

1 Timothy 4:12-13

Sunday 7/27/2025

SEC: Introduction to Camp and Ministry Priorities

I have had a lot of camps under my belt. I took my first camp when I came to Kansas City at the end of 1976, but the first camp was in 1977. I am lucky enough to have two of my guys who were with us today, Troy and Steve, back here. How old were you when we had our first camp? Fifteen. How old are you now? I will be sixty-five in January. If that does not make you feel old, it certainly makes me feel old. I know some of you know Steve is right in there, too. From that period of time, I probably, either preaching them or having my own, did three or four camps a year. You can do the math, well over two hundred camps in that period of time.

I have to tell you, nothing has been more exciting and exhilarating to me than what we have done here with our camping program. Way back in the day, Joe Christensen got us started, and he had the vision for it, and how it has developed down through the years to what we have today. This is a very special day for our church. I want to help you as a parent understand everything that God has for us in this, not just for the next four days, but when we come back from camp.

Over the years, now 50 plus years being in the ministry, one of the things that I have learned, and I really learned it early on as I watched and learned and grew and made my own mistakes, I saw how important it was in the ministry to have the ability to set priorities. Priorities within the ministry that you do, but then priorities within your own life. Very early on, I had the fortune that many of you have of good men and women who really helped me with the Bible, just like many of our people do for some of you young couples and young singles. I saw the importance of the priority of the Word of God in my own life. The fact that you hear me talk about it all the time, not just to know the Bible, not just to know things about the Bible, but actually to know the Bible.

I talk about, and I know you probably do not think about it like this, but we talk about different levels of your spiritual growth as you learn the Bible. I went through those same levels. I started out dumb as a fence post when it came to the Bible. I am not much better now, but I get a little bit of insight into some things. I found out that there, and we talked about this Thursday night, there is a right way to study your Bible and there is a wrong way to study your Bible. The right way will give you in time an understanding of the Word of God. The wrong way, you will still learn fragments about your Bible, but you will never really come to an understanding of it systematically that you can see it as God laid the big picture out of the Word of God. So I saw that in my own life, that if I was ever going to make a difference in somebody else's life, the Word of God had to make a difference in my life.

SEC: Priority of the Church Family

The second priority I saw was my responsibility to you, the people God gave me, my getting the Bible to you, my church. Most pastors will distance themselves from their people on a personal level. I have seen it for years and years and years. Their fellowship and their friendships will be with other pastors. Years ago when I was connected to a church, we were part of the Baptist

Bible Fellowship down in Springfield. I saw the fallacy of that, of the pastors going down there and hobnobbing with all the other pastors. Actually, what they really did is they all got together and they complained about their people back in their church. The things they did not like, they traded problems and talked about that. I saw the result of that over many years with many pastors. They seem to develop an elite status, that they are up here and you are down here.

It is one of those things where I learned that you have to make your people a priority. I joke with you all the time and I tell people that wherever you are going to church, if your pastor will not give you his personal cell phone number, you need to leave the church. I am joking, but I am telling you, you have got to be one with your people. That is a priority. They have got to be your friends. I have pastors out there, Mike Veach and Jim Lake and Herb Kuntz and those guys, and we are great friends and all of that, but it is not a fact that where I spend my quality time, I want to spend it with you guys, all of the things that we do. It is because the pastor's job is to make his people feel special. The reason why he should do that is because they are special. He needs to develop that relationship with them to be one of them, making your church a true family where everybody is just part of that family.

Please, some of you call me Pastor Bob and I am fine with that. I had a friend of mine who was Greek Orthodox, and he knows I am a pastor. He is a collector like I am of military stuff. He knows I am a pastor and he is from California. He asked me one time, he says, "You are a pastor. How do I address you? Do I address you as Reverend? Do I address you as Father?" I just said, "Address me as Bob." I put my pants on just like everybody else does. In fact, the thing about my name, whether you spell it forward or backwards, I am the same guy, B-O-B. You have got to have that. I appreciate it. The only thing I do not tolerate, and for some reason when I always went up to New England, they had to call me Bobby. I hate that. I feel like I had to have a ponytail and a big...

