Child Training - Introduction Sunday 9/27/2026

I. A Pastor's Primary Role-See the Needs of the People & Supply Those Needs

The job of any pastor, whatever he does with his church, has many different aspects to it. There are many things he has to do; many hats, as they say, he has to wear. In my own personal opinion, I think the number one thing a pastor has to be able to do is have the ability to see the needs of his people and then, to the best of his ability, try to supply those needs.

You will find that the discipleship lessons we do here in discipling people are literally used around the world. They were used over in Africa where the team just went; they are used throughout Europe and the Philippines. The Lord has just used those in a mighty way, and it will only be at the judgment seat of Christ that we see the impact that they had. My point is this: those lessons had a very humble beginning. When I did it, all the way back in 1978, it was not designed to reach the world with them. My design was, I had people in my Sunday school class, and I sat down and asked myself, "What do they need?" I thought about that, and out of that understanding and the ability to see their need, I created the discipleship lessons. It gained through the years as we took teams to churches all through America, Europe and Africa. But it all started with just my wanting to give my people what I thought they needed.

With a church such as ours, there are so many young singles and young couples, and obviously, the singles who soon or someday will be married in a short time. We have a greater advantage and a greater opportunity than most churches. I hear this all the time from pastors and from people in churches, that most of their people are in their 70s, their 80s, and well into their senior years of life. Pastors today just don't understand; they have a hard time reaching younger people. Younger people, young singles, and young couples—the average age of our church, if we got everybody in one place, would run about 200, but the average age is about 30. Now, we have some "oldies but goodies" sprinkled through it. Any donut or cupcake is going to have nice little sprinkles on it. I look at old people as the sprinkles. It's okay. We have a greater opportunity with all the young minds that we have, all the young families that we have, and certainly all the young singles and all the young children that we have.

I built our ministry here teaching books of the Bible on Sunday morning, and right now we are in the book of Psalms. You know that Psalms contains 150 separate psalms. Psalms 119 alone, which is the longest chapter in the Bible, runs 176 verses in that chapter. With our teaching, verse by verse, which I think is the way to teach it, and developing each chapter, you can see that we are going to be in Psalms for quite a while. I personally think that we will start some Sunday morning in Psalms and wind up in heaven at the judgment seat of Christ trying to finish it up. I think it is going to be that long.

- Sunday Morning – Our Premiere Time Together in the Word of God

So, having said that, from time to time, as I see the need, we are going to hold up Psalms for a little bit, maybe a week or two, maybe a month. Then there will be times that we interject a study or a series that, as your pastor, I think needs to be taught. That is my job: my ability to see where we are at and the need, then try to keep up with that as best I can. Sunday morning is always a premiere for me of preaching and teaching. It is our time together in the Word of God. I can do more on Sunday morning than any other time of the week. There is more to get done; there is more time to do it, and I like the consistency of it. So I am going to use it to get my message out to as many as I can, as obviously I see the need.

Next Sunday, and we have talked about this, I am going to start a series on children and child training. I did this a number of years ago. Most of you were not here, or certainly if you were here, you weren't married yet. We did several books on the family and marriage enrichment and all that stuff, and they are in the bookstore. But with all the new couples and all the new babies and all the young children, it is time to look at it again. We have many families online too. I get emails from them all the time, and they are following us, so they need it too.

II. The Attack on the Bible and the Family

First off, I am going to talk about some things that we all know, and then I want to put it into a context of where we need to go. We all know that the Bible is under attack today. There is no question about that. The attack of Satan on God's Word is now complete.

- Martin Luther broke with the Catholic Church over the Bible

The attack started in America around 1900, when Martin Luther broke with the Catholic Church during the Reformation, and we saw the Reformation flourish. It flourished because what Martin Luther did, he not only broke with the Roman Catholic Church, but he broke with the bible that they used. Martin Luther translated his own Bible in German out of the text that the King James Bible came from. When he broke with the Catholic Church, he broke with them over the Bible. From Martin Luther's translation, he opened a door to the other English translation that in time, the Bible that you hold in your lap, hopefully, is a King James 1611 Authorized Version. We see how that all transpired and how that it all took place.

- After the Reformation, Europe went back into Apostasy

After the Reformation, 300 years later, Europe was back into apostasy. All that Martin Luther accomplished was lost in just a split second. The Catholic Church had a Counter-Reformation by which they destroyed everything that had happened with Martin Luther. The real understanding of the Reformation wasn't so much what was taking place in Europe, and people get confused on this. But what Martin Luther did for the Reformation was open a door that the Bible-believing groups, who were under great pressure under the Roman Catholic Church, now got to go out. England sent out missionaries to the ends of the earth. In time, so did America. But in Europe, that was landlocked, they went back into apostasy. I could take an hour this morning and talk to you about the Counter-Reformation, the Oxford Movement, and all the things that they did to

destroy what God had done in Europe. Europe today, some 400 or 500 years later, is in total apostasy. They are amoral; there is no God. If you want probably one of the hardest mission fields to reach, it will be any country in Europe. They are so out of touch with the fact that there even is a God.

You are going to find that in our country, when you talk about other churches, the question that comes up is, "Does your pastor use a King James Bible, or does he use one of the other translations?" That is the question. That is not the question in Europe. The question in Europe, if you are going to have a discussion about your church and your pastor, is, "Is your pastor in your church an atheist, or does he believe that there is a God?" The churches in Europe have no problem being churches with a pastor that is an atheist that teaches people there is no God. That is where Europe is.

- In American Christianity there is only a Remnant Left who Hold the Truth

America, where this country was founded on the King James Bible and for the first hundred years or so, held the Bible in great admiration and great esteem. We wrote it into our Declaration of Independence. We wrote it into our Constitution. All the Founding Fathers were influenced by two of the greatest preachers that ever hit the shores of America: Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield. It was tremendous what God was doing. But then the attack, like Europe, in America started in 1900. It is a battle that Christianity in America has completely lost. Nothing will stop the spread of Christianity quicker than taking God's Word out of Christianity in the hands of God's people.

I have told you that when you lose your Bible, you lose seven key things in your Christian life. We will talk about that in a week or so in a Bible study. The devil knew the Bible was the power source by which God's people would reach the world. So with it gone, the Bible out of the way, now New Testament Christianity is dead in the water. As I have said many, many times, in American Christianity, there is only a remnant of men and women left who hold the truth and hold the line and preach the Word of God. We know who those churches are; there are many of them out there. But they are all small churches like ours compared to the big monstrous mega-churches that are out there. **God always did His work through a remnant**. That is a principle that is taught down through history.

Years ago, I was told, and I have told it to you many, many times, that **no nation who dumped the Bible ever survived 200 years after they left the Word of God**. That is a truism down through history. Germany under Martin Luther never survived after they dumped it. When they had the Bible, Germany produced the greatest spiritual leader that the world has ever seen: Martin Luther. When they lost the Bible, Germany produced the greatest evil dictator the world has ever seen: Adolf Hitler. You see how the Bible slides down that rule of measure of what a country produces. England was the same way. God used England in the 1600s and 1700s to get the Bible around the world. The old saying was that the sun never set on English soil. England was just a little island nation, but she had reached the world with colonies: Africa, India, the Philippines, the Solomon Islands, everywhere. The world was bathed in the light of a King James Bible. Today, England is run by the Muslims. England has no Bible; they are in an absolute total

disarray mess. We had a young man here who is a doctor at KU who has been following us online. He cannot always get here because of a work schedule, but he is from England. He moved to the United States simply because his own country had completely dumped the Bible and had been taken over by the Muslims. That is where it is today. It did not survive 200 years.

America was started around 1776, somewhere in there. Up until around 1888, it flourished. Then, shortly around the turn of the century, it too dumped the Word of God. Now, 138 years later, after this country losing the Bible, here we are. God's people that do the work are a remnant in a cesspool called Christianity. People talk about revivals today; they do not even know what a real revival is. Do not forsake what a real revival was under J. Frank Norris or Billy Sunday or some of the great revivals to a few grapes gleaned off a disease-ridden vineyard today. The people have no understanding of history.

- The Devil not only attacked the Power Source that we had, but he attacked the Family

Not only did the devil attack the power source that we had and take it from us, but he also went after the very vehicle that God established to reach the world with the Word of God: he attacked the family. You have heard me say this many, many times: God's plan of the Old Testament and the New Testament church age was to reach the world through families, ministering together generation after generation. We are told in Genesis 12:3 that all the families of the earth are going to be blessed in God's people, the nation of Israel.

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. Genesis 12:3

This is why in the Old Testament, and it seems harsh to some people because they do not know anything about the Bible, but all of us at some point in life have had in your family or other family's rebellious children. Children who rebel against your authority, the Word of God, and everything that goes on. We try to help them and work with them and do what we can do, and that is our job.

Do you realize that in the Old Testament, if you had a rebellious child and that child rejected their parents' authority, the first step, you took them to the elders, and the elders tried to get them to straighten it out. If they did not, then the third step was, you killed them. You took them out and stoned them. Now that seems harsh, doesn't it, compared to the "mamsy-pamsy" Christianity we have. But the method and the reason behind that strictness was the fact that God knew what rebellious children would do to destroy the plan of God of a nation, taking the blessings of God to the world. That is the reason behind it. Now I know that is the kingdom of Heaven, that is the physical thing; and we are in the kingdom of God, that is the spiritual thing, I understand that. It is a thing where he attacks the family after he took the Word of God from us. **I cannot impress upon you enough how your family and your children are under an attack today.**

Before next week, when we really get into the meat and potatoes of how to do this, I need to put everybody on an understanding context level. **I need for you to better understand what you are up against to be able to know how you are going to deal with it**. We have talked about this before, the idea of a snapshot of things in life versus the video of life. I want to create for you today not the snapshot but the video. I want you to understand how families, your family, got into the mess that it is in today and how the attack is coming after them. Then we will talk about fixing it next week.

III. The Rise and Fall of Mega-Churches

By the 1950s and 1960s, the attack on the family was underway in America. I want to play you the video today. For 60 years now, the Bible has been under attack. In 1900, when the attack really began, Baptist churches in America fell into three categories. The largest of them was the Southern Baptist Convention. The second largest group was a group called the GRB, the General Association of Baptists. The third group was the smallest of the three, still very large, the American Baptist. You are going to find that these were the three main Bible groups during this time, and all three were corrupted. All three of them had bought into the devil's plan and the devil's Bible, and all three of them had dumped the Word of God and are in the biggest messes you ever saw in your life.

I was born in 1950. I grew up in the 60s, 70s, and 80s. What I am about to tell you, I did not get out of a book. I did not get off of somebody's sermon online. What I am about to tell you, I lived through. I watched it. I witnessed it, and most important, I learned from it. Today I understand it. **My goal before we get into next week is for every one of you, families, moms and dads, to understand what you are up against**.

➢ The Era of Mega-churches

What I saw in the 1950s and 60s was the era of the mega-churches. We think of the mega-churches today, you know, Saddleback and all these churches around that run three or four or five thousand people. We think of them as the mega-churches over time. What most people do not understand is that is the second phase of the mega-churches. The first phase of the mega-churches was back in the 50s, 60s, and 70s. You had the Akron Baptist Temple by Pastor Charles Billington. You had the Canton Baptist Temple, by Harold Henniger, Kansas City Baptist Temple, by Wendell Zimmerman, Dayton Baptist Temple by Gerald Fleming, Lima Baptist Temple by Romany Candid. You had the Temple Baptist Church up in Detroit run by A.V. Henderson. You had Mansfield Baptist Temple by Tommy Leatherwood. You had Landmark Baptist Church by John Rawlings. Down in Springfield you had High Street, Cherry Street. Open Door in Kansas City. You had Tri-City. Over in Hammond, Indiana you had First Baptist Church over in Hammond, Indiana with Jack Hyles. The list is endless. All of these churches came out of J. Frank Norris, either directly or indirectly.

The three major Christian Baptist groups, the Southern Baptists, the General Association, and the American Baptists, were in apostasy. J. Frank Norris was in the Southern Baptist Convention, saw the corruption, saw what it was, broke free, and he established what we know as the

fundamentalist movement or the independent movement. All those churches I just listed come from him either directly or indirectly. Harold Henniger, my pastor at home, came out of Frank Norris' church. Wendell Zimmerman came out of his church. All of them did. The ones that did not were impacted by the ones that did, and it gave birth to the mega-church of the 60s, 70s, and 80s called fundamentalism, the independent movement.

- Almost Every one of these Churches Started with a King James Bible, but They All have Rejected it

Here we find, not only the devil going after a country, we find the first deviation of these great churches moving away from the Word of God. Listen to me, almost every one of these churches, without exception, started with the King James Bible, but in the 1990s they all had rejected it. Back in the day, these were incredible soul-winning churches. Most of these churches ran about 2,000 or 5,000. Akron Baptist Temple ran 10,000 on Sunday morning. Jack Hyle's church ran 20,000 on a Sunday morning. But you know what, they built it all on two things: nickels and noses. All they wanted was big offerings to build big buildings and a lot of people to brag about it. This is the era. Hey, do not tell me. I lived it. Some of you, you lived it with me. You know what I am talking about. You sprinkles on the cupcakes, you know what I am talking about.

- The Era of the Sunday School Contests Building the largest Attendance, but All for the Wrong Reasons.

This was the era of the Sunday school contest because it was all about attendance. Get the largest crowd as you could and build the biggest churches you could, but all for the wrong reason. So you would be a church of 2,000. You would challenge another church of 2,000 to have a 10-week Sunday school campaign. You would send your people out, get as many people as you can, and whoever won by having the most people at the end of 10 weeks, that pastor had to fly in and preach and concede that your church beat him. That is what it was all about. Many of you remember the goofy promotional Sundays that we had. I was a young pastor on a staff. I had no say in anything, but I watched all this. We would have Hell Sunday where you bring all your friends to come to hear about hell. We had Heaven Sunday where you brought all your people to hear about heaven. We had all kinds of things that they did. Stupid!

This is also where the pastors would hold a baby dedication Sunday. They stole that from the Roman Catholic Church. They could not sprinkle and baptize babies like the Catholic Church did; that is against our doctrine. But somebody figured it out that we will just have everybody bring their babies down here. At the end of the church service, invite all your friends to bring their babies that we are going to dedicate. Well, what parent doesn't want their baby dedicated to the Lord? They all showed up. Dedicating your baby with a bunch of people down at the front is not going to ensure your child is going to be everything God wants it to be. But that was the farce. But all of it not much to do with the Bible.

There was a guy in 1979 from Springfield, Missouri. He was connected with the BBF down there. In 1969, his name was Elmer Towns. Elmer Towns wanted to make a notoriety for himself, I guess, I do not know. But he started touring the big churches, the mega Baptist churches in this

country. Then he wrote a book of the *10 fastest growing Sunday school churches in America*. If you were in that book, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, he flew there, congratulated the pastor that him and the pastor would stand with a great congregation behind them. They would stand there, get their picture taken, and then he would write you up in his book. Every Baptist preacher's dream was not to get the crowns at the judgment seat, but to be in Elmer's book. It was so popular, five or six years later, he wrote a second book: The second *10 Most Fastest Growing Sunday Schools in America*. Well, five years after that, he wrote his third book. This one was the *10 Most Beautiful Sanctuaries in America*. You know why? Because the churches were not growing anymore. Something happened. Something took place. While people slumbered and slept, the devil snuck in and did what he always does best: took from these churches the one thing that was the power source that they never saw, the Word of God. Now it is in decline. This is the movie, this is the video, this is not a snapshot.

- Christianity is in a Mess Today for Two Fundamental Reasons

Every one of these pastors, almost without exception, lost their kids to the world. **We are in the mess we are in today in Christianity for two fundamental reasons:** the Word of God taken from us, and when that happened, then our children were taken from us.

Back then, if a man got saved, it was all about soul-winning, but nobody discipled anybody. Nobody worked with anybody. You came down, got saved, got slapped on the back, and immediately got put into the work of the ministry someplace, long before you were ready to go. These people burned out. When they burned out, and quit coming, guess what? Instead of the pastor taking accountability and looking at himself and seeing what they needed, it was easy just to blame the people for why they left. The kids whose fathers were great church builders, great orators, great preachers, they built incredible churches, but their kids, when they got older, 17 or 18, saw the fallacy and the emptiness of the phoniness that was going on, and most of them never went back to church again. In time, the churches died.

IV. The Mindset of Pastors who Once had the Bible Were Now in the Process of Losing it & their Families

I have probably the greatest example that I could ever give you. There was a book that was written a couple of years ago. It was about a pastor who, during this time, built a great church. I am not going to tell you his name; I mean no disrespect for him. In fact, anything I am saying to you today or in the weeks to follow, I have nobody in mind. I have no disrespect, no axe to grind with anything or anybody. **I am teaching you the facts of history that you better learn**. He built a great church. The author of the book did actually a masterful job of laying this guy out. I love this guy; I knew him very well. This guy in his book laid out what he thought was the greatest sermon that this pastor ever preached. Now the book had a lot to do with him being called into the ministry. He was one of J. Frank Norris' boys. The book talks about that in great detail. There is a lot to learn from it. But the book is a snapshot. The book is a snapshot of the mindset of every preacher in the Baptist fundamentalism mindset that once had a Bible and now was in the process of losing it and their families too. This message was preached in 1972. I was

there. I heard this message. It is one of the best illustrations of where pastors and churches were in the 1970s. The name of the sermon was "*What the Devil Wants From You*." Then through his sermon, he proceeded to lay out nine things that Satan wanted to take from you.

1. *The devil wants every soul.*

He talked about how the devil knew the work of the ministry and how he knew how God saved a man and God came and died to save a man, and then talked about how the devil wants every soul in hell and nobody in heaven.

2. *Not only does he want every soul, but he wants you to drift away from going to church.*

Back then, church was Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night, and one night you went out on visitation. So it was a full week, and you were expected to be at all of that if you were a good Christian.

3. *He wants you to neglect the Bible*.

Stop reading it. Stop studying it.

4. *Neglect your prayer life.*

Of course, we all know how important prayer is.

5. *He wants you to lower your Christian standards*.

Oh boy, have times changed. Context, snapshot. Back then, the Christian standard, was no long hair, women no slacks, absolutely no shorts, only shirts and ties at church, no movies. If they got up to sing a song for a special, it could only be accompanied by a piano or an organ. The tapes that you would play that somebody would sing to, that was canned music of the devil. No guitars.

Let me tell you what the snapshot of the movie or the mindset was back then. This is the 50s, 60s, and 70s. No guitars because you know who was the leading demonic guitar person on the planet? Elvis Presley. So if you brought a guitar in, you are mimicking Elvis Presley. Okay? It was also the times of the hippies. Yes, I see the confusion on your face. Most of you have no idea what a hippie is. A hippie was a whole culture in America. The hippie culture was the people who never took baths. They lived free lives. They wore shirts that said "free love." The guys all had long hair. You could not tell them from a woman.

➢ The Birth of Legalism

Our sports program is really a key aspect of our reaching our culture, and through our softball and our volleyball. Back then, and I learned how to do what I do with our athletics by being involved in their athletics. It was basketball. That was the big deal. We were to invite people to play basketball. But if you brought somebody to play basketball and their hair touched the top of their ear, not like some shaggy dog, but if your hair touched the top of the ear, you were told you could not play. That was the mindset. I understand what was going on in America at that time. But that is no excuse. You have a Bible that overrides that kind of stuff.

What happened was this, and it is still this way today. I am sure he will not mind me telling you this. Damien went down to a wedding this last weekend. He went to a Baptist church down there. It was a King James church that somebody that had been here told us about his church. Damien said, "Well, I am going to be right in that same town at a wedding, so I am going to go see, go to your church." Well, he went to the church, and he must have had a nice T-shirt on. He said, "The first thing that happened, somebody came up and shook my hand and says, 'Why don't you have a button-down shirt?'" He said to him, "Well, you know, I am just dressed like my pastor dresses this way when he preaches." He says, "I would never go hear a man preach that dresses like that."

See, back then was the birth of legalism. Legalism is still rampant today in a lot of Baptist churches. This is why a lot of churches lose their kids. Mom and Dad are so inept to the Word of God. That they allow their kids to get under these rules and regulations that the church thinks if you keep the rules, if you dress right on the outside, it is going to make you good on the inside. The kids see the fallacy of that. So, when you put them under that bondage, hey, I have had them tell me, "The reason why I will not come to your church anymore or I will not come to your church is my mom and dad put me under the most godless, perverted system, and I do not trust any system now." I am telling you, the tragedy was, they actually thought that if you made someone dress right on the outside, that would make them spiritual on the inside. So they tried to legislate morals through a set of rules started back then. It is alive today.

There are churches in this country that, and they are good churches, and I am not fighting anybody. The guys are great guys. They are good men. Praise the Lord for them. But they are stuck in this mindset because they come out of that mindset. I came out of it too, but it did not stick with me. I'm too much of a rebel. You told me to do this; I better do the opposite. So, I have heard him say from the pulpit, "No man will ever preach from this pulpit without wearing a suit and tie." Okay. If you ever invite me to preach, I will wear a suit and tie. I have no problem with it. I am not mad at anybody. I believe the Bible, you that are strong, ought to bear the infirmity of the weak. I am good. I can bear your infirmity.

The Christian school movement came in during this time. Get your kids out of public school, put them into a Christian school. The Christian schools were a hundred thousand times worse than the public schools. So they went to homeschooling. All this started back in this time, and it is still around today.

6. He wants you to criticize your church and your pastor.

Well, that is a good one. You need to understand this too. I will put it all in a time capsule for you. Back then, the pastor making all of the decisions and running the church was somewhat of an illusion. The churches back then were run by the deacons or the finance committee or some board. Pastors could pretty much preach whatever they wanted, but any major decisions concerning anything with the church, like putting the steps on out here or fixing this or fixing that, the pastor could not make that by himself. It had to go through the committee, and the deacons were the ones who decided if it was to be done or not. The pastor was kept out of the leadership role of his own church.

The deacons ran it! You know what? For the most part, they are the most unspiritual guys on the planet. It was power to them. Absolute power. They had control of everything and everybody.

7. *He wants you to lose your temper and lose your testimony*.

Okay, I am good with that.

8. He wants you to act childish.

Oh, come on, give me a break, man. We all have to have a little kid in us. I have a dog that is probably 12 or 13 years old, and she has still got a lot of puppy in her. I am 77, 76, I do not know how old I am. But you know what? I have a little puppy in me. I like to have fun. I do goofy things. But back then, the pastor had to be like he was baptized in dill pickle juice or something.

9. *He wants you to put off serving Christ*.

These were the nine points of this guy's sermon who this guy thought was the greatest sermon he ever heard. It was preached in 1972, and I was there. Snapshot. Do you see what is missing? Nine things the devil wants to take from you and **not one mention of your kids or your family**. They focused on buildings, big great churches. So, Elmer would put you in his book, but they lost the number one aspect of building a solid church, and that is building solid families.

- The Era of the Christian Higher Education Movement

Add to that, during this time, higher education began to raise its ugly head. I would say the greatest satanic culprit of the Christian higher education movement was Bob Jones University. Bob Jones University had a hatred for the King James Bible. Bob Jones all came in three: Bob Jones Sr., Bob Jones II, Bob Jones III, and you know, I do not know if there was a fourth or fifth. I hope not. They all took over the school after the old man died, and they were totally against the King James Bible. The Bob Jones guys, saw themselves and wanted to be the pope of fundamentalism. They were the ultra-legalists, and they made deals with all of the pastors of J. Frank Norris's churches. "If you send all your kids down to our school, you send enough down of your prime kids, we will give you an honorary doctor degree and make you a doctor of theology." That is all it took. These pastors fell for that like hotcakes. My own pastor from Canton Baptist Temple, same thing. The music director, same thing. They tried to offer Mel Sabaka a doctor degree one time to have his kids sent to a Bible college, and here was his answer, greatest answer I ever heard. He said, "Now let me see if I got this right. I got the best people that I have trained that are ready to go into the ministry. So I send them down to your church. You put them to work in your church, building your church, and then when they are ready to go to go out and do a work, you send them back for me to support them. No thank you." It was a corrupt system. It is still a corrupt system, and God's people fall for it.

If you were against them, if you took a stand against them, they had so much power, they blackballed you. They were the Christian mafia. They blackballed you. I had a couple of guys that had fallen into their trap and sent them all the kids. They gave them an honorary doctor's degree, and it is "Doctor this, Doctor that," and then he went to a church that they did not agree with the doctrine, and there was nothing wrong with the doctrine, but it was not their stand. You

know what they did? Took his ordination doctor degree back. Power, absolute power. They were the most corrupt system on the planet. What are you going to do? You learn from it.

Now I have told you this many, many times, the great biblical principle: short term versus long term. These churches came out of J. Frank Norris' ministry, and they were built in the late 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s and were the birth of the fundamental movement and the independent movement. By 1969, Akron Baptist Temple was running 10,000 people on Sunday morning. Two years ago, they tore it down. It is gone.

In 1971, the Canton Baptist Temple, my home church, was running 5,000 on Sunday morning. You go there today, there might be 900, maybe. Kansas City Baptist Temple under Wendell Zimmerman ran 2,000, 3,000 in the day. It is gone today. Thomas Road Baptist Church, Jerry Falwell, one of the biggest names in that era, not only had the Thomas Road Baptist Church, but built Liberty University to train young men for the ministry. Totally gone today. Liberal. Now run by his own son who denies that there is a God or the Bible.

Jack Hyles, Hammond, Indiana. His heyday, 20,000 people in his church. Pastors came from all over the country to see how Jack Hyles did it so they could build a church like him. Little did they know. To get to that 20,000 mark, he had 200 buses that were driving out 100-mile routes to bring kids in so they could count them. Where is it at today? It is still there. He was pastor from 1954 to 2001, and he died sometime thereafter. The lawsuits of sexual harassment and sexual deviance in that church. There was a news media in Detroit that put out a thing called "Preying from the Pulpit," but it was not P-R-A-Y, it was P-R-E-Y. One of their pastors was convicted of having sex with a 16-year-old girl, and the church was rife with that kind of decadency. Every one of these guys and many others lost their kids to the world. Some of their kids committed suicide. Some of them went to liberal churches and now are preaching baptism for salvation. Because in that era, the emphasis was on soul-winning, building big mega-churches, nickels and noses, but a total and complete disregard for building family and ministry teams. **Today the attack on your kids, your family, is in full swing**. It has been coming your way now for 138 years. Today it is in a full attack mode, not only from the world, but from Christianity itself.

V. The Devil's Strategy: Changing God's Word, Attacking the Family

Let me show you something. I know you know this, but I am going to add a little bit to it this morning. Turn to Genesis chapter three, the verse we looked at today in your Bible.

Genesis chapter three, you know what is happening here.

1. Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2. And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

7. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

You know this is the first place where the devil shows up in your Bible. In **the law of first mention**, which is a viable study tool in learning your Bible, the first time something shows up, you will always want to watch it because it is usually going to define something for you. That is what you have here. What you have here historically is a real garden with two real people with a real devil showing up. The plan was that the devil wanted to destroy God's plan with this couple.

What you have here is, and I want you to see the picture, Adam and Eve. Eve will be a type and a picture of the church. You will find that in 2 Corinthians 11; Paul tells you that. Adam over there in 1 Corinthians 15 is a type of Christ. What we begin to see here is a picture of the devil's attack, not only in the garden, but through the typology of the Bible, his attack on you and me and our families today.

I want you to notice that when the devil shows up to Eve, a picture of the church, he picks a time when Adam is not there. That is a picture of the church age. Christ is in heaven right now, and all we have, as Eve had, was what God had told her. All you have right now is in your lap what God tells you through His Word. In verse 2, 3, 4, and 5, the devil simply shows up and then he says to her, "Yea, hath God said?" Then he changed what God said. Here is your first Bible reviser anywhere in history in 4004 B.C. God was meeting with Adam and Eve on a regular everyday basis according to Genesis. In the heat of the day, he comes looking for them, and now you find the first Bible reviser of what God had told them. "Yea, hath God said?" and then he changed what God said.

- The Mega-churches of the 50's-80's died and the Devil Raised up the Evangelical Movement

With that understanding, let us move forward to the 1950s, 60s, 70s, and 80s. Ninety-nine percent of these pastors who had the Bible, the King James Bible that came out of J. Frank Norris through the influence of higher education, walked away from the King James Bible. Once that happened, those churches died. Stay with me, here comes the movie. Once that happened, these churches died, and then the devil raised up the second big mega-churches which we know as the evangelical movement. People who are non-denominational, people that have no doctrine, have no Bible, and they built mega-churches on entertaining people, not giving them any depth of the Bible. Today in Christianity, we do not have a Bible anymore. Genesis chapter 3 through

Adam and Eve into apostasy and sin, and the same plan that through changing of the Word of God through Christianity into the apostasy in 2026.

➢ Once the Devil Destroyed the Bible that God Gave Them, His Next Attack was the Family

Now you all know this. I was taught this 40, 50 years ago, and I have given it to you many, many times, but what happened after that is what is missed today. You see, the first attack in Genesis 3 took and destroyed the Bible that God had gave them, but you have seen once he got the Bible out of their lives, where was the next attack? Genesis chapter 4, he attacked the family. Cain killed Abel. You are told in Genesis chapter 4 verse 16, after the fall and the devil attacked the mom and the dad, then he attacked the family, and then one boy killed the other, and then in Genesis 4:16, Cain leaves the presence of the Lord forever.

> *And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. Genesis 4:16*

➢ Pastors & Parents Today are Focused on the Wrong Things & Losing the Battle with their Kids to the World

Once he attacks the home, he will attack the kids. Many of those kids will leave the presence of the Lord forever. Today God's people are completely out of touch with the Word of God. Just like the church and pastors in the 1950s, 60s, 70s, 80s, pastors today, parents today are focused on the wrong things and losing the battle with their kids to the world. My job is to hold the line with two things:

- 1.) The Word of God.
- 2.) Your family.

So next Sunday we go to work, and I will help you.

VI. Biblical Family Training and Leadership

Just as a pastor today does not know how to build a church, parents today for the most part do not know how to build a family, biblically. Both of them make some terrible mistakes. Know this, just having the right King James Bible is not going to ensure that you are not going to lose your kids. In building a church, you build men and women to be leaders. If a pastor knows what he is doing, he knows that is the key. Somebody said, "Well, when you build a lot of leaders, you have too many chiefs and not enough Indians." But you see, you do not get it because you do not get much out of the Bible because the greatest commodity of a leader, he is a follower. He may lead when he is in charge, but if somebody else is given charge, he follows the leader. That is the rule of true leadership. A true leader is a true follower of whoever is leading.

➢ Leadership is More Than a Title. Leadership is a Commitment to Serve

Guys, ladies, leadership is more than a title:

- ❖ Leadership is a commitment to serve.
- ❖ It is a commitment to mentor others.
- ❖ It is a commitment to be the right example to others.
- ❖ A leader is somebody that is set apart.
- ❖ He holds the right standards.
- ❖ He never compromises.
- ❖ He is consistent.
- ❖ He is disciplined.

With your children, the training you give them will lead them to where they become of age. Isn't that what we call it? We explain it and know it as the age of accountability. Most parents, when you hear that term, you think of the age of accountability as the age that they are accountable to sin, so they have to be saved. That is absolutely true. But do not stop there. If they are old enough to know the accountability to be saved, then at the age of accountability, they are old enough to be taught accountability and the rest of the things in their lives. This is where the parents fail. Oh, you want to get them saved. "I think my son, my daughter is at the age of accountability. They need to get saved." And they get saved. But then you forget that at age of accountability, if they know right from wrong, now you have the ability to keep them accountable to the things in the Word of God to help them grow to be the leadership in your family that you need to have them to be.

➢ The Age of Accountability-the Second Phase of Their Training in this Life

The age of accountability is more than just the day they need to be saved, but it is the beginning of a second phase of their training in this life.

Phase one: six months of age to the age of accountability. You build a foundation. We will talk about this as we get into the next couple of weeks. You build a foundation in their lives. Here again, and I just have to say this, and I am not pointing a finger at anybody, this is the way it is in general. Most parents want their kids to get saved and hit the age of accountability, but they are okay with the most important day of that child's life for some Sunday school teacher to win them to Christ instead of Mom and Dad winning them to Christ. You know what? If your daughter or son or your daughter ever gets going to try to get married when she grows up and she is going to have her wedding day, and you know, the dad always walks the bride down the aisle. Would you be satisfied with saying, "Hey, let somebody else walk you down?" No, that is the most important day in her life, and you want to walk her down. Well, let me tell you something. The most important day in that child's life is the day they trust Jesus Christ as their own personal savior, and you should never turn that over to somebody else. I feel better now that I got that out.

Phase two: They are accountable not only to be saved, but they are accountable to become the leader for God in the things that they need to be trained in.

Leaders are not born. I am sorry. You read too many books. Leaders are not born. If you are a Christian, maybe it is in the world, I do not know, but if you are a child of God, you have got the Holy Spirit of God inside of you. You have everything that Jesus Christ was, is, and about to be, inside you. Leadership is developed. Leadership is for me, a pastor, seeing in you those qualities. Everybody has got dumb issues in their life, don't we? Maybe I am the only one. Don't we? Some of God's people, all they do is focus on a negative in somebody. "Well, I do not like this person. I do not like that person for this or that." You cannot build leadership that way. Leadership for a leader and building leaders is the ability to look past the stupid things that they do and cultivate the good things that they do to get them over the dumb things that they do. So many God's people cannot do that. So many pastors cannot do that. We all have issues. We are idiots in some way or the other. If I just focused on a negative that we all had, we would never build anything here. You have got to focus on what is good, cultivate it, develop it, bring it along. Shape it, mold it, cultivate it. Leadership is a building process, not only with a pastor with the people, but parents with your children.

Just like any building, there has to be a plan. A contractor just does not come in and say, "Okay, give me the girders, give me the wall, give me the sheetrock, give me that." He has a plan by which he is going to build the building. Yet as a parent, you are the architect of your child building that temple. We can never forget our accountability to our children, short term and long term. Next week we start to lay out for you the architectural plans for building the temple of your children, right and biblically.

VII. We can Never Lose Sight of the Vision for our Children in this Church

Going back to what I said when we started, my job, the job of a pastor, God is doing some tremendous things with our church. We just had some people come back from Africa. We bonded with Kevin's church. We had the Dominican trip. We have got the Costa Rica trip. We have got everything going for us. God is doing some tremendous things. We now as a church, after 20 years of trying to cultivate and build leaders, some made it, some didn't. We have now come of age as a church. My job is to keep the balance, a balance so we do not make the same mistakes that the pastors of old made: ministry over families. To me as your pastor, the number one issue and priority of my ministry at our church will be to you and our children. No matter what we do or where God takes us, we can never lose sight of the vision for our children in this church.

- Keeping the Right Balance

We have come to where God is doing some tremendous things. My job is to keep that tight, keep that balanced. We start by tightening up all of our ministries. We tighten up the nursery. We tighten up the Bible Buddies, the Bible Explorers. We tighten up the high school. We tighten up the Timothy. We tighten up the adult ministry. Everybody looks at what we are doing and looks at it and says, "We have to really streamline this thing and make sure we keep the right balance." We start by teaching parents how to train up their children biblically. Every parent should be

involved in our elementary of training children, and they are getting familiar with how to work and deal with kids and exercise your senses in training up kids.

When you build a church as a pastor, you have to have a plan. The pastor will be the spiritual architect of that building process. There are a lot of things in Christianity that just drive me crazy. God's people today, I understand it, but I guess I don't get it. God's people are lost in the fog today of what real leadership is in their lives and their children. Just let me ask you, if you went to a church and it was known that the pastor was an alcoholic and had a problem drinking, would you go to that church? Do not answer. Maybe you would. I do not want to know. I mean if you knew that he is out in the bars on Friday night and Saturday night and getting looped and then he shows up sober on Sunday morning. If you knew that would you feel comfortable if you had an uncle or a brother or a son that had a drinking problem, that pastor would be able to help them get to kick their drinking when he cannot kick his? That is a question. If you went to a church where the pastor had a gambling problem and he is in the pulpit preaching the Word of God but Saturday night, he was out at the boats and he just cannot keep two dollars in his pocket because he has got to bet on this, bet on that or be at the boats. Would you feel comfortable going to his church allowing him to tell you how to guide your life? Any open sin in his life. Would you still trust him to guide your life?

We like to pick and choose today out of the Bible what we believe and what we follow. If you had a pastor that was an alcoholic, did drugs, gambled, you would not go to his church because you would think that because of his inconsistencies in those things that he is not going to be able to teach you the Word of God and give you what you need. But when Paul wrote out over there in 1 Timothy chapter 3 the parameters of being a pastor, he talked about drinking, he talked about brawling, he talked about fighting, he talked about all of the things that I just mentioned. Then he adds to it that a pastor has to have his family and his children under subjection and under the rule of the Word of God. You would not go to his church if he was an alcoholic, you would not go to his church if he was this or he was that, but you will let him lose his kids to the world.

I take a lot of flack for what I am saying, I really do. There are men out there who are pastors who have lost their kids that they want to pick and choose, and they will always do what parents do when you lose their kids: you blame it on somebody else. But at the day that they are accountable for their salvation, then they are accountable for you to get them the rest of the way home. I have known pastors that their kids committed suicide. I have known pastors that their kids were into drugs, that they were alcoholics, that they were sexual perverts. You actually are okay with what they are going to teach you, how you are going to raise your family. There is something wrong with God's people today. We don't get the luxury to pick and choose out of that Book what we want to believe. Paul said, "I teach you the whole counsel of God," not just what you want to hear.

It only takes two or three years to see that a pastor has no idea, no plan about building a church. Most of these guys, and I have had my share of them in my 50 plus years, most of these guys have one glaring problem: they are unteachable. <u>When it comes to your children as parents, you too need to have a plan</u>. You need to understand that you are the architect of the building process

in the lives of your children. Again, as a pastor in his church, it only takes two or three years to see that parents have no plan for their kids.

VIII. Summary

Over the next three or four weeks, I am going to lay out the plan for each of you. I watch your kids, and I will just be very honest, some of you are making some bad mistakes with your children. We need to fix it while it is still fixable because there comes a time when you cannot fix it. I will do my best. I will provide you with everything that you need. I am already putting a whole packet of things together that I will work with you one on one, help you build it every step of the way. Clear, concise, direct, step by step. **All that is needed are parents who are willing to do the work.** I will be here to help you and get you wherever we need to go and do whatever we need to do. We simply cannot make the same mistakes that were made back in the 50s, 60s, and 70s with our children. Building a church but losing our kids. Teaching your children to be accountable starts with you being accountable.

- Next Week we go to Work

Next week, we go to work. We are going to cut down the song service. Jamie has got everything covered over there. We are going to start right on time, and we are going to take every moment we can. I have a plan laid out that is for everybody that wants to do what they need to do. Now, I fully understand that not everybody is going to do this. I cannot be responsible for that. My responsibility is to give you the truth, and some of you will. I know that some of you are older now, and your kids are older, and you lost them. I am going to deal with you how you deal with that. There is a way back in everything. But it has to run through the Bible. We will cover it all. My responsibility as your pastor with everything that God is doing, to keep the balance. In the excitement of everything that is happening, we can never make the mistakes that those pastors made back in the mega-church of the Baptist mentality and build a great church but lose our children. **Next week, we go to work!**