

Proverbs 28:24-25

Sunday 11/3/2019

SEC: Reviewing God's Principle of No Respector of Persons

Last week, we looked at a fundamental rule that God has laid down that truly fits through the Old Testament and into the New Testament. It is the fact that God is no respecter of persons. In God's dealing with man, one of the great things about God is the fact that we are all on an even playing field with Him. He does not choose; there is no caste system, like many religions have. There is no politics, like most churches have. We talked about it last week: there is no religious hierarchy, there is no pecking order, so to speak.

We were told clearly out of James 2:9 that when a church, a pastor, or even a Christian sets up that kind of structure and violates this principle, the Bible made it very clear that they are in sin. Back in early church history, around 200-300 A.D., we saw the roots of this begin, making its way into the early church. When you come through the first seven chapters of the book of Revelation, in Revelation 2:6, it talks about the deeds of the Nicolaitans. The deeds were what they began to do. By the time you get to the Pergamos church period, around 325 A.D., in Revelation 2:15, it had changed to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. What started out as just a basic thing that was happening had now become a prominent doctrine within the church.

The word "Nicolaitans" is a combination of two words. *Nico* means to conquer, and *laos* or *laity* means the common people, so it means to conquer the laity. It is simply setting up a priest class over the common man, which is the beginning of the idea that God has some kind of respect for certain people, leaders, spiritual leaders, or people over the common man. Of course, that is simply not true. In time, through the centuries, it developed into the heresy that it is today: that elite mindset that there are people in churches—pastors, deacons, teachers, whatever—people of status or money, who are better than the common person. Of course, that is just not the way that it works.

If you know anything about world history, you saw this down through history, even in the secular world. In the Dark Ages, you had a feudal system where you had the lords and the nobles who were over the peasants. Today, in most churches, as we saw last week, it is the lords—the pastors—and the nobles—the rich and famous—over the common, so-called peasants, the common people. That is just the way that it has worked.

I showed you in Galatians 1:10 and again in 2 Corinthians 4:1-2 that a church has one fundamental, basic thing that it does. It has a lot of different aspects to it, but fundamentally, it is a manifestation of truth, putting out the Word of God clearly and plainly, where everybody who wants it can get it. It leads to an accountability system across the board for everybody. Nobody is above the law; nobody is higher and does not have to deal with it. We saw that last week too.

Then I took you to a great teaching found in Leviticus 13, where you find that leprosy is a type of sin in the Bible. Leprosy came in three stages in the Old Testament, and it forms a great practical application for us.

1. It started in a person's flesh.

2. Then it spread and got into their clothes.
3. Then it got into the very framework of the house that they lived in.

What a great picture that is of how sin in our lives starts with us, then it gets into our clothes—that is, the changing of our lifestyle, acting, dressing, talking, and being like the world. Ultimately, it gets into your house and destroys your family. It is just a great concept.

SEC: Introduction to Proverbs 28:24-25

Today, we are going to take just two more verses, and it ties into last week, as all these verses did. We are going to pull together a few more verses as we come through Proverbs 28. I want to read for you Proverbs 28:24-25. So let us read it together.

Proverbs 28:24-25

Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer.

He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.

There will be something here for all of us today. I do not care if you are married, young married, single, middle-aged, or in your senior citizens, much like myself, who enjoys the senior coffee going through McDonald's for just 59 cents. There will be something for everybody here today. Especially for you young parents who are just now breaking in, getting married, and having kids, we have a host of them. It seems like every month another baby is born, and that is great. If we never win another person to Christ, do another missions trip, or ever have another outreach program, we are going to grow just by all the kids that are getting born here, but that is a good thing. So there is something for everybody here today, and I want us to all find what we need to find here. This is a great passage; it opens up a lot of avenues for us.

SEC: The Concept of Robbing Parents: Literal and Spiritual

For sure, you can make the case in a physical application for Proverbs 28:24 of children in a family literally robbing their parents. It happens all the time. Many times over the years, I have been called in to deal with it in different situations as parents get older. If they do what they are supposed to do, they have good savings; they have money set aside for their latter years. Kids sometimes will take advantage of that, and they will get money from them with no intention of ever paying it back. They look at it as kind of like their own private slush fund, and they can talk Mom and Dad into everything. This will happen quite often.

I remember a number of years ago, this has been 20 or 25 years ago, I knew a guy whose mother had a lot of money. He convinced his mom that she had to invest some of that money to make money on it. She trusted her son and she said, "Okay, that is a good idea, son. How do you want to do it?" He said, "Mom, the best way to get a return on your money is to buy a Corvette. Corvettes never go down in value. Corvettes will only increase in value." So he talked his mom into buying the Corvette. Guess who drove the Corvette? It was not his mom. I see things like

that all the time. I guarantee you, he probably drove it long enough that his mom, bless her heart, passed away. And then, "Oh my, it is all mine." So I know how that works.

I have seen both parents sometimes die together in an accident, or maybe close together, especially older couples. One dies and six months later the other one passes away. A kid will know what his parents have, and he or she will get into that house before their bodies are cold, and they will take everything out of there that is of any value. The parents foolishly have trusted them and gave them the combination to the vault or safe or however they keep their stuff, or a safety deposit box. They have guns in there, bags of gold coins that the dad was buying gold for 35 years when gold was \$250 an ounce. Try it today! Of course, there would be bags of them in there: silver, jewelry, all kinds of valuables. When the estate folks showed up to take inventory for all of the family, nothing was left. It was all gone. But the guy is driving around a brand new red pickup truck. It just works that way.

