Proverbs 29:17-18 Sunday 10/11/2026

I. Introduction and Resources

Last week, I left you with a challenge, and I hope that as husbands, wives, and families, you had some good discussions this week. We talked about the nine different types of families I have encountered throughout my time in the ministry. I asked you to sit down, talk, and figure out where you want your families to go and how you want that to transpire from here. Today, at the end of the church service, I have put together for you what I call our Family Vision Planner. Everyone who signed up last week will have their name on it, and Jamie and Kelly will be passing them out to you.

In this planner, I have put together a step-by-step guide for a family vision, which some of my people have done a great job with. One of the big questions people have is, "Where do I begin? Where do I start?" Right here. This is everything that you need, and it is one of the great tools you will be able to use, with very, very, very step-by-step instructions. Along with that, we are including every week's outline so you can go back over it. I know many of you are furiously taking notes, and I understand that. But let's face it, you never keep up with me, either when I preach or when we eat. I don't care if I start 15 minutes after you start eating, I will still beat you eating. But that's just the way I am, part of my charm. So, I put those together for you so you can have them to go back over.

Then, I had one of my guys go back and do a complete transcription of the last child training we did a number of years ago. I have approached this one a little differently, knowing that I was going to give you the other. If somebody really wants to delve into it and get all the material together, you will have an incredible way of understanding it and then giving it out to your children, everything you need to do. I also want to tell you, and I have mentioned this, that where we are right now, we have a discipleship program that one of our ladies put together for little ones. We have five or six levels of discipleship, but this is for your kids, maybe if they are three, four, five, or six years old. They are in that stage where they are not ready for the older kids' material, but this is perfect for them. We have those available in the bookstore for you.

I told you that I have some couples who are going to work with me. If you are new at this and want to start putting it together, then I can pair you up with them, and they can help you put it all together, walk you through, and give you what you need. And then, last and probably least, is me. I am always here for you. I will sit down with you and help you put together all the material; I will work with you any way that I can. It is a thing where not only are you guys important to me, but your children are vitally important to me. I am reminded in the Bible, in the Gospels, and this is where most pastors are, unfortunately. You remember that when Jesus was there, the Bible says all the little children came unto Him, and the professional apostles by that time—I am sure they had their big bus ordered with a big sign on it, "Jesus coming through Middle East and Bus Tour"—they would not let the little kids get to Him. I get that. Little kids can get dirty, and they are only looking at the adults and all the things, and they just did not want the kids. Jesus made one of the greatest statements that I have never forgotten about my own personal life and your

time with the Lord, but your kids also. He said, "Except you come to me as a little child, you have no part of me." All in midst of His ministry to Israel, He never forgot the little kids. To me, that is a model for me as a pastor. I know most pastors do not care about the little kids. Kids cannot give any money. Kids cannot make all; they would just rather focus on where their focus is. For me, the future of this church is those little guys and gals who are up there in those classes today.

You look at last night, we had an open house over at Jamie and Danny's, and I am always looking for a little way. I brought one of my Jeeps over and took the kids for Jeep rides. They thought it was the greatest thing in the world. People look at that and do not think much of it, but in my mind, that Jeep ride and things that I do with your kids will pay off 10 years from now, of them knowing that I care about them and that I have a relationship with them. I love when they come up and hug me. I love when they come up and show me things. Some of them come up and salute me. I salute them back. I say, "Yes, sir, Colonel, I will see you in a minute." But anyway, that is important to me because not only is it important because they are your kids, but they are also the future of this church. I do not want them to wait until they are 17, 18, and 19 until they get into some trouble that they have to meet who their pastor is. I want them to know me. They do not have to call me "Pastor." They do not have to call me "Pastor Bob." They do not have to call me; just call me "Bob." I want to be their friend because that is the key to my building a relationship with them, and I think that is very important.

II. Laying the Foundation for Family Vision

In our last class last week, I showed you four key verses that we were going to be using in our study. I built all of them around the last one I gave you, which was Proverbs chapter 29, verses 17 and 18. That is providing a vision for your family, for your child as parents. I showed you that from Habakkuk chapter two, where the vision is really explained, there are six parts to you taking your family, your children, and then getting them to understand the aspects of really building a vision into your family's life and into your children.

1. You stand your watch. We talked about the tower.
2. To be able to write the vision.
3. To make that vision plain upon the tables. We talked about that.
4. That he is going to run a race. We talked about the race that Paul talked about in the New Testament.
5. There was an appointed time that you are working toward in establishing the vision.
6. We are to be patient. We do our job, and God does His job.

And the vision, He says, will come to pass. The vision in Habakkuk chapter two and Proverbs chapter 29, that is a promise to you. It is as much of a promise as John chapter three, verse 16, and Romans chapter nine, verses nine and 10. Most parents do not see it as a promise; they just see it as a verse. It is a promise.

Last week, I gave you the basic structure for your family: the concept of establishing a vision, the training of your children. We saw again, Proverbs 22:6, where it says,

Proverbs 22:6

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

I want to make note here where it says "train up a child in the way." That way is defined, and we have talked about it many, many times, in Proverbs chapter eight, verse 22, the deepest chapter portion of scriptures in the Bible that talks about what God was doing way before Genesis chapter one, verse one. It says there, "in the beginning of his way." That way is found in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The beginning was the beginning of God's way. What you are doing in your child by establishing the vision is that right there. You are beginning in their life the way of God in their life, the way God wants to take them, the way God wants them to go.

Training your child, training with trial, will be giving your child a vision of a life given over to God that in time will shape their will because the will of God is so key in their life. In time, it will develop his mind, and we know that the Bible says,

Philippians 2:5

5. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

In time, it will mold his spirit, and the Bible says that true worship with God is spirit and truth—our spirit, God's truth. It will motivate him to good works, to run the race like First Corinthians chapter nine last week when Paul said that we are in a race. But the parent must have a plan to accomplish this for the family. Just as a pastor has to have a plan for his church, he has to have a plan for building people in a church. A plan for mom and dad to build their children into their family.

When you put in place the concept of a vision and you make it plain upon the table, this means that you communicate to your child what the family plan is, having them a better understanding of it. This will be enforced in the vision updates. I talked about how you have to have, and you know, there are a lot of things that the parents have to use their own discretion in. This is certainly one of them. You do not have to do it every week. You do not have to do it every month. You decide, based on where you are at, what you want to do, but there needs to be a time when you sit down and you reinforce your family plan and help them to be everything that they are as part of that family.

In your communication of the vision and your reinforcing it, you will build seven basic areas in their lives. These areas will be the key fundamental components of a biblical lifestyle that is found and talked about in Proverbs chapter 22, verse 6. You train your children through the vision through these seven areas, and when he is old, he will not depart from them. It is just that simple. This is what he is talking about. In other words, you train up a child in the way he should go, or you do not train him up and away he will go. It is just that simple. Then you find yourself in Luke chapter 15, the prodigal son syndrome, which none of us want to be in and do not have to be in. We go from there. So let us begin to look at that.

III. Prayer and the Unique Church Family

Before we do, let us ask God's blessing on our time this morning. Father, we do thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus Christ. We love You so much. We thank You, Father, for all that You do for us. We thank You for the host of children in our church. We thank You for the moms and dads that are committed to the Word of God. For many of them, it will be easy because they already have a love for the Word of God, and all they have to do is learn the basic steps to get to that next level with their family. I pray that through my teaching, I know some of it is hard, some of it hurts me even to say because it is a thing where the tragedies that you get into and dealing with families that lose their children. But help us, Father, to look at the positive, help us to see the principles, and help us in this church never, never, never, never to lose one more child to the world. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for the sake of the sake of the ask it. Amen.

Our church is very unique in one aspect—many aspects—but the main one is the fact that if you look around today, how young our church is with the couples that we have. I have tried to teach you the Bible. We started way back in when with Bible conference, Bible Institute, and all the different things, the systematic study of the Bible. I can actually say that today, out of all of the Bible I taught you, all the verses that I gave you, most of you got one verse down, and praise the Lord for it. Most of you got one verse down that you really understand and are practicing: "Be fruitful and multiply the earth." This is a baby factory. We shut the water fountain down because I think that may have something to do with it. It is a great thing; it is a great problem to have. Most churches, as you know, we work with several of them. The average age in there is 70, 80, 65, 70, 80. Really do not need a nursery for that unless your name is Sarah and Abraham. But anyway, it is a thing where this is a great problem to have. Every time somebody gets married, four, five, six months later, there is a baby shower. It is a great thing. That shows you that the church is healthy and people are growing, and you guys are young couples. But to whom much is given, much is required. That is why I think now is the perfect time for me to do this. I have done it two or three times in the past at different stages where we needed it. We certainly are at that stage now with all the kids that we have.

IV. The Pastor's Role and Parental Responsibility

I want to say this; I want to go public with this: From my perspective as your pastor, most of you parents are good, really good people. You love the Bible. You really are. My job is to help you be better. There are going to be times in your life when everything changes. The older you get, the more things change. Most of God's people can adjust to those changes. They do not like change. Hey, you are looking at a guy, I do not like change. Are you kidding me? I eat the same thing for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day of my life. I do not like change. But change comes. The real flexibility of a child of God dialed into the Word of God is their ability to change with it. The pastor's job is to be able to see the changes in his church and then meet those changes, give them what they need. That is my job.

My job is not to tell you what to do. I do not have any right or any responsibility to make you do anything or say, "You have to do this, you have to do that." That is not my job. My job is to give you the truth, show you the cause and the effect, and then you have to decide. I cannot decide for

you. My job is to give you the biblical principles in everything, certainly in raising a family. But you are the one who has to decide for your family. Every family will be different. You cannot carbon copy what one family does for another family. Every family is different. You have to decide for your family. My job is not to decide for you, tell you what to do, what not to do. I do not have a right to do that. That is not my responsibility. My responsibility is to preach to you what the Bible says to the best of my limited ability. Then you have to take it and you have to go from there and make it work for you. I think for the most part, most of you parents, if not all of you parents here, really want to do what is right. There is no question in my mind that you are not good people. You are the best of the best, but you have to be able to adjust to what changes in life.

V. Defining and Enforcing Boundaries

So the first thing I want to talk about, I think is very important when it comes to the vision and your children, is the ability to define boundaries for them. You will start this early in the stages of their training, from year one up to three or four. You are going to see that, and we are going to build on this as we go through this week and next week. But let me ask you a question: How many times do you want to tell your child to do something before they finally do it? That is an honest question. I hear parents all the time, "I have done it all the time, I am not going to tell you again, again and again and again. If I have to tell you one more time..." See, you know what your child is doing? He already knows how many times he has got before he has to really adjust to it. You train your kids. You train them to react to; they know, they know. So a parent will say, "This is the last time I am going to tell you." And he is thinking, "No, I have three or four more compared to all the other times." So I asked you a question, how many times do you want to tell them to do something and have them respond?

I mean, I know my dogs. I have two. If they do something wrong, all I have to do is say, "Stop." Done. No, done. I have never had one of my dogs look up and say—not that he can say—but look up and look at me and give me that. His tail goes between his legs, and he stops. Come on. Most, a lot of you have dogs. We are a dog-loving church. All our activities, bring your dog. Halloween, bring your dog. Dress them up. Every Christmas and Easter and Halloween, my sister sends me pictures of her Dobermans. She dresses them up, and they like it. They just, and she sends me the pictures. But we train our dogs better many times than we do our kids. It does not need to be that way. It really does not.

In training your children, you will follow the principles that we all follow, like in Second Timothy chapter three, verse 16. This is how you begin to define boundaries. That verse is a familiar verse; we just do not put it in a kid context.

2 Timothy 3:16

16. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Defining boundaries is about communicating these four simple concepts to them in everyday situations.

7. Doctrine: You tell them what is right.
8. Reproof: You tell them where they messed up.
9. Correction: You instruct them how we are going to fix this.
10. Instruction in Righteousness: Show them how we are going to keep it fixed.

What you have to understand is training is a daily process, sometimes an hourly process. The two keys for you and for me are communication and consistency. You sit down with them, and you will explain what the boundaries are. How do you do that? You bring it back to the baseline, your family vision, your family ministry. These are things we as a family and our ministry together, this is a line we do not cross. You do not necessarily tell them, "You cannot do this." You have to tell them, "We do not do this." But then you cannot say, "We do not do this," and they see you do it. Consistency. Consistency.

Now, I will tell you this, a lot of parents make this mistake: You must teach them the boundaries, and they must understand the boundaries before you hold them responsible for the boundaries. That is not fair to them. You have to have them understand that they are in your family, not their life, certainly their life, but it is bigger than that. Within your family, we have boundaries.

VI. Accountability and Reading Your Child

➢ 2. You have to be able to hold the line of accountability with them.

This will start with not just what you teach them, but the example of you in the husband and wife relationship, because their accountability will be based on your accountability. They watch it. You are the model. The role model of parenting is showing the kids by your relationship and your marriage what it is supposed to be like. They see mom and dad accountable to each other as they are accountable to the Word of God. You bathe the training in the love of the Word of God, but you exercise discipline in their lives to the idea of being accountable, not only to you as the parent, but to the Word of God, and having the discipline in the boundaries that you have set.

The key is the husband and wife have to be on the same page. You cannot be divided on this. This is where the word "unity" has to be very strong in the relationship. You have to be strong. You have to be decisive, but you have to do that with a loving kindness, but leaving no doubt with your child who is in charge. You want to eliminate. Kids will learn to play you. Your dogs will learn to play you. If you do what we do, every time the dog goes out and does its business, they come in, they get a treat. How long does it take for them to figure out that all they have to do is go out and pretend like they are going, and they are going to get another treat? They will be lined up at that door all day long. Your kids will learn to play you. Kids are a lot smarter than the parents most of the time. While the parents are on the watch, they are not looking, and the kids learn the patterns of the parent, and then they use those patterns again to parent.

For instance, this is what you have to eliminate: "Hey, Mom, can I go over to Susie's house and hang out for a little while?" And she says, "I do not know. Supper is almost ready. If your dad says it is okay, then you can go." "Okay. Hey, Dad. I asked Mom, she said it was okay, but she said I had to ask you. Can I go over to Susie's house?" You see, she just played. What? The dad is going to say, "Well, the mom said it is okay. Yeah, you can go." You cannot do that. You have to

be together. You have to be one. You have to have the unity to be able to hold that line with them. It is just that simple. You build the principles in their lives from day one. But as I told you early in the last session and our introduction, it starts at the accountability stage. We think of the accountability stage as when your child comes to the age of accountability, and now they trust Christ as their own personal Savior. That is true. That is where most parents stop. If they have the ability and the age to understand they need to be saved, and you can win them to Christ, then they also have the ability to understand that now that they are saved, they need to be accountable to mom and dad and the Word of God. That is where you start. Next week, I am going to show you all the different, all four phases of that, how you walk them through those phases, how you recognize those phases, but you understand what takes place in those phases. But when they hit the age of accountability, it is more than now that they just need to be saved. Many parents, that is all they care about. "Oh, praise the Lord, God is saved, very saved. Oh, praise God, we are going to heaven." That is all the farther they take it. That is now the beginning of you teaching them accountability beyond their salvation. You cannot miss that. You just cannot miss that.

- 3. Your ability to read your child.

This goes back to your power being on your watch. Your children, any children—it was true of my children—you are going to, they are going to have strengths and they are going to have weaknesses. The thing that you never want to do is compare your child with other children. That will put them in a no-win situation every time. Each child will be different. Each child will have different strengths and different weaknesses. On your watch, from your tower, you see the issues develop. They are strong in this area. They are weak in this area. You want to encourage the strengths, but you want to develop and work on the weaknesses. Most parents are oblivious to it. They just never see it. Their kid got saved. That is all they care about. "We are all going to heaven. Praise the Lord." That is all the farther it goes. Most parents have never seen the inside of a high tower. They watch TV. They watch their phones. They watch sports, but they have no watch care of their own child.

This is where I want to give you a great principle and a great verse. Hebrews chapter 13, verse 17. Wow, what a great principle and a great verse. Here is what it says:

Hebrews 13:17

17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

Now this is used all the time as a pastor with his church, him being the watch care of the souls of his people. I get it. Absolutely. But parents, you have the watch care of your child's soul, you, you and nobody else. Notice it says that you are going to give an account. Notice it says that you will give an account of joy or you will give an account of grief, one way or the other, but you are the watch care of your child's soul, and you will give that account. As I said, next week I am going to lay out the different levels of growth physically for your child and how you need to understand from your tower each one and how to meet it, how to deal with it, and how to understand it. Because you as a parent, me as a parent, moms and dads, we need to watch by

using the Word of God as a guide. This is child development. You hear a lot today about child development, you know, in the city and the public school system and all that. This is biblical child development from a Bible standpoint.