Anyway, we are laborers together. We are in this together. There is no elite status here. We may be on different levels spiritually learning the Bible, but at the end of the day, we are all in the same foxhole. I love it. I love the great example of this. Your church and the way it is put together and how it operates really comes through in a time like this when we do the camp. The logistics of this week are on the same par probably as a Normandy invasion. There are so many pieces to this. We have the sound guys who have got to get that sound up. I have my stuff for the giveaways. We have the food for the people who are cooking at that. We have the crafty ladies who do all the craft stuff. Well, they are not crafty ladies. You know what I am saying. We have the medical team with all of that stuff. We have the grunt crew. We have guys that were over there getting the obstacle course stuff out. You have got to get that all set up. It is unbelievable, but it runs just like it is supposed to run in the military because we are supposed to be soldiers of Jesus Christ. It runs the same way. You have the orders come down to the captain, the captain to the lieutenant, the lieutenant to the sergeants, and it gets done.

I asked Danny a little while ago, "Hey, what needs to be done?" He said, "It is all done. These guys are getting it done. All I got, it is all done." That is the way it works or is supposed to work when it works as a team. Camp is just the tip of the iceberg of what goes on in this church

because the same kind of protocol flows through our ministries with people helping people and being there for people.

SEC: Priority of Family

Another priority I learned was family because churches are made up of families and a church will only be as strong as the families that are in it. I totally understand my family has to be the example first. I cannot get up and tell you how to raise your kids if I failed with mine. I cannot tell you how to make your family a ministry team if mine is not. It starts at the top. Everything rises and falls on leadership. That is a precedent that has to be set.

I understood early on, God's plan in the Old Testament was to reach the world. He told Abraham in Genesis 12:3 that all the families of the world were going to be blessed in Israel. For the church age, God's program of reaching the world, when you boil it down and you get it down where it really hits the road, it is through families. Families building ministry teams together and ensuring that the cycle from generation to generation within that family keeps producing men and women and children that in time when you get to the judgment seat of Christ, you have a whole train. Your life is either going to be a train of ministry or a train wreck, and you get to decide.

I made families a priority, helping folks on all levels that want to get their family. We have so many young couples in our church here that came out of families where mom and dad did not really do anything for them with the Word of God and they did not really have anything. When they came here, they fell in love with the Word of God. They fell in love with the church and what was going on. When they got married, they decided that from this point on, their family is going to be everything that God wanted them to be. In other words, they saw the priority of a family and they broke that cycle that from this point on, their family is going to become that generation. It is an incredible thing, and it is never too late to start that.

SEC: Priority of the Future Generation

The fourth priority I learned was that within all of the priorities, I saw what I believe is probably the number one priority in any church, and that will be the future generation of that church. Today, everywhere, almost in Christianity, wherever you go, I have people that call me on the phone, "I am looking for a church around the country. I cannot find one. Where is this? I do not see. I do not know." You look around today and most churches are dead in the water. They are just dead. They may have the right Bible. They may believe salvation and all of that, but they are dead in the water. Nothing is going on. They are like buying a hundred thousand dollar car and then you cannot drive it because the battery is dead. There is no power. You may get good gas mileage because you never drive it, but it is not going anywhere. Nothing is going on. It is filled with people, and this is not a criticism, but it is filled with people of 60, 70, 80 years old. They checked out a long time ago. The older people in our church, they are just as involved as the young people.

I learned a long time ago, another great priority. We have people in our church who are in their 60s, 70s, and 80s. People say, "Well, what do they have in common with the young people in

your church?" Obviously, you are not going to play softball. Obviously, you are not going to play volleyball, but you know where you have a commonality? It is called ministry. You can minister together, and we do. You help, everything moves along in the same line. Most churches are like what I talked about a couple of months ago or weeks ago in John 5, where everybody was laying around the pool waiting for the moving of the water. Everybody goes to church in many churches and nothing happens. The pastor is not motivated to motivate his people because he is not motivated. He has no clue how to build a church. He can build a building, he can do all of that, but he needs to build people.

Churches need to be exciting. They need to be, people need to be motivated. People need to have a vision. They need to see what is going on. They need to see God happening. Do you know why the electricity today, with everybody excited? It is not just because we are going to camp. It is more than that. You know what it really is? You are in a place where God is doing something. There is no substitute for that. For me, the number one, the greatest asset in our church and the number one priority is the future of our church. This will be our young people. You can look around you today in this church and 85 to 90 percent of our church is 30 years or younger. That does not happen by accident. We do not have a sign out front that says, "If you are over 50, don't come here." It did not happen by accident. You have got to build toward that. You have got to understand the big picture and the priorities that you have to set in your church.

I just turned 75. I have to tell you, I do not think like a 75-year-old. The reason why, somebody asked me, she said, "You are 75, but you do not act like a 75-year-old guy." He says, "What is your secret?" The secret is I may be 75, but when you let this mind begin, you would also cry, Jesus, you have a 33-year-old mind inside you. My problem is my body will catch up. I did not see him there last Saturday night, but we go to Culver's after the ball games, and everybody has a good time fellowshiping and eating. At that back section back there, they were not there last night, but the week before last, there must have been five or six or seven really old guys back there and one older lady, one old lady. I watched them because they had to be my age. I do not know if you were paying attention to them or not. One guy got up and he was walking like lizards, glasses were down on his nose, going to get something, and then coming back. Everybody else was just like they had, I mean, bumping each other to keep them awake and all those things. I called Barbara, my girls over, and I said, "Hey, tell me the truth. Do I look like that?" Jamie said, "No, Dad, but you kind of look like the old lady."

I have been in the ministry a long time, and I have seen a lot of preachers come and go. Most preachers never get to my age. They retire by the time they are 65 or 70. If you drive right down Walnut here, Walnut is the street over here, you go about a quarter of a mile down, you will see a sign there that that road going down is dedicated to pastors in retirement. Just a sign there. It is called, I do not know, dinosaur graveyard or something like that. It actually is a sign saying that in this little section down here is all for retired pastors. I am thinking to myself, I do not understand that. My Bible says in Ecclesiastes 8 that there is no discharge from this war. When God saved us, He did not put a stamp on the bottom of my foot with an expiration date when we get out of the ministry. You take your guy that is 60, 70 years old, if he is worth anything and he has done anything, by the time he gets that old, he has got more information because of what he

has experienced or what he has learned, that that is when he can really help somebody with it. What do we do? What do they do? They quit. They quit. They give it up. One guy told me one time, he says, "Well, you know, I have done my 40 years. I am going to take it easy." Yeah. Right up to the judgment seat of Christ. I will go till God takes me out. It is just that simple. I am not taking myself out.

I figured it out. I figured the priority is you young guys and gals. I cannot do what you do anymore. Let me tell you something. When I used to rent camps years ago, and some of you have been around, I used to go Mach five with my hair on fire. I liked to do it all. I delegated everything, but brother, I cannot do that anymore. I cannot play softball anymore. I cannot play volleyball anymore. It popped the screws in my back when they put the rods in, and the screw in my hand is kind of loose anyhow, so I cannot do that either, but that is okay. You know what? I reproduced myself in you, and you now are reproducing yourself in others. That is the way it is supposed to be.

Proverbs 20:29

The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the grey head.

That is why I keep mine so short, so I do not have to remind myself. But the bottom line is now in my ministry, at the time I am in, I cannot do it, but that is okay. I trained you to do it. The team concept of families and training the future generations of this church or any church. So a pastor being able to see that, taking everything that he has learned and infusing it into you while he can, that then you can get the job done. I just stand here and look at it and get blessed by it. Like this camp, I have nothing to do at camp this year. I usually preach, but I have been preaching this year. I am going to give away little things and have fun with all my kids. You are going to be blown away when you see this thing, what I have got set up here, and when you see how I am going to give it out. Oh, I am going to have fun. I am going to have some fun, but that is it. I do not need to, you know why? You guys can run it just fine. You know what you are doing.

In this church, the watch care of your children are in the hands of the best teachers and Christian leaders you could ever ask for. Starting in the nursery, they are dedicated, the Bible buddies, the Bible explorers, the Timothy class, then the high school. Those departments are staffed by our young singles and couples and some of the older folks that will certainly make a difference in your child's life. When you begin to invest yourself into people, some of you sponsored someone to camp, you will never understand till the judgment seat of Christ, the eternal blessings of maybe that kid getting saved.

When it comes to our kids, I spare no expense. We will spend probably \$50, \$60,000 on camp. We are paying for everybody to go to Worlds of Fun. Are you kidding me? Most camps you go to, when you go to breakfast, you get a soggy donut, and whatever. You go to lunch and you get watered down spaghetti, and you go to dinner and you get a hot dog that has been sitting there for three or four days. That is what you get. You are going to eat like kings in our camp. We have the best cooks you could ever want. Everything. It is put together, and we spare no expenses for it. I am telling you, the reason for that is, first off, I want your kids going to camp to think this is the best camp, and I want to give to them. I want them to understand that we spare no expenses

to them because they are a priority. Through that, the Holy Spirit of God will reach down and touch their hearts, and then they will live to give to others. It is just that simple. They are my priority.

