of you will not, some of you will sometimes do it, some of you will wind up with nothing in your hand. You will give back God exactly what He gave to you like this guy did, and you say, "Well, Lord, I just did not want to make a mistake so I did not do anything."

One guy had one pound, he brought back ten. One guy had, he brought back five. But all they will be God's people with what God gave in you. You will make no investment in your family, no investment in your life. He says in Luke 19:24:

Luke 19:24

And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

He takes what this guy would have gotten and He gives it to one who did what was right. "The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just." God has something for all of us, and He has got a plan that He wants us to fulfill. But when we do not do it and we wind up standing there with the judgment sheet doing nothing for Him, He takes what He would have given you and He gives it to somebody else. I am not a mercenary about it, but this is why I do not mind people shafting me when you try to help them in the ministry. Somebody says, "Boy, they really will hose you over." Yeah, they did, but probably at the judgment seat, I will get what God had for him just because I did what I was supposed to do. Gives a whole new meaning to it. Not that you care about that.

Look at Proverbs 13:23: "Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that destroyeth for want of judgment." Translation: It is not about how much Bible you know. It is about what you

do with what you do know. You can learn all of the Bible and do all kinds of things, but if you yourself do not apply the principles and learn how to make judgment calls in your life, you will be destroyed for the lack of judgment. You will have everything that God gives you, but you will make bad judgment calls because of lack of judgment, and you will wind up in a context that the mom and dad can do the right things with their kids, maybe even get them saved, but they cause a bad judgment in dealing with their kids, but a third generation winds up being all destroyed. They are tackling the marriage and the family. Wait till we get to the last pillar, the enemy of your marriage. There are several.

I see it all the time. Husbands who know the Bible but lose their marriages. They have no idea how to minister, how to nurture, what it means to wash or to cherish or to sanctify, those five things in Ephesians 5. No concept. The marriage of two destroyed people is destroyed because of the Bible-believing, deep-studying husband who has a lack of judgment when it comes to her and with his family. He has much food but gets destroyed because of his lack of judgment, how to use the Bible with his own family.

I do not know how many times I have had somebody I have tried to help and show this, and they say, "Well, I am just really hard-headed." I always say, "Let me translate that for you: You are really prideful." That is all hard-headedness is. It is your pride. We like to call it hard-headedness because it is cute. It is a punchline. "Oh, he is so hard-headed." No, he is prideful. You cannot teach him anything.

I told a guy one time he was the most hard-headed guy I have ever met in my life, and I finally got through to him. I said, "You know what, in my other office I have what I call my divorce clock, and everybody I work with while I am talking with them, the Holy Spirit of God comes down and moves the hands, and the divorce is going to happen at 12 midnight. Every time I sit down with, while I am in here in this office, the Holy Spirit of God is moving it, and when I am done, I am going to go peek in there and I am going to see how much time you have got left on the divorce clock." They actually believed me like some of you just did, and I said, "I just looked, and you know what, pal, with your hard-headedness, you cannot teach you anything, and you think you are always the one that is right. I just looked at the divorce clock. If divorce happens in your life at 12 midnight, you are at 11:55." Families.

XII. Chastisement and Parental Love

Proverbs 13:24-25: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." Oh, that is a rough verse, man. You do not whip your kid, you hate him. You know most parents do not whip them because they say they love them. Amen. Amen. Boy, how biblical you are. You know why God whips you and whips me? Do you know why He does? If you have not had a good whipping from God, you are probably either lying or you just need one. If you say, "I have never had one," you are probably going to get one when you get in the car and go on the way home today, just to God keep you honest. But you know why He chastises us? He does it because He loves you. He has something that He wants you to do, and we are so bullheaded on it that the only thing He can do is come down and drop the hammer. He does not do it because He

hates you. He does it because He cares and He wants to mold your future, but He knows you have got to break that stubborn will.

Matthew 7:11

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

He chastises you because He loves you. I know the Bible says in Hebrews 12:11:

Hebrews 12:11

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

I get it, it hurts, but "afterward it yielded the peaceable fruit unto God." There is the reason. You want peaceable fruit with God, do you? I am asking a question. It is a question. Do you want peaceable fruit with God? Do you? Bend over. Because the path is chastisement.

There are five stages of training up your child that leads to the failure of the family. When you lose a child, there are five steps to take to restore that child. He says, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." It is an old English phrase that simply means "before it is too late."