VII. Avoiding Unrealistic Expectations

➢ 4. The fourth thing you want to avoid is unrealistic expectations.

You never want to put your child into a no-win situation and set them up for failure. As I said before, you never compare them to a brother or sister or anybody else. You never say to them, "Why can't you be like your brother? Why can't you be like your sister?" The answer simply is because they are not. They are who they are. That kind of training will always hurt them. They are who they are, with different strengths and different weaknesses. Our failure to be able to see that and to help that is not going to help them. We always need to understand that we set the boundaries, and then we help them through the boundaries. They give them the purpose that God wants them to have. There will be some things that they cannot do. It is no different than you. Many of you, when you came into this church, you did not know anything about the Bible. You knew nothing about ministry, knew nothing about any of this stuff. But through the time and the process of training and giving you the Word of God, God grew you up. Look at you now. It is the same process. They will have to go through it, but you have to realize that you cannot put them in unrealistic expectations. You allow them to be who they are, but you have a process to make them better.

That is what I do with my people. I accept you where you are at. I know there are some things when you first come into church that I cannot just step in and change. It does not work that way. You have to accept people where they are at, love them where they are at, and then look for the opportunities to give them what they need to get them where they need to be. Make them better. My job, whether you like it or not or believe it or not, no matter how hard I preach or what I say, at the end of the day, my job is to make you better than you are. Your job as a parent is to make your children better than they are. It is just that simple. It is not complicated. You remember that some kids will not develop as fast as other kids. I have seen this all the time. You cannot force your child to grow up. You cannot force your child to do the right thing. You have to lead them. You have to guide them. You have to mentor them. You have to develop them. You have to take an active interest in where they are at, understanding who they are, their strengths, their weaknesses, and then everything to make them better than they are.

VIII.Disobedience as a Teaching Tool

➢ 5. Using any disobedience as a teaching tool.

Now, it goes without saying, and if you are parents here, you know this is true. As they grow up, there will be times of disobedience that you have to deal with. This is where parents make another bad mistake. First off, you need to understand that there are two kinds of disobedience that you are going to have in your child. The one will be disobedience through ignorance. They just did not think it through. They did something stupid. The second one will be willful

disobedience. This is where they planned it. This is where they schemed it. This is what we call the Jacob syndrome. But in both cases, you have to use it as a teaching tool.

Again, there are some points to deal with disobedience.

11. You have to deal with it swiftly. You have to deal with the offense while it is fresh in their mind. Little minds wander all over the place, and you do not want to have to deal with something that they forgot even what they did or why they did it. So you want to deal with it swiftly.
12. You want to sit down and lay out the offense and why you cannot permit them to do this. This is where you bring in the foundation of the vision, the family, 2 Timothy 3:16. Go through the four points, you know, what is right, what is wrong, you know, correction and how we are going to keep it correct, why we cannot allow you to be disobedient in this.
13. You bring it back to the family ministry unit. We are a team. We are a ministry. We do not do these things. We have boundaries in our lives. We cannot allow you to do these things either.
14. Always go back to Hebrews chapter 12. Of course, when they are old enough to understand this, Hebrews chapter 12, verses 5 through 11, talks about God chastising us. How God chastises us because He loves us. God's chastisement comes out of that chastisement comes the peace that passes all understanding as God gives us what we need and deals with us. You always want to, always want to, always want to keep it into the context of God chastises us. He does not let us get away with disobedience. We cannot let you get away with it either. This is what you do. You make them understand the gravity of disobedience. It is more than just, "Do not do that." It is more than, "Okay, I am going to really," it is more than that. It comes to the point where you explain to them, they understand. They understand.
15. All dealing with discipline issues should be done within the context of love and caring, but with absolute authority. You use the example like God. God does not let me get away with sin, but God loves me even when I do. But because He loves me and He has something for me that He cannot give me if I am in sin, He has to deal with me. It is the same way with you, sweetheart. Son, it is the same way with you. I love you. I have some things for you. God has a thing for you, but you will never be able to get them if you do not understand obedience.
16. Through your dealing with their disobedience, you reinforce your love to them. Then you, I have them understand because of the love that you have for them, you have to deal with this disobedience. When you mete out the punishment, depending on the various, we will get into that a little bit later. Take your time. Do not make disciplining your child an inconvenience in your day. It is the greatest teaching tool that you may have to help them. Disciplining your child is not a quick process so you can get back to what you are watching on television. It may take a while. You never want to end the discipline session until you understand, one, your child understands, two, they realize why you have to do this, and three, you realize that it is out of the love that I have for them and God's love for them, I have to do this. It is just not simple. Too many parents want to make it quick so they can get back to whatever they are doing. You are missing one of the greatest teaching tools that you will ever have. You have to take your time. Mom and Dad together. It is not Dad's responsibility. It is not Mom's

responsibility. That child needs to see that responsibility and accountability and obedience and disobedience is in both parents.

IX. Knowing When to Spank

➢ 6. Knowing when to spank.

Now, we all will see here the different levels of different punishment. But allow me to give you a couple of verses on this that you need to look at, given the society that we are in today. First off is in Proverbs 23, verses 13 and 14. It says,

Proverbs 23:13-14

13. Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

14. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

Proverbs 19:18 says,

Proverbs 19:18

18. Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.

And Proverbs 13:24,

Proverbs 13:24

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

"Betimes" is an old English phrase that means over and over and over and over again if need be. Now, this is called corporal punishment. It is called corporal punishment because years and years and years ago in the military, when there was an infraction within the company, somebody had to be disciplined. The corporal of the guard is the one that did it. So it became known as corporal punishment. Just so you know that. These verses clearly teach corporal punishment for your child from a Bible standpoint. There is a key biblical principle behind the method of this in spanking your child, and it is an incredible teaching tool. Most parents never see it, never get to it, never understand it.

Knowing when to spank: You never spank when what they have done is a legitimate accident. Maybe they spilled their milk. Maybe they did something and they tripped over something, broke something, whatever. What you look for in spanking corporal punishment is intent. What was the intent behind what they did? Now, I will just give you what I have used over the years. I have taught this many, many times. There may be some you want to add or not add. It does not matter to me. But I teach the seven areas that definitely for sure you want to demand corporal punishment.

17. Rebellion.
18. Willful disobedience. And I know that will come on levels.
19. Lying, no question about it.

20. Hurting others, absolutely.
21. Deceitful behavior.
22. A strong-willed child. Yeah, you better get on that one.
23. Uncontrolled fits of anger. Temper tantrums.

I remember years ago when I was still in Ohio, I was at the mall. Now, our mall back then was different than the malls today. It was kind of an L-shape all the way down until the left. But it had an open center in it, and the sides were covered. But it had greenery in there, and it was by poles. I had just gotten right with God and was really doing what God wanted me to do, and I was learning a lot. I will never forget. I was sitting at the counter at a diner restaurant there, I forget where it was. I was eating something, and I was looking out the window. I saw this woman coming down the corridor, and she had a little boy. Now, I do not know all the parameters of what had happened. But evidently, this little boy wanted something in the last store they were in, and she did not get it for him. He is throwing a bonafide temper tantrum. I mean, I am inside behind big glass windows, and I can hear the kid screaming and yelling, and the mom trying to, she is obviously embarrassed. But it was the funniest thing in the world. She is dragging this kid who obviously wanted some toy or wanted something, and she did not get it. So now he is going to throw a temper tantrum. So what does she do? She wants to get out of Dodge, the mall, as quickly as possible. As far as I am concerned, this is why in most places they have a men's bathroom, and a women's bathroom, and a family room. In the bathroom, you have stools and urinals and washbasins. In the family room, you have whips and chains and electrodes. This mom got this kid by the hand, dragging him down, and this kid is wrapping around every pole, screaming his brains out, wanting whatever he wanted. She rips him off, pulls him down, he latches on to the next pole. Pole by pole by pole, he fought her every inch of the way because he did not get what he wanted. Now, I am talking to you about a strong-willed child, but you know what I thought that day? That is how a lot of God's people go home to heaven. From pole to pole, kicking and screaming because of what you did not get. I like that. I am going to be like that guy that preached a couple of weeks ago. Amen? I have never heard "Amen" so many times in my life. Amen.

These will require immediate attention. Both Mom and Dad must be partners in corporal punishment. We live in a society today where we have liberal parents. Liberal parents will produce liberal children, and liberal parents do not want to use corporal punishment. They look at you if they know you do it as there is something wrong with you. That is just the society that we live in. You find this because the country we live in, they are against capital punishment. When the Bible is fairly clear, it clears you all through the Bible that if you kill somebody, then it gives you the different kind. Manslaughter, premeditated murder, it is all laid out for you, and you have to give life for life. But that is all gone today, and it translates all the way down to the family. Down in Tennessee, they tried to execute a woman. Tennessee had not executed a woman for 200 years, and then they screw it up, and they finally do one. They give this woman lethal injection. They gave her the first lethal injection. She snored. They gave her the second lethal injection to kill her. She snored even louder. So now they put her in a hospital someplace. She wakes up confused and mad. I mean, and now both sides of the aisle are just crazy. "Get rid of enough, penalty! Use something stronger! Bring back the electric chair!" That always fixed it.

You know, back in the 20s and the 30s, being capital punishment ought to be a deterrent to crime. Amen? The most terrible thought for me would be to be electrocuted in an electric chair. I mean, but they want to make it easy. You know what they say? They say, "Well, we do not want the person to suffer." Oh, you just butchered 28 people, cut their limbs off, put them in trash bags, but we do not want you to suffer. That is the mentality today, and it runs right down to your children. That woman that they failed to execute, I do not know what they are going to do with her now, but what she wanted is a firing squad by women shooters. Now, when I saw that, I immediately got on and said, "I have the women here that would love to be part of that." She would not wake up in a hospital wondering what happened. Did you see this morning that, remember that guy that killed all those people down at Fort Hood, Texas? He was a major, and he brought a gun in and killed, I do not know, 18 people, wounded 39 more, and now they are going to execute him, and they just announced this morning, President Trump announced this morning, that they are going to execute him with a firing squad, and they are going to live stream it on TV. You ought to see who is going crazy. You know what I think about it? I think it is the greatest thing on the planet, because it should be a deterrent. Electrocution in an electric chair. They used to call it "Old Sparky." I mean, come on, they put you in a chair, strap you down, put a wet thing on your head with electrodes, so the electrodes, they go through your body, and then they fry you. Colonel Sanders never had it so good. I am not kidding you, and you die. But that is it. I cannot even imagine dying that way. You know what kids need to see? I know, this is not popular. I know, my preaching is not popular, but I am telling you something, if a kid saw what could actually happen to them if they did the final act, it might change some things. It might change some things. Your children are the same way. I am not saying you electrocute them. We raise, but you know how a kid gets that way? Because they were raised in a family with no responsibility or accountability to authority. You see it all around us today. How is it starting home? How is it starting home?

Now, corporal punishment, when you have to whip your child, here is the key to applying the Board of Education to the seat of understanding. Think about that, you will get it later. You have to whip them, but you never use your hand. You always want it to be an inanimate object. You do not want them associating you hitting them with your hand. I grew up in the age of paddles. You go to the grocery store, you can buy bananas and fruit and pineapples and all this. When I went to the grocery store as a kid, they sold paddles. The worst paddles were the ones that some genius decided that if you drilled holes in the paddle, remember that? I remember being in my high school, they still paddled people. I mean, when somebody, we always had the troublemakers, and it was an incredible thing. It had an effect. You still feel it today, because I will say, "Can I see you in my office for a second?" And I hear from behind me, "Oh, you are being called into the principal's office." That is what it was. Nobody wanted to go to the principal's office. When they ripped somebody out and you knew they were going to get it, the whole school was deadly silent. Waiting for the crack and the command, "Bend over, grab your ankles." First time offenders, whack. Sometimes they get up to three or four whacks. No, I am not saying you do that. But I am saying you do not use your hand. You do not want your child associating you hitting them. You want to use an inanimate object, an iron, frying pan, something. I am just kidding. You are bringing a little levity into the whole lump. You want it to be hard enough that they understand and hurt, but not enough that hurts them. You never smack

them. You never punch them. You never kick them. You have to exercise in discipline and disciplining them. You do not smack them in the face. You do not cuss at them. You do not call them names. You do not belittle them. You never lose your temper. When you act that way, you have lost the whole principle of what you are trying to accomplish through corporal punishment, chastisement.

The key to this level of chastisement is the break. It is not the whack. It is not hitting them. It comes down to the fact that it is the breaking of the fellowship between mom and dad because of disobedience. You have got to see that. If you have done your job in training them, the relationship with you and them will be the number one thing in their life, like you and God. When I sin against God, when you sin against God, if you love that book, God does not have to come down and whack me to get me to know about a fellowship. The very fact that fellowship is broken should break your heart. Look at David, Psalm 51, long before God killed his four boys, long before God came down. Five things in that Psalm show you what you need to look for and you need to have. It breaks your heart not because you have got a whack, break the heart because you have got a weapon. It breaks your heart because you have broken fellowship with mom and dad because my fellowship with mom and dad is the most important thing in my life. Now you saw Peter over there in Luke chapter 22 when he denied Christ. What did it say? He went out and wept bitterly. In your life, in my life, if your relationship with God and our fellowship is not so intense that when we screw it up, and we will, that is not enough to break your heart and bring tears to your eyes because fellowship now is broken with the one who loves you more than anything on planet earth. That should be instilled in your children. If you have not established that level of relationship, you are now in for a long road when they get 12, 13, and 14. Again, your discipline must be based on the common love that you have for them within that family in ministry together, the vision and the fellowship with your child that they love that fellowship with mom and dad more than anything else on planet earth. Because if they do not love the relationship with you more than anything on planet earth, in time, they are going to love some other relationship more than you. They cannot stand to be out of fellowship with mom and dad. It is a teaching tool.

Now, when you start to have to discipline your child, let me give you five guidelines that you will want to go by, all based on 2 Timothy 3:16.

24. You have to communicate to them that what they did was wrong.
25. You have to explain to them, "We as God's family cannot allow this to happen."
26. Application: Use the biblical principle. Show them in the Bible what happened to the prodigal son. Show them this. Show them that. Apply it.
27. Then execution. This is where the old saying is when you get ready to whip your child, and boy, I understand this, son, "This is going to hurt you more than it does me." But that is what the proverb said. "Do not spare his crying." Because you understand that in corporal punishment and giving him a whipping on whatever level you have to deal with it, it is a teaching tool. It is not just teaching him a lesson. It is not just you are angry now because of what he did. It is a teaching tool to build the relationship that the fellowship that he has with you and your wife or wife and husband is more important than anything on this planet.

28. After the execution, restoration. You restore that he is right with God. You hold him. You hug him. You kiss him. You pray with him. You go through the whole process. That may take a while. Yeah, you may miss big time wrestling. Yeah, the ballgame may be over when you are done. Yeah.

Now, I say this again, and I cannot make this strong enough. All discipline should be carried out in a loving atmosphere of how much you love them. After you go through these first four principles, you communicate to them, you explain it to them, you make the application, you exercise the punishment or execute the punishment. Now you restore that fellowship. You hold them. You hug them. You pray with them. You kiss them. You reinforce their importance in the family and why you had to do what you had to do because you could not allow the world to take them for what God has in his family because we are God's family. The end result for your family is the end result of any church where issues arise: restitution. It is a bottom line. In churches, sometimes it cannot happen. In families, sometimes it does not happen, but that needs to be the bottom line. Restitution is a biblical principle and a biblical process. It starts on your end as a parent with a forgiving spirit. It starts on your child's heart with a broken spirit. Then you bring it together, and then you rejoice. In the prodigal son, when the son came back, what did they do? They threw a feast. They rejoiced. They had a great feast because my son is now back. You do not have to go to that great length, but you want them to see, to understand how important it is for them and you to stay in fellowship with each other. I am going to show you why that is important next week.

X. The Key to It All: Parental Leadership

➢ 7. Knowing you are the key to it all.

Everything rises and falls on leadership.

Psalms 127:1

1. Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.

Today, unfortunately, most parents fall into this category. They labor in vain to build a house. For you and for me as a parent, internally, I must look at three things, three ingredients of my own life for all of this to work.

29. I have to have an honest assessment of myself. We are all capable of pride. We are all capable of hypocrisy. We talk about people today picking and choosing out of the Bible what they want to believe. Whether it is building your family or a pastor building his church, it takes an honest assessment of yourself. You have to understand you are the leader. It is your responsibility. You cannot lead honestly if you are not honest with yourself.
30. A consistency in all things. I am telling you, without a doubt, this is the hardest thing to do, staying consistent in dealing with your child. Because, listen to me, inconsistency is worse than doing nothing at all. I know, I know, I get it. I understand totally. You work all day, you are tired, you come home, and you want to relax. When you get home, there it is, the

tremendous responsibility of training up a child. Being a pastor is not a nine-to-five job. Being a parent is not a nine-to-five job either.

31. This is the understanding of the last ingredient that you have got to have, and that is self-discipline. This will be lacking not just in moms and dads with families; this is lacking in most of God's people's lives. Our inability to prioritize what is really important in life to stay consistent with it, spiritually speaking. Self-discipline is simply bonding ourselves to any structure in life that keeps everything in the context of life for us, the Word of God. Most of God's people, they not only see the importance of having their kids in church, they do not see the importance of being in church. They do not see the importance of having their kids up there with Jared or in the Bible people over here or being in Bible study on Thursday night. Here again, this will be the failure begins right here. Inconsistency and undisciplined parents will always produce 100% of the time undisciplined children who have no respect for authority. Kids will never cause problems in the home. I hear it all the time, "Well, my kid is just causing all kinds of problems." No, no, children do not cause problems in the home. Children just reveal the problems that are in the home. The quicker you learn that, the better off you are going to be. It is just that simple. It is just that simple. You can never blame them, the failure of your children, on somebody or something else. You just cannot.

Psalms 127:4

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

It all starts with the parents, dads and moms taking responsibility for their family and being accountable to the Word of God, its principles for your family. Next week, we are going to get even deeper into the training process for your child. I want to show you the different levels of their growth as they come through adolescence into pre-teens and show you how you understand and deal with each one of them. But again, allow them to be who they are.

XI. The Tragic Downside of Ministry and Parental Responsibility

Now, I am going to be finished here in a moment, but please again, allow me to leave with you a sobering thought. For 50 plus years now, I have invested my life in people. I honestly can say I have never asked anything from anybody. I realize that my position as pastor was not one to ask, but to give. With what I am about to say, please understand the spirit by which it comes from. I am far from a perfect parent or perfect pastor for that matter. I have made my own mistakes in life. The difference between me and most people, I have tried to learn from my mistakes, for most people never do. If I did not have the self-discipline to stay in the book, knowing me the way I am, I would make every tragic mistake that so many people make. I am no better than anyone else.

But having said that, in ministry with people, and this is really what motivates me, and I know you cannot see my heart. I hope through how I express and how I deal with you and am with you, that you can maybe see that. But in ministry with people, I have had to see some of the real tragedies in the lives of families with their children. In spite of the family's indifference to the

Word of God, because that is where it usually all started, I as their pastor had to be there for them and go through it with them in most cases. I want to tell you, we all look at the ministry like a Bible conference, like you folks coming down and being with us. You know, the great thing we had Thursday night with the African trip. Sometimes that is all you young guys out there and even you young ladies. That is the only taste right now in life you get of the ministry. But I want to tell you something, with all that to be true, and it is a great thing, there are two sides of the ministry, and there is a tragic side of the ministry. There is a tragic side where most of you never get to see. Maybe you hear about it, but you never have to experience it. You never have to deal with it. You never have to go through it. This will be the terrible downside to the ministry to people, the absolute tragedies that families go through with their children. I have seen it in 50-plus years.

I have seen parents lose their children to suicide. I cannot even imagine, saved or lost, a mom and dad going through the rest of their life with that terrible burden that their own child taking their life. I have preached their funerals. You have not. I had to. You have not. I had to. Finding words, the comfort of family in that, it is hard to find. I have had situations where somebody committed suicide, and the parents asked me to do the funeral, and I said, "Yes, I will do the funeral, but you need to understand. I need to deal with this. I cannot get up there and just blow smoke and lie. I need to deal with the cause and the effect that other people that may be in that same situation can get help from this." And I was told, "Well, then you are not doing the funeral." I am happy with that. Hey, I may be a lot of things, and I am a lot of things. If you knew what I knew about me, you would not even come and hear me preach. But then if I knew what you knew about you, I would not preach to you. But I cannot get in that pulpit and lie about something that is not true. Now, we get out of the pulpit and you ask me how big my fish was. I caught, I tell you, it was 120 inches long. But when I preach a funeral, it has to be what needs to be said. But I get it. Hey, I understand. Now, it is not a criticism. I get it. I totally get it. I understand that what they are going through, what they feel, and they have not lived in reality any part of their life. Why should now at the funeral reality start checking in? I get it. I have known pastors that have their children commit suicide. Commit suicide. Everybody feels for the pastor. I feel for the pastor. I feel terrible that that would happen to anybody. But honestly, what does that say? So this same pastor who lost his own child to suicide is going to guide you in how do you train yours? Are you kidding me? I feel terrible. This is the tragedy side. Believe me.

I have seen kids die of drug overdoses. I have seen them start with marijuana, which is nothing more than a gateway drug. Move into meth. Move into painkillers. Move into crack. Wind up inhaling. I had a boy die of an overdose of drugs here, oh, I do not know, several years ago that when he was just a young kid, nine or 10 years old, his dad used to buy drugs. He would buy marijuana, and he would smoke it together. I have seen them die of alcoholism. Literally drink themselves to death. 3.3 million deaths a year to alcoholism. The third most leading cause of death in America. Many of them grew up watching Christian moms and dads drinking a beer, watching a ball game. I have seen them die in terrible car crashes. I think of one young lady in particular that came to this church for a while, and she was a really nice lady, and I really liked her, a young girl. She had nothing at home, and like so many of them, she came to work. Like so many of them, she came for a while, and then she left, and several, about a year and a half later,

somebody told me that, and I read it in the paper that she was out on a party night with a bunch of people in her car, speeding down the road, had all been drinking, lost control of the car, car hit an abutment, exploded in flames. She burned to death in that car. See, these are the things that you do not have to ever deal with. You can sit down there while I am preaching all this stuff that may seem hard to you, and you say, "Well, you know where I am coming from?" I am coming from all of these funerals where I had to watch somebody go into the ground because of where they wound up in life. I have seen kids hang themselves, shoot themselves. I have seen girls cut their own wrists, getting into a hot bathtub of water to bleed out. I had one boy go under a bridge down here in the bottoms and gas himself with carbon monoxide. The police called me at two o'clock in the morning. They found his Bible in his car, and my name and phone number was in it.

Used to be part of my ministry. Some of you remember this about 10, what, 12 years ago, I had to preach a funeral for a family. Guy was in this church, a friend of mine. One night he could not stand life anymore. Could not stand where he was anymore. Quit coming to church. Had his wife and his grandboy there in the house. Took the gun, shot his wife, shot his grandkids, and blew his own brains out. I had to preach that funeral. You did not. What are you saying that? You tell everybody how much he loved God. You tell everybody what the Bible meant to him. You have got to deal with the fact that I believe he was a saved man, but how does a saved man get to that point? Same way your children will. I am often reminded what Solomon said in the book of Ecclesiastes. For me, one of the greatest verses in ministry, Ecclesiastes chapter 1, verse 18, where he says,

Ecclesiastes 1:18

18. For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

No truer words were ever spoken. The more you know the Word of God and the more you get into the Word of God and the lives of the people, the more you are going to see the depravity of man and what it really is. In all of my experiences, guys, and I love you. I am not mad at anybody. I am not thinking about anybody. I just do not want to lose one more child to the world. I do not want to have to do another funeral. I do not want to have to try to deal with all of that. Because I have learned two great truths. I leave you with these two great truths today. In all of my 50 plus years and dealing with all the downside and with all the wisdom and all the grief and all the sorrow, I have learned two fundamental truths of life.

32. Those kids did not have to die the way they did. God's plan cut short on their life.
33. Those kids, guys, those tragic deaths, all of them because of the same thing: Parents simply did not care enough to help them.

We as parents, we can blame it on everybody else. I know. I know. There are pastors out there, former pastors out there that lost their kids. There are Christians out there that hate this kind of preaching because they have lost their kids. You can blame it on everybody else. You can live in your world of denial, and you can never take any responsibility or accountability. Hey, I have been to the funerals, man. I have been to the funerals where the person so far out in the world, never came to church, never did anything, hated God, hated the Bible, all of these things,

committed suicide, drunk themselves to death, took overdose of drugs, shot themselves, hung themselves, and somebody gets up and says how much they love God, what the Word of God meant to them, their relationship with God, and everybody with one brain cell sitting in that crowd is asking the same question: If that be true, how come they ended up the way that they did? Denial. It is more than a river in Egypt. The sad reality of the real thing, and hey, I am telling you, this is tough, but I had to deal with it. You did not. I had to sit down with the families and try to make sense out of something that was senseless. I never say in those situations what I feel, because that is not the point to say. That is not the time. That is not the place. Maybe I can pick it up later down the line. Maybe not. But that is not what they need to hear is what I am really feeling. I do my preacher act. I put my arms around them. Yes, I do love them. I do care for them. I feel their pain. You bet I do. Do I wish they were not in that situation? Absolutely. But you know what I am feeling on the inside? You put that bottle in their hand long before they took their first drink. You put the drugs in their veins long before they got their first needle. You put the rope around their neck before they ever stood on that stool and dangled from the end of it. You put the knife in their hands and cut their wrists. You and only you put the gun in their hand. Because as arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, so are children of the youth. Remember, my dear friend, Hebrews chapter 13, verse 17, that you are the watch care of their soul, and you will give an account, you will give an account, an account of joy or an account of grief. But you will give the account, nobody else. Nobody else. It is an illusion. It is a head in the sand illusion because you cannot deal with the fact of the mistakes that you made when all you have to do is deal with it and move on and get that thing to the place where God can finish using you, but you will not do it. Your pride. Your self-righteousness. The fact that you as a pastor, oh, I could never make that. Somebody else made my kids go to the world. Two targets in life, folks. There is God's target, and there is the world's target. And you launch them one place or the other. Like me, do not like me, be upset, be mad. I am here with one message: that your kids do not wind up like that.

Now, if that is offensive to you, you do not like what I have said today, I get it. I have dealt with that all of my 50 plus years. And I am okay. That does not stop me from having the burden of your children that maybe you do not have. That does not stop me from doing the little things in their world that maybe when you lose them, when you lose them, I will have one more chance to get them because of a Jeep ride. A Halloween thing. A Christmas thing. Where their pastor came up and said, "Well, you look really good in that outfit tonight. Oh, you are a pretty little princess. Well, you are demonic." No wonder the kid painted that on the side. You look like a walking dead. Give them something that they remember. People will forget what you do for them. People will never forget what you say to them. The awesome, awesome, awesome responsibility of being a parent. Training children. Giving them the vision that God would have for them. Training up a child the way you should go. My commitment to you is my commitment to your children. I will help you any way I can. In a few moments, my girls are going to be in here. They are going to have their family planners. You signed up for it. We will kick you off the list and give you your stuff. We will have the insert next week for you. There is already stuff in here. One there, one here, one here. Come on in, guys. One here and one there, and we will get you all set up. We will get you going. I am here for you. I have everything you need because I want this thing to be everything that God wanted it to be in your family.

Let us pray. Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We love You. We thank You for all You do for us. We ask You, Father, now to bless us on what we said today. Let it be taken in the spirit by which it was given that we as a church lose no more children to the world. We thank You, Father. Give us responsible children by giving us responsible parents. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, and say, can we ask it? Amen.