I have seen that even without waiting until they are dead. I have had them where they have been in hospice, and they know they are not coming home, and the kids are just, they are seeing Mom and seeing Dad, who is the last one, maybe on Friday during the day. Then they are all over at the house, casting garments. It is crazy stuff. So you can definitely make a case for that kind of robbery of your parents, but that is not what I want to preach on today.

Within the context of Proverbs 28 and the Old Testament scriptures, and also the New Testament, this robbing of your parents is something else in a spiritual sense. It is about children robbing their parents of the honor and the respect that God has clearly laid down in the Old Testament: to be obedient to and to honor your father and your mother.

In Exodus 20, we have the Ten Commandments. Most of God's people today in the new translations think that is the Ten Suggestions. It is not Ten Suggestions; it is Ten Commandments. One of those commandments, the fifth one, by the way, is:

Exodus 20:12

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

If you would not do that, and in the Old Testament they robbed them of that, then Exodus 21:17 was the cure for that.

Exodus 21:17

And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.

That is the way it worked. When you get into the New Testament in Matthew 15:4, He puts the two of them together here and He says:

Matthew 15:4

For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

It did not say, "Let him just die"; it said, "the death." There is a particular death that He is talking about here, and that is in the Old Testament when you robbed your parents of that honor that God intended them to have, and disrespected and disobeyed them, they were put to death.

Here is how it worked in the Old Testament as to robbing your father and your mother. In the Old Testament, if you had a rebellious son or rebellious daughter who would not bring or give obedience and honor to the father and the mother and live their rebellious lifestyle, you want to write down 1 Samuel 15:23 because there it says that for rebellion, as far as God is concerned:

1 Samuel 15:23

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

So now we have a scenario where rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and now we know that in the Old Testament, rebellion is a serious thing to God, and they are to be killed. What happened was, if you had a rebellious son and he would not obey, would not bring honor, and would not do what he was supposed to do, you would bring him to the elders. The elders would confront him; the elders would give him a chance to make it right or get it right. If he did, everything was great. If he would not, then at some point they would take him out and they would stone him and they would kill him.

I have always thought it was interesting how many things that we use in the world that we have no idea about, and really the terms do not even make any sense to the world system, always go back to the Bible. In the Old Testament, when a kid was rebellious, did his own thing, he got stoned. In our world today, when a kid is rebellious and gets into the world and gets high on drugs, why in the world do we call it "getting stoned"? Because in the Old Testament, that is what it led to. You cannot get away from the Bible anytime you want to try to get away from it. Everything will come back to the Bible.

It seems harsh and way over the top to most people until you see the importance of God and the importance to God in understanding how it worked in the Old Testament.

SEC: The Family's Role in God's Kingdom and Parental Training

In the Old Testament, God was establishing a literal, visible kingdom. We know it as the kingdom of heaven. God tells us that through the nation of Israel, in Genesis 12:3 and again in Genesis 18:18, that all the families and all the nations of the earth are going to get the blessings of God. It is going to start with the families, and in time it is going to affect a nation, and they are going to get the blessings of God. That salvation depended on the nation of Israel and their families staying close to God and tied into God, and their children would take His kingdom on this earth, the inheritance, on and on through all the generations. The Bible says in John 4:20, "salvation is of the Jews."

We have now a picture, and of course you see it: Abraham, his son Isaac, his son Jacob, his son Joseph. It follows a family line through the Old Testament. You remember where it all started: it

started with Abraham. He is known as the father of the Jews. The key ingredient that God told us of why He picked Abraham in the first place was the fact that he would command his children.

Genesis 18:18-19

Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

You know what God had spoken of him? That his seed would go out through the ends of the earth and be like the stars of heaven. God was going to reach the world in the Old Testament through families. Families are made up of children. It is a situation where the whole key to God's reaching the world was built on a family with children. When they got rebellious, it destroyed everything that God was trying to do. As went the families, so went the nation. So in the Old Testament, there is a zero tolerance for the rebellion of children because when it is allowed, the whole system breaks down. You lose the kids, you lose the family; you lose the family, you lose the nation; you lose the nation, you lose the mission of God and the ministry. It is just that simple.

These verses and their principles will carry right over into the New Testament. I know, and I say it all the time on Thursday night, that there are many differences between the Old Testament and the New Testament. One of the things in rightly dividing your Bible and figuring it out will simply be knowing and understanding what the differences are between the Old Testament and New Testament so that you do not confuse them. But it is also true that there are many things that are the same, and this one is one of them.

Where in the Old Testament, God was establishing a literal kingdom of heaven and using families in a temple worship situation in Jerusalem to reach the world and carry His plan, in the New Testament age, God again is establishing a kingdom, but it is a spiritual kingdom. It is the kingdom of God, by a body of believers within the family unit that God wanted to take the Gospel through families to the ends of the earth. We have talked about it many, many times. The key for you is to have within your family an unbroken chain of ministry. Because in the New Testament, just like the Old Testament, that is the way that God was getting it done.

Both in the Old Testament and the New Testament, it was the parents training up the children to honor Mom and Dad first through the structure that you provide for them. We will talk about that in a moment. Then, as you train them to honor and obey you, in time you transfer that honor and obeying from Mom and Dad to God Himself. The whole family stays united together to accomplish that, and from generation to generation, never dropping the flag of ministry, so that it continues on and on.