Getting an inheritance to the third generation of your family is the number one most important thing we need to see and understand today. A simple lack of judgment in a parent's world. It is the second law of thermodynamics, the law of entropy. Things left to a random state go down. Listen, whatever your problems are as a parent, they will be three times as bad in your children if you do not do right. By the time your children pick up your bad habits and add their own bad habits, by the time they have grandchildren, it will be six times worse. And it is gone. It is gone. It is gone.

XIII. The Satisfying of the Soul

Proverbs 13:25 says, "The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want." That is a simple verse. It starts out by simply saying, "The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul." You can have as much of that Bible as you want, folks. You can eat it to the satisfying of your soul. There are no limits on it. You choose to be a surface type of guy, then that is your choice. You choose to go down deep and get the deep things and the fullness of God, that is your choice. God does not look at every man and say, "You can only go so far, you can really go down, you are going to stay on the surface, you are going to do this." God opens up the Bible; you determine how deep you go.

What should drive you is the forethought of looking ahead to know—I do not care if you are single right now, you are all beautiful ladies and all you guys are good looking—you are going to hook up sometime. You are going to get married sooner or later. Some fool is going to come along with one bad eye and marry you. You have got to think long term. It is not about now, this,

that. It is about the inheritance that you pass on to the third generation that completes your family for the mission to reach this world.

"But the belly of the wicked shall want." You bet they do. Across this city and across this country, there are moms and dads sitting in churches with their hearts broken. They want their kids to be in church. They want their kids to be in ministry, and they are not. They do not want to be. I get it. I understand it. But unfortunately, in most cases, the cycle is set. Not because there is not something you can do, but because you will not do what you need to do.

Somebody says, "Do you feel sorry for him?" I feel sorry for everybody. That is my makeup. A guy can be the dumbest, stupidest mistake he ever made in his life. I look past the mistake. I see the good in him and feel bad for him. I may think he got what he deserved, but I feel sorry for him because I see he could have been better than that. I feel bad for some of you, not a lot of you, but some of you, because you know what, you could be better than you are, and you are going to lose out at the judgment seat of Christ, and I feel sorry about that. But how many times have I told you, contrary to some belief, you cannot want somebody to do right more than they do. I mean, I keep it in perspective. I feel sorry for you, but I really feel sorry for the Lord. He is the one that loses in this. It is His heritage you are denying Him. It is His reward you are taking from Him. Oh, you may lose your crowns and you may lose your family and you may lose the inheritance for them, but God loses too.

I wonder how many people—just keep it silent now—I wonder how many people may die and go to Hell because a Christian family was not completed to the third generation to reach the world by God's plan. Wouldn't that be a sobering thought at the Great White Throne Judgment, that two or three thousand people point their finger at you and simply say, "We are lost today because you knew that families were the key. You knew that preacher told you it was the third generation, and you did nothing with it." God did everything to ensure your family would fulfill that third generation concept. He gave you salvation, gave you the Holy Spirit of God, gave you the Bible, gave you this church. This church gave you a pastor who understands and will kick your rear end, but he will love you through it all. But because you refuse to go deep, you just have got to live in the practical. He has done everything that God could do for you, but that Bible says that bad judgment will lead to want.

XIV. Action Steps for Parents

Now what do you do? Some of you got plugged in later in life and your kids were already gone. I understand. Some of you just really made a mess of it. I get it. I have made, thankfully not with my family, but I have made some really messes in my life. So I am not preaching to you, I am preaching to me and mostly to these young couples here. I am not trying to make anybody feel bad. You know why? There is no reason to feel bad. You know why? Because there is always something you can do. Do not you sit back there and say, "Well, I just do not like that message." I do not like it either. "Well, I just do not think he has a right to say that." Well, I probably do not, but I will tell you something, you do not have to feel that way because there is a way out if you want to take it, and if you do not want to take it, enjoy it, enjoy it. I mean, you are like some of your wives, you say, "Honey, what is wrong? I have a terrible headache." "Did you take anything

for it?" "No." "Enjoy it." Just because you want to put all the aspirin people out of business does not mean that that is the right thing you do.