I remember when I was a youth director, this was in '77, probably '78 too. We took kids down to camp, and the church that I was a youth pastor at, it was a decent church and a good church, and I am not criticizing anybody, but they did not really put the emphasis on kids. When I had camp coming up, I had to find a way to get the money. There was no budget for camp. I remember that I had a bunch of kids that wanted to come to camp. Jean and Diane, Jean, I think you were married to Diane yet, but you and your dad always helped me with camp, sending those kids to camp. Remember that, Jean? You still do today. Your mom and your dad and you, I do not think you were married yet, but you see, because you were so good at camp, look what God gave you. I said, "Because you were so good at camp." You had to reach over and give her a kiss now, Jean. Can you do that in front of everybody? Come on. What is the matter with you? I am not preaching anymore. Do you reach over and give her a little peck on the cheek? Here we go. Come on. Come on, Jean. Oh yeah, there we go. Dan, did I do that just the way you wanted me to? Okay, thank you.

I took some of my high school kids and we got a couple pickup trucks and we called the railroad yard down there, and they said that we could have all the railroad ties that they would place railroad ties with that we wanted. So we put an ad in the paper that for \$7 each, we would not only deliver the railroad ties, so we went down there. It was hard. Railroad ties are not light, and we would take all those ties, stack them in some place, and then people won, and then we would deliver them. That is how I paid for my first couple of camps, to get the kids to go. That left a lasting impression on me, and I made up my mind if I ever got in the position where I was the pastor, if my guys were going to have camp, they would never have to do something like that because these kids are our priorities. Why? These kids are our future. That is why.

SEC: The Six Areas of Example (1 Timothy 4:12)

For me, the single verse that I built all of this on, and it stayed with me for years, was in 1 Timothy 4:12-13. So let us turn there and we will spend a few moments here. I am going to get you out early today because everybody has a lot of things to do, but you will get the message, believe me.

While I am doing that, where is Addie at? Addie, where are you? Your spiritual birthday, I hear, huh? Good. Happy birthday to you. And then Jordan Hemecia, where are you? I heard, you did not tell me this, but I heard that you passed your cybersecurity test. Is that right? Wow. I have your outline here, honey. Come on up and get this. I am a little discombobulated this morning, but what else is new? This is our outline for Psalms. I know we are all discombobulated in faith and in purity.

1 Timothy 4:13

Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

Let us pray. Father, we do thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We love You. Thank You for today. Thank You for the great folks that are here, the visitors, and we pray, Father, if they are looking for a church, they will consider us. Lord, my home is always open to sit down and answer any questions or help them with anything, Lord. But we just thank You for what You have given us today. We look forward to our camp. We pray, Father, not only for the kids but for the parents today who are sending their kids. Lord, Your Spirit will not just work in the kids but also in the parents. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name for His sake we ask it. Amen.

As you know, we are starting today. We have our camp, but I want to tell you, I do not know if you see beyond this, but we have an incredible opportunity here with our kids. Today, I have asked all the parents who will be sending their kids to camp to be here, and next week, too, because we will talk about that in a little bit. It is important because families will be broken down into three basic units. You have the father, you have the mom, and then you have the children. Those are three key priorities. That is how you make a family, but that is also the basis of making a ministry team together.

As a parent, I do not know if you know this or not, but next Thursday, almost across the board, there may be a few holdouts, but I would say 98, 99 percent, when you pick your kid up next Thursday, you are going to get a new kid. You are going to get a new kid. God will do in four days what Jared and Danny and Wes could not do in six months of just coming to classes and just doing things with them. It all comes down to getting them out of the world, getting them out of their phones, getting them out of the TV, getting them out of their video games, and then saturating them for four days with a lot of fun things to do, but some powerful things out of the Word of God. I will just say, next week, everybody is going to be changed. It will not just be the kids. We should, selectively, the counselors are rock solid. They have been doing it for years. But I always like the new guys and gals that come to camp for maybe the first time. It is going to change your life too. You are going to see God in action. You are going to see something that you do not see in the world, not anymore. You are going to see where God comes down and you are going to see it affect the young people's lives, and it is going to change their lives.

Moms and dads, if you take the opportunity, you now will have the ability to begin to redirect your family and begin to get everybody on the same page and then begin to move forward. Next Thursday, your kids will come back changed. But what I need is not just changed kids. I need changed parents. I need parents who are going to see not only what their responsibility is, but they are going to see the opportunity that God has laid out right in front of them. Our leaders at camp, we have over 130 kids going. We have over 90 staff going, well over 200. Those guys will do the work. The Holy Spirit of God will come down and do His work. Mike and Danny, they will do their work, but their real work will need to be done when we bring those kids back and put them into your care. We will always be your support team, but you are the key factor in continuing what God will do in their lives over the next four days.

In 1 Timothy 4:13, we see the end result of camp, the end result of where any parent should be and any parent wants their kids to be. The end result is he says three things: reading, exhortation, and doctrine. That is our goal to begin the fundamentals of that, to build into them. These will be

the three keys to God's building program in everybody's life. I talked about how pastors can build buildings. Every church has a building program that goes on 24/7 every day, but it is not a building of literal buildings, it is the building of people.

To do that, in 1 Timothy 4:12, six things have to change. This will begin to happen at camp that you, the parent, when they come back, need to learn how to continue on with it. I am telling you this today so you can be ready. I will help you.

1 Timothy 4:12

Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

He says, "Be thou an example of the believer," and this will be in six areas. These are where we are going to begin to go to work next week. No matter what the theme is, no matter what preaching, no matter what, it does not matter, this is the bottom line. You as a parent must put these six things in your life. When they come back, they are going to be maybe not a hundred percent grounded in these. Some of them they will be, but they are going to be well on their way. Now they need somebody to pick it up and keep it going.

➤ 1.) In Word

The first thing he says, "be thou an example in word," getting your child to spend time in the Word of God, families working and growing together in ministry, in reading, exhortation, and doctrine. Reading, getting them to begin to understand what God has given them. We do this in different ways. We do it through the preaching. They have memory verses. They make a big deal about that. They are going to get all of the basics in the next four days that when they come home, they are going to be prime time ready to go. It is now going to be up to the parent to see what they got, take this here, and begin to work it and keep it going. They are going to understand what God has given them in His Word by the end of next Thursday. They are going to see the importance of them staying in it. This is going to be the key. I am telling you right now, mom and dad, if you the parent do not pick it up where we leave it off in three or four weeks, it is going to be gone. They are going to be right back where they were before. The world, their friends are going to suck it all in and take them away. Camp will simply be in four days to get your child ready that you as a family can begin the process of building a ministry family together. I will help you do that. I do not expect everybody to be experts at this. We can do this together. This is my job. This is the job of the church. This is what people do what we do here.

➤ 2.) In Conversation

He says, first off, "example in the word." Then the second thing he says, "in conversation." In the world we live in today, we think conversation means talking to somebody. But in the old days, when the English language was much purer and everybody understood it, we realized that the word conversation really means lifestyle. It is based on the principle in Matthew 12:34 that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Whatever comes out of your mouth is the lifestyle that you have, is what it is based on.

Next four days we will have a really good opportunity to get your child away from the world. They will not have their TVs. They will not have their phones. They will not have all the things they do. They are going to be bombarded with counselors, staff, preaching, memory verses. Everything is going to be geared toward getting them out of the world and getting them into the Word of God. But you are going to be the key to that. I have said this many, many times.

Psalm 127:4

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

A mom and dad will take those children like arrows, and whatever that kid winds up, whatever that kid does in life, good, bad or indifferent, will simply be based on that parent launching him through life at a target. When you build your family the way that it needs to be, that target is going to be a ministry family together. When you do not, then it is going to end in disaster.

I have spent too many years. I have. If nothing bothers me more than this, I watch kids that I think have great potential. I watch them and I think to myself, I see the basic traits and qualities in them, but it is not in the parents. They wound up being destroyed by the world system. You lose them forever. They get lost to the world. I have preached too many funerals for kids that died way too soon. I have seen too many suicides that should have never happened. Seen them die way too young. I am telling you, you have an incredible opportunity to take what God is going to do these next four days and redirect your family. I will help you do that. I have people that can help you do that.

➤ 3.) In Charity

Then the third thing he says is, "in charity." Now charity, again, it is a word that is totally misused today. In all your new Bibles, they take the word charity out and put the word love in. That is typical American Christianity, not knowing the difference between charity and love. Now, charity is love, but the world does not see it that way because charity defined in 1 Corinthians 14 is the purest form of love. Charity is loving somebody without wanting something back. That is hard for America. This is one of the greatest things that your kid is going to struggle with in the world that we live in today.

I have watched over the years, being a history buff and especially in America and seeing how the whole thing developed, where in America it started with the Bible. Patrick Henry, who was Patrick Henry back in the 1700s, he made the famous quote that we hear all the time. It says, "Give me liberty or give me death." When I was growing up in school, that was something that we were taught about him and all about his life. It is removed. Into the 1970s and the 80s with all the social issues rising and all the problems, the new slogan became, "Give me liberty." Now today, all your young kids are faced with a world that does not say, "Give me liberty or give me death." They do not say, "Give me liberty." They just say, "Give me, give me." They live their lives like the world owes them something. They live their lives like mom and dad owes them something. Please do not misunderstand me. Yes, you do, but it needs to be in the balance of the Word of God.

The real biblical aspect of ministry will be based on understanding what charity is, loving people by giving yourself to them and for yourself, asking nothing back. We do not give you things here because you are a visitor because we want something back. We want to show you. We do not do things for you because we want something back here at the church. We do things here simply because God did something in our life first. He gave to us and told us to give to others. When you set that precedent in somebody's life, then you see what would happen. You see, charity, real biblical love, purest form, will always require sacrifice. The ministry, your family being in the ministry and being effective in the ministry will have to understand a great concept. It is true with pastors. Most of them do not get it. But ministry, charity, is giving up what you want so others can have what they need. That is the ministry. That is what Christians should do.

I am not saying that next week your child is going to come back understanding all of that, but I will tell you this, your child will have the fundamentals of that over the next four days through the preaching, through the examples of the people that are sacrificing their jobs. You think those counselors, I mean, they have to get off work. They have to, some of them are not getting paid for it. They are making the supreme sacrifice because they love those kids and they are not asking nothing back. They are doing it because Christ did it for us. Your child will learn the fundamentals in the next four days, but I am telling you, mom and dad, you, the parent, must keep on developing it, helping them develop an understanding of Christ's pure love for us and then our pure love for others. It has to come back there.

➤ 4.) In Spirit

Now, the fourth thing he says, "in spirit." Without a doubt, our spirit will be the key to it all. This is where the real biblical definition of worship is found, not in a service, not in worshipping God with your tithes and offerings.

John 4:24

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Your spirit, God's truth, putting the two of them together. Giving your spirit over to the things of God's Spirit will always make you what God wants you to be. Giving your spirit over to the world will always make you what the devil wants you to be. Right now, your child is in the most vulnerable time of their lives, and your spirit is like the rudder of a ship. You can take an aircraft carrier that is 16 football fields long, but it turns on one little thing back there underneath the water, left or right, the rudder. Think of that rudder as your spirit. Which way you go in life depends on which way you turn that spirit toward the things of God, toward the things of the world. In the next four days, we will get most of them to get their spirit on the right track, but how long it stays on the right track will be up to you and where you put your spirit. It is just that simple. True biblical worship will always be my spirit, human spirit, immersed with God's Spirit and truth, and then God takes it and then He develops it from there. They will not have all that down, but they will have the beginning of it. Now you need to pick it up and go from there.

➤ 5.) In Faith

Then the fifth thing he says, "in faith," teaching your child to walk by faith and not by sight.

2 Corinthians 5:7

(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

To live by the faith. Faith is the simplest, in its simplest form, will be learning to trust God and wait on Him for everything in life. It is just that simple. Faith is not something you cannot understand or grasp, it is just that simple. The Bible says in Romans 10:17 that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Next week they will begin the process to live by faith. They will learn what it means. They will get everything that they need by faith, through the teaching them the Word of God.

You have to be able to see this. This is why I wanted to take this time and prepare you. Because you have before you an opportunity for your whole family to begin a new chapter, turn a new page, begin a whole new process. Sometimes it is almost impossible when the kids want it, the parents do not, or the parents want it. They have got to argue with the kids, "We are doing it for you." The next four days we are going to fix that problem. Almost 100%. I always get one or two holdouts, I get that. But almost 100%, those kids are going to come back ready. All they need is willing parents to be able to take it and go from there. We will do the foundational work. We will lay the groundwork, then you can build on it. Working together to ensure your child and in your family the future generations continue to grow. Building and strengthening the three key aspects, mom, dad, and the child. This is the job of the church.

You see, for us it is more than just, "Oh, we are going to have a camp." There is a design behind it. There is a purpose behind it. It is so much bigger than most people can ever see. Some parents see their kids going to camp because now they got out of their hair for four or five days and they can do whatever they want to do. Some see it as a good thing, "Well, I want my kids to go to camp because I want that church to fix my kid." Shoot, I do not know. Maybe next year we have to forget the kids' camp and have an adult camp, fix the adults. There is a bigger picture here. What we are trying to do is to get those kids set up to the place where when they come back they are ready for you. You are missing the greatest opportunity that you could ever have. It is all going to be done for you. All you have to do is to do your part.

➤ 6.) In Purity

Then lastly the sixth thing he says, "in purity," keeping your child pure, untainted, and unspotted by the world. Believe me. Our kids in the world that we live in today, this is where they are most vulnerable. This is where they are most impressionable. Brother, let me tell you something. The devil knows it. When you are 14, 15, 16, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, you are at the greatest time of your life that is going to go one way or the other. You are either going to get foundationalized in the things of God and do for Him or you are going to get foundationalized in the world. Look at Daniel 1. That is exactly what the devil's plan was. I am trying to get you to understand that you have the greatest opportunity if you will just come Thursday, meet those kids on the same ground they are coming to you with.

Right now, your kids, they are at that age where they are going to begin to make some bad choices. Those bad choices, in many cases, can change and alter and affect them the rest of their lives. Here is where if something does not happen and the devil goes after them. I have told it before. I live right down the road from John Knox Village, the old folks' home, which I am not going to, by the way. I used to do electrical work for a guy. We had a job over there and we had to do it after hours. I remember it was about 10:30, 11 o'clock, and I was walking down all the rooms there going to where the power box was. My boss kept saying, "Gosh, you have got to be quiet. You have got to be quiet." I am thinking, "Quiet?" Then it hit me. Those people were all asleep. I walked down there. I was on three different floors. You know what I never heard? I never heard any loud music coming out from under the door. I never smelled marijuana smoke drifting down the hallways. One time I heard a little Willie Nelson coming through. You see, the devil is not after those folks. He is not after them. They are way past his interest. They are way past them being effective to alter his plan. But you know where he wants to put the emphasis? In your kids. They are at the greatest point in their life right now. They are also at the greatest point where they are going to start making some bad choices. If somebody does not help them make the right choices, this is when they are going to get into drugs. This is where they are going to get into alcohol. This is where they are going to get pregnant. This is where grandparents are going to move in with somebody and live outside of marriage. This is where they are going to enter into bad relationships. They are going to become abusive. This is where the parent is going to lose contact with them, and now they do not need you anymore. They do not need you anymore because you gave up the greatest responsibility that a parent can have, and that is influence in your child. When you do not do it right, somebody else is going to have the influence in their life. That is where they are at, guys, and I am telling you right now, Mom and Dad, you need to be the first line of defense. As good as our program and our ministries are for your child, we cannot undo in the short time that we have them two or three times a week what you have them the rest of the time.

Did you notice he mentioned purity last? He mentioned it last because a pure life is developed as you get down in your life the first five that we have already talked about: the word, conversation, charity, spirit, and faith. Out of those five things come a pure life. These are the building blocks to a pure life. Now we can help you, but in reality it lies with you. We can help you, but I do not have anybody designed to move into your family to do your job. We can show you, we can help you, we can lead you, we can spend time with you, we can do everything we need to do. I am not expecting you to be on top of it, but we can help you get there.

SEC: Call to Action for Parents

What I have given you today, Moms and Dads, if I were you, I would take this message and this is where I would start on Thursday morning. When your child comes home next week, next Thursday, the minute you pick up your child, they have just had four days and they are really dialed into the Word of God and they are really happy. They got memory verses, they got everything they did, they got great memories, some of them got saved, some of them, they all got their lives right. The moment they drive out that gate onto 40 Highway, the world, the flesh, and the devil is waiting for them. You are the first line of defense. If I were you, they came back from

camp, I would start to really get involved in their lives in the basic things. I would ask them about camp. I would ask them about their memory verses, have them show it to you. You can start saying, "You know what, those are verses for me. You got them down, you helped me learn them now. You said your verses to somebody there, I am going to start learning these and I will say them to you." You need to work together. You ask them what they learned about God. You ask what they learned about themselves. You start bringing them to church, being part of the church family. Get them into the Timothy, get them in with Jared. If you need help with them, talk to Danny or Jared. We have everything here you need. It is right here before you. The opportunity of a lifetime to change the course of a family because that is what it is going to take.

The Bible says that Noah built an ark in preparation of the saving of his household. In Noah's time, we know that as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of man. There is coming a time like Noah's time that when he built that ark, the only ones that he could save was his own family. Do not ever let that get to the place where you cannot save your own family. You have the opportunity. As a church, we are here, pastor I am here. I have butt loads of people that can help you. Buckets that can just be there for you to help you every such way. But you have to, as arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, so are children of the youth.

SEC: Support for Children Without Parental Support

Let me just say this and then I am done. This is a tragedy, but it happens in every church and it certainly happened with us. I know there will be kids that come to camp that, and this again, there is not a criticism, it is what we call the reality of life and ministry. Their parents are not going to do anything. Not because they are bad people, but because that is just where it is. I want you to know that we will be here for you. I could give you list after list after list of young men and young ladies that came in from around the country that had no moms and dads. That saw us online, got hooked up, and then moved here. We adopted them as a church. We took them in, we helped them. Some of them, they never had a birthday before till we gave them their first birthday. We took care of them at Christmas. We give them the Bible, we give them everything we need, because that is what, and I am saying all that to say this, if you want to do it and you do not have anybody out there, we will help you, we will be here for you. We will do for you what we have done for 20, 30 others, and we will take you in and provide for you what you need and to give you there. That is not a slam against your parents, that is just where the world is today. Maybe you can be the testimony to help them if they cannot be the testimony to help you. It is a two-way street. But I want you to know that. We will be here for you. I have got men and women who will help you. I will do for you what I do for everybody in this church that I come into contact with that joins this church. I will give you the best shot I can. I will give you everything I have got. I will give you everything that you need up to my ability to help you. I will hold nothing back. You can have as much of me as you can stand, but we will help get you there.

SEC: Conclusion and Logistics

So we start tonight, five o'clock. Pray for your child. Pray for our camp. Pray for the kids, the workers, and the men preaching. It is going to be a hot week. Heat index is going to be well over 100 degrees probably. We are probably the only camp around Kansas City that has a doctor, a

full doctor on staff that is going to be at camp to be there for your child. We have taken every precaution we do every year. You pray that this year that you can turn your family and change your family in the direction of life. We will always be here to help you because we are laborers together.

I told you when I started that this week and next week, I would like you to be back. That is because next week, I suspect we will have our little slide program like we always do so you can get a good, what the kid did. But then, we are going to split the time. Danny is going to preach and he is going to tell you the direction that he has laid out for your children. Jared is going to take the other half and he is going to lay out for you where he is going. I want you to understand every aspect of this. But I cannot impress upon you enough of the great responsibility that we have and that you have to make a difference in your child when they come back next Thursday. It can be a game changer, folks. You have to be able as a parent to meet your child on the same spiritual level that they are at. Then, we will work with you from there.

Pray for us. When I get done here, if I could get three or four guys, I need to load Woody's truck up with some of this stuff if you can meet me up here. Rest of you, get home, do what you have got to do and get everything ready. Just pray for us next week. We are really excited about it. It is going to be a great time. God is going to do some great things. I am asking God to do some great things in the lives of parents while we are gone doing some great things in the lives of your kids. Then the Holy Spirit of God will put it all together next Thursday.

Let us pray. Father, Thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We love You. We thank You for this great host of people here today and they are good people, Lord. Lord, let them know that we love them and we care for them. That I am more than just their pastor, I am their friend. I want to be there through the good times, the bad times and the tough times. We can make this work. There is no reason why it cannot. It is never too late to start. But we need to see the opportunity God has given us with the children and then the parents this week. Help us, Father. We will be careful to give You all the honor and the glory and the praise. Bless Mike as he flies in today, get him here safely. Lord, let us get over there and get set up and let us get it going. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name for His sake. We ask it. Amen.