I get it, many parents fail in this. They go 10 or 20 or some years bringing up their kids in a bad, unbiblical situation, and then they have tremendous issues. It is a thing where the whole system breaks down. In Old Testament Judaism, one of the things that you have to understand about the

way it was set up in the Old Testament is that Judaism was all-inclusive to the family. It was not a fact that they grew up or got born into your family and decided what church they were going to go to. It was not like they got born and grew up and decided what they were going to do for God. No, no, no. It was a cultural lifestyle in the Old Testament to be born into God's nation, to have everything from the very get-go. Those children knew nothing else but the Old Testament promises. That is why the Jew knew the Old Testament so well. Their whole life was built around the Old Testament; it became everything in their life. It became like their vocabulary; it became like the center of everything that they learned. It was a nation that in a cultural sense physically incorporated everything in the family and the life to God.

That is exactly the way it should be with our children in a spiritual sense. Christianity is a lifestyle. It is not something that you do four or five Sundays out of the year or every other month or whatever you want to do. You train those children that it is a central thing in their world, and it becomes that because it becomes a central thing in Mom and Dad's world. You are going to see that New Testament Christianity should be just like that: a lifestyle.

I get it. Some of you parents got here late. My goal is obviously to help the parents that come in late. Maybe the kids are in their teens now, and they are struggling many times; that happens. My job is to help put all that together. My other job is for all you young couples who are now having kids to make sure you have everything that you need. I cannot move in and make you do it, but I can certainly give you the tools that you can do it with. Either way, there is always something that we can do.

One of the great things about God and Christianity that sets it apart from the world is that in the world, there will be sometimes in your life where there is absolutely nothing that you can do. You are done. That is not true with God, because with God there is always something you can do. I do not care how bad your scenario, I do not care what the circumstances are. When I stand up here and I talk about parents who have lost their kids or this, I am not saying that to blast anybody. I am telling you and saying that because whatever situation you find yourself in, there is always something that you can do. The question is not what can you do; the question is, will you do what you need to do? There lies the question.

You will see that your family, I am telling you, dads, I am just going to speak to you. You ought to look at your family just like I look at this church, because you are the pastor of your family. The only question today is simply this: what kind of pastor are you? They say it all the time, and it is true: the family is under attack today. But the family is not under attack today any more than it was in the Old Testament. But I want to tell you, yes, the family is under attack. If we want to blame the poor old devil for it, we will say that the devil is attacking your family, but let us just get specific: he is attacking it through the father. Do not get the idea that he is doing it through drugs. Do not get the idea that he is doing it through the world. Do not get the idea that he is doing it through the friends that you let. If he is going to get your family, he is going to attack it through the father, just like if he is going to get this church, he is going to attack it through the pastor.

What would you think of me if I got up next week and I had an NIV and I started teaching you and handing out literature on predestination, and I started to tell you that you can lose your salvation, and I would come around to some of you and say, "And I am really worried about you"? Would you respect anything that I have to say at that point? If you bought into that, if you believed that, if this became Calvinist, and this pastor over here suddenly spoke in tongues, and this crowd over here thought you could lose your salvation, it would destroy everything. You know what keeps this church solid through the book? A singleness, a mindset in preaching the truth and the manifestation of truth. The moment you lose that, that is where the devil comes in. When you lose that in your family, he is at the front door. It is just that simple.

Did you ever notice that all the great Bible verses on training up your children are all found in the Old Testament? Did that ever strike you? It is because that is where it all starts: with the nation of Israel and the families. Here is a verse I am going to give you that every parent ought to have down, and you want to look at it every day of your life if you have young kids. It is found in Psalms 71:15-18. Here is what it says:

Psalms 71:15-18

My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof.

I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.

O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.

Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.

What he is simply saying there is what he is talking about in Psalms 90. You do not know how long you have in life, so every day you ought to account for showing forth God's righteousness and His salvation. "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth." That is the way it was in the nation of Israel. From the very time they were born, they were indoctrinated with a Jewish mindset of God, the Old Testament, the law of Moses, and sacrifices and everything. It was not an option for them. In your life with your family, as you get them saved and bring up those young kids, it should not be an option either. You are the one who makes it an option. "Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come." This generation, that is your family. That is somebody understanding that from their youth they got the truth, and now they are going to make sure that everybody in their generation gets it.

You want to add to that?

Proverbs 22:6

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

You do not raise children; you raise rabbits, you raise cats, you raise dogs, you raise carrots, you raise cabbage. You train children. That is the concept taught all the way through the Bible.

Psalms 127:3

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

Oh, how we get that wrong. We think they are our heritage. No, no, they are God's heritage because God intends for you to carry on the ministry through your family for Him to reach the world, just like in the Old Testament structure, this time through the church, from generation to generation.

Psalms 127:4

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

You bring somebody up here with a bow and arrow and put that clock back there on the wall, and he is good, he can hit that thing right in the middle. In other words, wherever he launches the arrow, he hits the target. Your children are just like that. You take them and you take them in the bow of life, and you will shoot them toward heaven or hell, serving God or not serving God. The attack on your family starts with the father.

The basic, fundamental basis for your child's training program, as far as I am concerned, is Proverbs 1-7. You will find within that—and I never really taught that to you because I was hoping that somebody would pick it up, but nobody did, so I will give it to you now—you will find within those seven chapters, 15 times where he says, "my son." Before he ever gets into the Proverbs, which are the issues of life, he gives his son 15 things that his son needs to know. I would simply tell you young couples who are having kids, or thinking about having kids, or want to have kids at some point, you will use this as the foundational basis for what you do in your training program: 15 areas that he addresses to his son in training up your children in a cultural lifestyle called Christianity.

For years, I gave you the five stages of training up your children to be God's heritage. We talked about:

4. The discipline stage
5. The relationship stage
6. The fellowship stage
7. The responsibility stage
8. The ministry stage

I have showed you many, many times—it is on the website, you have seen the books back there—how you incorporate those and you blend those together through a process of training, how to build them into your family. So many of you have done that. I mean, I look at your kids, and I will tell you what, you have got some decent kids. They are really doing what is right. So many of you have done it, and at the same time, so many of you are trying to do it.

SEC: Addressing Parental Failure and the Path to Restoration

I never care if your kids have issues. Every kid is going to have issues. For me, it is never about the kid having issues; it is about getting the parents fixed. If we get the parents fixed, in time, we get the kids. You give me a Mom and Dad on my side with the Word of God, and I do not care whatever your kid is, whether it is a guy or a gal, we will win one way or the other. That is the way it works.

I have seen so many parents over the years who have made terrible mistakes with their children. Sometimes they get in late; they come to church, their kids are in their teenagers, they are having issues with them. I am telling you right now, there is always something that you can do. Your kid may rebel against you, but they are not going to rebel against the solidarity of a church that has the Word of God and the Holy Spirit of God that is going to hold them accountable. The question is, what page of this manual are you going to get on?

I realize that sometimes parents have completely lost their kids. The kids do not want to go to church; they do not want to do anything. I get that. Here again, when it comes to the Bible and God and Christianity, there is never a time when you simply say, "There is nothing we can do." There is always something you can do. Just like there are five stages of building into your kid from day one, when you find yourself in the second scenario, there are also five stages to restore your child to your family. There is always something that we can do. There is always a road to fix it because the bottom line of the church and Christianity is restoration. That is not true in the Old Testament. The bottom line of the Old Testament for rebellion was a rock pile.

Blaming your failure as parents on your kids will never work, or blaming somebody else. Ownership is where it starts with your family. Ownership is the key. In Luke 19:8, you have what I call the Zacchaeus principle. In the Zacchaeus principle, there are eight great principles on what somebody has to do to fix something that is really, really bad. The Zacchaeus principle teaches us that sometimes just saying, "I am sorry," is not enough. It is the fourfold concept. Zacchaeus said, "If I have taken anything from any man, I am going to restore it fourfold." Where was the basis for that? Did he just make that up? Did that sound good? Is there a biblical precedent for that? Yes, when you get into the Zacchaeus principle.

SEC: The Destructive Consequences of Children's Disobedience and Proud Hearts

When a child today does not honor his father and his mother the way the Bible lays out, I am going to tell you something, kids: you do not honor and obey your Mom and Dad, it is a pipe dream to think you are going to honor and obey God, because you cannot separate the two in the Bible. You just cannot. He will rob his parents. She will rob her parents. You will rob your parents not only of the honor and the respect of the obedience that God said that you are to give to them, but I will tell you what else you will rob them of:

You will rob your Mom and Dad of peace because there will always be a conflict with you. Every four, five, or six months, something else will blow up. You will bring them to the preacher, and the preacher will give on him, and you will put some people around him, and he will make all the little promises or her little deals. It does not last because it is not real. The bottom line with you kids, all of you, let us just put it on the table: the bottom line with you kids, why you will not do what is right, is that you do not need any more Bible verses. You do not need a team of people

around you. You do not need people bringing you through the Bible and giving you principles. What you need is to understand that the root of your problem is because you are not honoring what your Mom and Dad are saying. You think you are doing it your way, and you actually believe that you can get all the Bible verses, all the great teaching, and still fundamentally disobey Mom and Dad, and God is going to be okay with that. You are out of your mind.

They will rob you of your time. All the time that you could be serving the Lord and doing something for God, you have to be wasting it on dealing with kids with their problems, issue after issue after issue. You want to read your Bible, and you cannot because you are all upset because you have this issue to deal with. You want to come to Bible study, and you cannot because you have to deal with this. You want to get into a ministry, but you cannot. They will rob you of your time.

They will rob you of your money: court costs, lawyer fees, fines, breaking things that you have to pay to fix.

They will rob you of a peaceful family life with the other kids. It will be the domino effect. The older kid will always teach the younger kids, and if you put up with it and allow it, and you have five, six, seven, eight, ten, twenty, thirty, forty kids in your family, you can just watch. The first one goes, the second one goes, the third one goes, right down the line until you step up and put an end to it.

They will rob you of your sleep. They will lay awake all night worrying about where they are at, what they are doing, praying for them, asking God to turn it around, asking God not to bring them back from the world. I know, I have been there with so many parents over the years.

They will rob you of your credibility.

1 Timothy 5:8

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

1 Timothy 3:4

One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

If he does not know how to rule his own house, how in the world is he going to rule the house of God? Yet, here again, I go back to last week: we love to pick and choose what we want. I know pastors out there, I know people out there, I know pastors that are pastoring churches whose kids are out in the world. They are not in their church, they are not in any church, they are not doing anything at all, and they think it is still okay to pastor. But somebody else over here will have a problem, and they will drop the hammer on them. It is across the board; it is clear. I have watched people all my life. I know how human nature is. Some people will get out there and they will talk about, "Praise the Lord," doing this and doing all this great stuff to blow the smoke up in the air. Why? So nobody will look down and see that your kid does not go to church anywhere. For me, I learned that lesson years ago. I do not look at what you are saying or what you are doing. I just ask the question, "Where are your kids this morning? Where are they at?"

The last part of Proverbs 28:24 says, "and saith, It is no transgression." The kids do not even care. They are so insensitive to the things of God; they are so insensitive to anything that is going on. They do not care anymore. This crowd we talked about a couple weeks ago was found in Job 21 and Job 22. They do not care about the things of God. They do not care. They are rebellious to everything, but it all started with the rebellion to Mom and Dad, and Mom and Dad allowed it. You will train your child to be a giver or you will train your child to be a taker.

Turn over to Ephesians 6. I want to show you something. This is going to ruin a lot of sermons. Ephesians 6 is the great chapter on the whole armor of God. 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. You know how great that chapter is. When you get over to Ephesians 6:10, it says:

Ephesians 6:10

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

What happens here is he comes down through seven pieces of armor. The whole chapter, or the first 20 verses, 10 through 27, is built around one concept for the child of God to take his stand for God. Three times he tells you that, excuse me, four times in three verses. Then he comes down: breastplate of righteousness, feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Oh, that is great, get up there and tell them about Jesus. Shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Spirit, praying always. Every one of those is a sermon in itself. This is what we preach to be a real soldier for Christ. This is what we preach to be a warrior. This is what we tell you you need to do to put on the whole armor of God. You get your loins girded about with truth. You get on the breastplate of righteousness. You get your feet shod. You get the shield of faith. You get the helmet of salvation. You get the sword of the Spirit. You pray without ceasing.

Most people never see where all this warfare starts, where it begins, and your stand for God begins. Look at Ephesians 6:1-4. Here is where it starts:

Ephesians 6:1-4

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

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

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

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

There is where it starts. Who cares about the armor of God if you are not going to obey your Mom and Dad? Who cares about your loins girded about with truth? Are you kidding me? The breastplate of righteousness? Is that a joke? Feet shod? Are you kidding me? It starts out, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." It says it is the first commandment with promise. You know what the promise is? If you do not keep it, God is going to kill you. That is a good promise you have to put in your Bible. Let us see that around a campfire some

night at camp. "Give me your favorite promise." "God is going to kill me because I did not get right at camp this week." That would be a good one.

Ephesians 6:3 says, "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." Let me tell you something. Every problem you have, every problem you are going to have, and the debt that it is only going to get worse, all goes back to one thing: you forsaking the fifth commandment and not honoring your father and your mother and not obeying your parents. Notice how in Ephesians 6:1 he tells you the two words: "obey your parents" and "honor your parents." He is talking about honoring them by obeying them. Then in Ephesians 6:4, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath." Wow.

You know what, Dad? I am going to tell you something. You have no right to get upset with your kid about anything, and you certainly have no right to provoke them to wrath. You know why? Because whatever they are is what you trained them to be. They are exactly what you made them to be. Now, I know you are going to have some bumps in the road. I get that, but I am not talking about that, and you know I am not talking about that. I am talking about the time in your life and my life where we have kids who simply want to go their own way and do their own thing, just like we did growing up. I am telling you right now that the Bible says in this text of obeying, "fathers, provoke not your children to wrath," because they are exactly what you made them to be.

Then over in Colossians 3:19, I will just throw this in for you guys, for the ladies here. He says, "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them." I find a lot of husbands get bitter toward their wives, just like I find a lot of dads that get vengeance toward their kids and provoke them. In both cases, you have no right to do that as a father and as a husband. You know why? Because whatever your kid is and whatever your wife is, it was your choice. Pastor, it was your choice.

I say that fully knowing that many of God's people in my life over the years, hey, you made your mistakes. You lost some of your kids. They got into the world. But when you came here or you got in my ministry at some point, you decided to fix it. We put a plan together, and we are right on track with that plan. The problem is not me or the plan; the problem is you following the plan. You see, you want to get blameless with your children. "Blameless" is the big word today that nobody understands. You want to get blameless with your children. The only way you can get blameless with your children is to go through that five-step process to reinstate them, even if they do not get reinstated at that point in time. You walk away from it doing everything that you needed to do. It is a simple thing, but in all my almost 50 years in the ministry, I have only had two fathers ever do it. Only two. I will tell you what, I had more respect for those two men than anything out there because they took their responsibility. They did exactly what they needed to do. In both cases, their kids are in church with them today because it works.

I am telling you all this about the armor of God and serving God and standing up for God and being a soldier. You know where it starts? It starts with you obeying your parents. For all you kids here today, when you rebel against your parents, you rob them. For they are the key to God reaching the world by training up the family. I know, sometimes I get it. You come to the point

where the family, Mom and Dad, was not where they needed to be, but now they are, and they are doing it. I get it. I understand. You need to understand this message today that you need to get your head out of wherever it is at and realize that God is not going to allow you to do that because with your rebellion comes a promise. When you fail to see and understand the value of your parents, when they try to do what is right and they are working in a structure to make it happen, then you rob them and now become a companion to the destroyer. You will tear down and destroy everything in the family and rob them of the blessings of God.

Spare me. I do not want to hear it that, "Well, my parents were so bad, and this is now the way that I am." I do not really want to hear that. I get it. I realize, and some of you understand, I have had to be parents to you. I have had to be your dad. I have had to be there for you because your dad was a bozo and an idiot. I have had to be there for you. You came into this church, and you had nobody. We built a relationship, and I saw that immediately, and I reached out to you, and I have been a dad to many, many guys and gals down through my ministry. That is one of the things that God has called me to do because I understand how valuable that is.

I do not want to hear that, "My parents were bad, so that is just the way I am." You listen to me, you werewolf. This church is filled with young men and women who had terrible parents. Some of them were saved; some of them were unsaved. You know what those kids did? They decided to break that cycle of sin in their life. They said to me, "Bob, I am not going to go on with this. I am going to make sure from this point on, in the woman I marry, and the kids that I raise and train, and the people in my generation down the line, I am going to break that cycle of sin, and I am going to start the cycle of ministry." So I do not want to hear it.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

We have no excuse for staying the way we are. The only excuse we have is, "This is where I want to stay." Some of you will remember, I hope you do not, but you will remember that family we had here, I do not know, four or five years ago. I think they have been in every church in Kansas City. They came in, and everything was somebody else's fault. Their kids were a mess, but that was somebody else's fault. They never took ownership of anything, and they whined about everything. I would watch this lady get on Facebook, and she would talk about that they needed this and they did not have that. She would pour this thing out there on Facebook, all of this stuff that they needed. Then when some stupid fool gave her what she needed, she would get on there and thank God for what He had done. The only time you can really know that God was the only one who did it is when you have a need and you do not say anything to nobody except Him. I told her one time, "You know what, darling, if you got into His book as much as you were on Facebook, you would be doing a lot better off."

She would always go around saying, "Well, my family is..." Now I know the devil is going to the lake of fire, and I am glad about that. But I want to tell you that poor old boy gets blamed for a lot of things he has nothing to do with. It was always, "The devil is going to destroy my family." No, no, no, no, no, no, no. Let me tell you something. If your family gets destroyed, do not

blame the devil. I guarantee you he would take one look at your family, and he would be in Iran. There is only one thing, one person, one identity that will destroy your family: it is the parents. That is all. I know it is convenient. I know Flip Wilson years ago said, "The devil made me do it." No, he did not. It is a convenient thing for you, for all of us, to blame our problems on somebody else. Ownership. It is yours. Quit whining about it. Quit blaming everybody else for it. It is yours. You own it. My old drill sergeant used to say, "It is a blank sandwich, and everybody is going to take a bite." You say you should not talk like that. Greatest truth you will ever hear.

Kids, you may not be responsible for what happens to you with your parents because your parents are not where they need to be. Your parents may not be responsible for how you were trained and dealt with when you were a kid. It is not about if you are responsible or not; it is about what are you going to do with it now that you are saved and you have the ability to change everything in your life, to change everything in your family? That is the real question. But no, no, no, no. We are going to go on dragging it out like this is some Greek tragedy, some play with a hundred thousand scenes of going through life. "Woe is me," blaming everybody else. Get a life.

SEC: The Proud Heart and Stirring Up Strife

Proverbs 28:25 says, "He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat." This verse will be true in a universal sense across the board, a common truth about a proud heart. We have talked about this a lot in Proverbs. It will go along with all we have seen through Proverbs, dealing with people who will cause division because they do not want to do what is right. They will tell you they want to do what is right, but underneath the surface, something else is always going on.

In our context here, it will be a reference to the child who will rob their parents of the honor that God has for them as the authority structure in a child's life. By their rebellion or disobedience, they will continually be stirring up strife within the family. They will tear up the family unit. There will be no family ministry. Four or five kids in the family, allowing the older one to be rebellious, causes a domino effect; your kids will go down one at a time. He talks about becoming a companion to a destroyer. That is exactly what happens: one issue from another, one heartache from another, one problem from another. Many times, when you have weak parents, the rebellious children will actually take over the family. They will hold the family, Mom and Dad, hostage. I have seen it happen many times, and the child will play both ends against the middle. I have seen it when the child will get older and want nothing to do with the parents, and that will always bring a lot of strife.

What I am about to say, I cannot stress enough to you young parents how important it is to begin that five-point process of training up your children at the very beginning. The key to it: there is nothing magical about these five principles. We have talked about it before. There is nothing magical about anything I give you on Thursday night or Sunday morning. The real magic is not in what I give you; the real magic is, will you be consistent in doing it? Because without consistency, it is just another thing you do, another thing that happens.

No matter what your situation is, because of your earlier failures, I never fault anybody for those things because we all have our problems. My job is not to cast blame on anybody, but to take any man, woman, Mom or Dad, boy, girl, whatever, who wants to do what is right and help you get established to where God wants you. We spend all our time in the past lamenting over what mistakes we made in the past. We will never move forward in the future. You have got to forget those things that are behind. You have got to put them behind you. You have got to take stock in the fact that you are now in a church that teaches you the Bible. You have got a pastor that will walk through every bad time with you. You have got people who will work with you on every level where you are at. It is your choice whether you want to use that or turn against that. But no matter what your situation is, you can always do something, and I am here to help you do that.

My greatest asset is being a planner, planning a way out of the mess that we are all in. That is the key. You get in combat, the most valuable guy you can have is a guy who knows how to plan his way out of any circumstance you are in. When you get cut off and you cannot get out, you come to him and say, "Find us a way out of this mess." And 20 minutes later he is back, and he says, "Captain, this is what we have to do, and we have a chance to get out of here if we do this." That is my job. You come to me with the biggest messes in life. What will I do? Give me 20 minutes. Give me 10 minutes. Give me 30 seconds, and I will give you a plan to get out of the mess you are in. So what if you do not do anything with it? Most people get going for a while, and then because of that old attitude, the way they are, the very people who try to help them now become the very people who they do not like anymore. Oh, my ministry, are you kidding me? What do you think I like dogs so much for? It is absolutely ludicrous what some of God's people will do with the truth, or better yet, will not do with the truth.

I am going to tell you right now, walking backwards will never be easy. I will tell you rule number one of life as far as I am concerned, and I carry this with me and think about it in every situation I find myself in, every decision I have to make about life. You better too, and the quicker you get it, the better off you will be. I am going to tell you right now, it takes longer to fix something than it did for us to break it. When it comes to mending families, relationships, marriages, it always takes longer than it took to break it. Just like the nation of Israel, when families go, churches go. When churches go, God's plan goes. When God's plan goes, the church goes, and the family goes, the nation goes. Welcome to America in 2019.

SEC: The Blessing of Trusting God: Being Made Fat

Then the last part of Proverbs 28:25: "he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat." When it comes to the Bible and your spiritual relationship with God, I think the saying is, "Thin may be in, but fat is where it is at." That is because God uses the word "fat" or "fatness" in a good way spiritually. I know in America you hear it all the time: obesity in America is a national crisis. Kids overweight, it leads to all kinds of health issues. I totally understand that; it is a tragedy. But in a biblical sense, every child of God should be obese when it comes to the blessings and the depth of the Word of God in your life.

Last week we looked at Proverbs 28:20: "A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent." This time of year, when it is getting into the

wintertime, if you notice, the squirrels are much more active in your yards. I was over at Gary's the other day doing something. It was a nice day out, and I was up the back, and I saw six groundhogs running for their holes. When they ran, they were kind of cute because they had so much fat on them; they were just trying to run to the hole. That is the way squirrels are out there gathering their food for the winter. The animals know that wintertime comes; it is tough, so they put on extra layers of fat that they can survive through the winter. I am telling you, for a child of God, that is pretty good advice. He says, "Then, Job, learn from the animals; they will teach you." Wintertime is going to come in some of our lives, and you better have a good casing of fat around you spiritually speaking that you can live off of. Most Christians are not in very good health. They are basically junk food Christians, but when it comes to spiritually, they are anorexic. A child of God should never go on a diet spiritually. In the world, when we are undisciplined, we gain weight; it is fat. In the spiritual sense, the key is discipline, and you get fat. You get in that book, and you lay it on.

Fat in the Bible is always an interesting study for me because in Exodus and Leviticus, you find the burning of the fat always had to do with something with the sacrifice of Christ made. I am going to tell you right now, spiritually speaking, the fatter you get, the more fat you put on spiritually speaking, the more you are going to understand the sacrifice that Christ paid for you. All through the Bible, God will use fat and fatness to illustrate how God will increase you in His blessings, enlarge you, the Bible talks about. Spiritually speaking, ladies, you ought to go from a size four to a size 20. Spiritually speaking. And do not stop there. Spiritually speaking, at some point in your life, you ought to get your spiritual clothes down at Kansas City Tent and Awning. Spiritually speaking, guys, I know physically we all like the 33-34 inch waist, but I am telling you, spiritually speaking, you ought to be enlarged. When you fly on a plane spiritually, and you had a spiritual section for you, they would have to put two seatbelts together just to get you in the chair. God enlarges us.

In fact, he says over there in Proverbs 13:4:

Proverbs 13:4

The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

He said in Proverbs 15:30:

Proverbs 15:30

The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat.

In Isaiah 30:23, he said:

Isaiah 30:23

Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

That is a verse for Israel in the millennium. See how we use the word "fat" and "fatness"? In Ezekiel 45:15:

Ezekiel 45:15

And one lamb out of the flock of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord GOD.

Again, Israel in the millennium. Notice the fat pastures. Genesis 27:28, he says:

Genesis 27:28

Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:

Then in the same chapter, in Genesis 27:39, he says:

Genesis 27:39

And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;

That is the blessing of Jacob and his family and his seed from God, the nation of Israel. Then in Psalms 36:8-9, he says this:

Psalms 36:8-9

They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

That is the blessing of the fatness of God to David and his house. Notice the word "light," the Word of God. Notice the word "drinking of the river of pleasure." That is a lot better than the sewer that most of God's people drink out of every Saturday night. Look at Isaiah 55:1-2. Now here is a promise and a principle for everybody in this room this morning:

Isaiah 55:1-2

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Lastly, Romans 11:17. Here it is:

Romans 11:17

And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

Here is the root source of our fatness for our soul. It is the olive tree, and that olive tree will be the Lord Jesus Christ. It all starts and it all ends with our relationship with Him. The olive tree, from which comes the fatness, which, by the way, was the tree of life in Genesis 3. The fatness of our own lives, the fatness of your children's life, the fatness of your family. Your house will be fat with the fatness of the Lord, or your house will be diseased with leprosy, and you get to choose.

SEC: Conclusion: Ownership and God's Plan for Families

As I said earlier, Psalms 127:4, "As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth." Nobody will shoot those kids through life; you will. Somebody says, "Well, my gym teacher or this person or this teacher or this guy or this gal took my child away from me." No, no, no. What you did is put him in your car and drove him right over to them and said, "Here, have at it." You are in charge of your family.

This is a message for all of us on many levels. Kids robbing Mom and Dad of the honor and giving them the ability to have the final authority in their life at this point, until you get your own relationship with the Word of God and you are out from under your family. Understanding that as parents, your importance is not only in this life but in training them the right way, putting those things in their life, and understanding that our children are God's heritage. They are not ours. You are just the key, and it is your ownership that decides which way they go. Do not blame it on somebody else. You take it. It is yours. When families fail, God's mission will fail. That is why in every case, because the parents have failed, it has to start with that.

I say it again, and this church stands as a testimony to what I am about to say. The families over the last 16 years that have come into this church, who have come to me and said, "Hey, look, we got in this late. We went to a church; we did not get what we needed. We are starting to have some issues." In every case, there was a plan put into effect that makes it work. I am not saying it is going to work in an hour or two hours or a month or a year, but it will work because at the end of the day, this church holds everybody, without God being a respecter of persons, accountable on the same scale. Right is right, and wrong is wrong. God's plan is to reach the world through families, generation to generation.

It is our job in this church to take every Mom and Dad, every Grandma and Grandpa, every uncle who has a kid who is struggling—maybe their parents are nowhere, maybe they have no parents, or maybe their parents are in this church and they do not want to do it. It is our responsibility, by the manifestation of truth, to give everybody in this room the opportunity to do what God has called you to do. If you are a young single right now, you ought to be preparing right now because the biggest disaster in your world that will take away everything that God has for you will be you simply marrying the wrong person. So you better start right there. You better understand what you need to look for. You need to understand you can always bring them to me. What you cannot see in your flashlight, mine is a lot brighter. It is a situation where we will work together; we will pull together.

Father Flanagan said something one time when he started Boys Town, and he did a tremendous job. Unfortunately, he is in hell this morning; he is a Catholic priest, and Boys Town is a Catholic organization. But he said something one time years ago, which was the thing that he really founded it on because he really loved boys; he loved those kids. He said one time when somebody asked him why he would do it, and he was a boy, he worked a deal to get that thing going because he had nothing. Somebody asked him one time why he did what he did, and he simply said, "Because I really believe that there is no bad boy." Now, I understand what he was saying, and from a Bible standpoint, obviously, I do not agree with that because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But I am telling you right now, if you are saved here this morning, if you are saved here this morning, and you are a young man or a young lady and you are struggling through life, what is good about you that does not make you a bad boy or girl is the Holy Spirit of God living inside you today. As long as I have that, we have something to work with.

If I have Mom and Dad in my corner over here, and they are 100 percent, we are meeting and working through everything and talking and communicating back and forth, and they are doing what I am telling them to do, I do not care who you are, I will get you in that same scenario on the other side. We will make some things happen because the goal has to be that this church will only be as strong as the families, and the families will only be as strong as the parents doing what needs to be done and the kids obeying those parents. When the family fails, God's mission will fail, and the kids will develop an "I do not care" attitude, become complacent, and become a companion to a destroyer, and God's plan to reach the world through the family generation after generation goes out the window. The proud heart continues to stir up the strife, and the training of a child who will not do what is right also, when they will not do what is right, the whole system breaks down. Parents blaming the kids, when all the time the kids are only a spiritual picture of what the parents really are.

Being made fat with the fatness of God's blessing in your family, but it starts in your own personal life with the olive tree. In this church, you can eat all you want 24/7. John and the Christensons will understand this; you guys put on those cruise ships. Betsy, is it not true that on a cruise ship you can go down in the middle of the night and get a full buffet? Food everywhere you go. They feed you 24/7. You go out to the boats, the casino—not telling you to do that now, you understand that—but if you would go out there, it would be a little gambling out there in the middle of the night, you can have all the food 24/7. That is the way every church ought to be. If the world can do that, God's people ought to do that.

You have the bookstore, you have the website, you have Sunday morning, you have Thursday night, you have the people ministry, you have the Bible Institute, you have the principle classes that are taught, you have a one-on-one with me or the people that you work with, and the discipleship one and discipleship two. We have a smorgasbord going on here 24/7, but it is all fundamentally baked with one ingredient: truth. We have baby food for your young baby Christians. We will take it and we will cut up your little food for you so you do not choke on it. We will get you little cans of that little applesauce and that stuff that looks like somebody already ate it and feed it to you real slowly. You can just take it down there, and it tastes so good, you can

even rub it on your face and get it all over; it is okay, that is what babies do. We are here for you. But then you will grow up a little bit; we will give you little kids' food. Now we will put away the baby stuff, and we will get you those little cans of Beanie Weenies, and we will take those little suckers out and we will cut them up so you do not choke on them, making sure you get it. Then a little bit later on, you grow a little bit, you get into the adult food. We will go down to McDonald's after Bible study: two cheeseburgers and a medium Diet Coke. Then down the line someplace, you are a warrior, you are a soldier, and now you get seasoned meat: sirloin steak, two inches thick, roasting on the grill, all you want. "Come and dine, the Master calls, come and dine." You can feast at Jesus' table anytime.

That is what it takes for everybody to get what they need. That is what it takes for every child of God, on whatever level you are: how you came in, young Christians who just drank out of the wrong water fountain and now you are a child, or if you older Christians had brought your kids in and you already were struggling, and here they are now, we are going to work with you. Or you have lost your kids totally and completely, and you want to say, "What can I do?" There is always something you can do. That is never the issue. The issue is, will you do what you need to do? There lies it, because that is what it takes. That is a great proverb for you kids: you better go out of here now and realize that there is a promise that comes with your disobedience and your rebellion. Whatever your Mom and Dad thinks your problem is, or whatever you think your problem is, or whatever your favorite little sin is that you think that is it, that is not it. It goes back to a fundamental law taught in the Old Testament and the New Testament: you disrespect and do not honor your father and your mother. That is where it all starts. Do not talk to me about fixing over here if you are not willing to fix that. Start doing what they say.

Moms and Dads, if you do not know how to put that together, that is what I am here for. We will make it work. I am a planner. There is always a plan in the Bible. We will go through the principles. We will go through the Zacchaeus principle. We will go through the prodigal son principle. We will go through the Jacob principle. We will go through the Davidic principle. They are all there to put together to help you get what you need to get well. We will hold up there and have a word.