Now here is what you do:

7. You keep living the example you are now living before those kids. You show them that there is a difference in your life, and you show them not halfway, not three-quarters of the way. You show them that the ministry and church and the things of the Word of God are the most important things in your life. Quit substituting church things for this when they need to see that we had better not schedule something on a church day because they are going to be there. That is what they need to see.
8. Then you begin the five steps to regain your kids.
9. And now the third thing, probably the most important. You learned a lesson, you cannot necessarily fix it today or tomorrow in your own world. Okay, I get that. Quit crying in your beer. Quit slopping and moping around about it. You know what you do now? If you have got it together and you understand, and maybe you cannot at this point go back and fix your own family, then just do this: Be smarter than the problem. Look around you in this church at some young man and some young guy who is coming along and wanting to learn, and then do with him what you should have done with them. It just may be the thing that God uses to turn the whole corner for you. But no, no, no, no. We will sit back there. We will complain. We will mumble. We will groan. We will murmur. We will not do what we need to do, and you look around you and there are scores of people who need an example in their life of somebody bringing them along and helping them, and you could help these young guys and gals ensure they break that cycle that they are coming out of. There is always something you can do.

There is a man in this church, and I will not tell you his name. I will not even look in any direction. He is a hero to me. He never was a bad guy. He was a guy who just got caught up in a lot of things in other churches. Never really did everything with his family he should have. He is a wonderful man. I love him like he is my own flesh and blood. I love his family. When he got into this church and God started to reveal to him all the things that he was missing in his life, he moved toward it. I will never forget the first time he came into my office, and he sat down and he told me how he had not done what was right with his family. It was bothering him terribly that him and his wife were now plugged in and all of his kids were not coming to church, and he took responsibility for that, and he knew. There was no blaming anybody. There was not like, "Well, so-and-so made my boy drink beer," or "so-and-so did this," or that. It was none of that. He took complete responsibility for what he did for that.

I will tell you something. We sat down and we talked and we prayed about it, and I laid out a plan out of the five steps. You know what that man did? He called his family together and he confessed to them that he was not what he needed to be in their younger years. He asked them to forgive him. Then he told them from this point on it was going to be different, and he wanted them to be everything that God wanted them to be. The family responded overwhelmingly. They wept. They hugged each other. It probably was the greatest single moment in that family's life other than when everybody probably got saved in their time period. They got in shape, and I

want to tell you something. In this business, over 40 years, I have never seen anything like that in my life. I have seen dads do what was right. Try to do what is right. Seen a lot of them not do what was right. Most of them just blame everybody else for it. But there was no guile in this. He took full responsibility. He sat down with his family and he confessed to them and asked them to forgive him. He began to put in his life, and today his family is on target. To me, he is my hero. I wish as a father I could be as good as he is. He is a model to me. I never told him this. He is a model to me. I always loved him. Always thought he was special. But I have never loved him like I loved him after that moment. Because there is what the Bible calls a father who is going to make sure that his family gets the inheritance to the third generation.

XV. Conclusion and Prayer

Every head bowed and every eye closed. It is always up to us. It starts with the dad. That third generation is absolutely vital in the Bible. It changes everything. Yet we get married. We have relationships, and we never see it. This tape today, when we put the book together on our marriage, "Seven Pillars of Marriage," this is going to be the last part. It is going to be a little section in the back that explains it, and there is going to be a CD that goes along with it because it puts the finishing touches on it.

Listen, kids. You are going to be married someday. You are going to have a family. You need to understand that the reaching of the world is not just about you. It is about who you marry, the family you raise, and getting that family to the third generation. There is something about that third generation in God's mind that settles the thing. I do not fully understand it. But it is all through the Bible. You have to begin to realize that you need to leave your children the inheritance that God has given you and the vision that you have for the world. It just will not happen because you go to church and have the right King James Bible. It happens because in every aspect of a husband and wife relationship, you train up a child in the way he should go. "As arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, so are children of the youth." You will launch them in life, and they will hit the target where you launch them.

Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. These are good people here today. God, I meant nothing to anybody to make anybody feel bad. But God, dear help, God, dear help us. Sometimes we need to feel bad. Sometimes we need to see and understand that there are some things we have got to do differently. There is still time left. There are still things that can be done. There are still things that need to be worked on. There are things we can accomplish. But we just sit around and feel sorry for ourselves and sit around and cry in our beer and mope around. Lord, we will never get it done. We need to realize as men, as men, we need to stand up and realize that we need to lead our families, and we need to do it by the book no matter who it offends. Help us, Father. These are good men and good women here, and I love them very much. I thank You. I would rather be here in this church than any place on the planet. I love them very much. They mean the world to me. Help us together as a church. Lord, help us to just keep moving forward and see these things as You reveal them to us. Help us, Father, be everything to our families that we need to be, that our families can be the heritage of the Lord. Our family to the third generation will be Your reward. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen.