

Nathan Rambeck - The Christian Family: Mothers and Fathers

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning, everybody. All right, so I'm just going to go with the podium mic today, but I do have this up here just in case I get really excited and I need to run around.

But I think there's a theme today with our bulletin. By the way, you know, Marla does our bulletin every week, and she does a great job.

And thank you, Marla, for all that you do. But she actually needs people to tell her what to put in the bulletin, right?

But I forgot to update her on the message this week. It says husbands and wives, we're going to be talking about, what are we talking about, mothers and fathers, parents, basically.

So you can scratch that out along with everything else in the bulletin. And then also, you know, it's easy to take for granted as we have these services and the music that we do and all the different organizational things that go into it.

[1 : 07] But, you know, there's a lot involved. And, you know, Steve Dunham wasn't able to make it this morning, and he was definitely missed. But he's usually on the piano.

And we did a great job, I thought, right, without him. But we sure do miss him, don't we, when he's not here? And by the way, if there are others who have talents when it comes to playing the piano or musical talents like that, I'm sure he wouldn't mind other people stepping up to help out as well. I would, since we've got a pretty early start here, by the way, I almost forgot. If there are children here who haven't been dismissed yet, you can go on to, and you're interested, or go to the children's class, you can do that now.

And then what was I going to say after that? I forgot. Well, we're going to open up the scriptures. And today we're going to talk about husbands and, or not husbands and wives, mothers and fathers. We're talking about the Christian family. We're just talking about God's design in general for the family.

[2 : 30] And what I was going to say was, since we got an early start, there might be some time at the end. I expect that there will be some time at the end. There are some comments or questions. So if you have questions along the way, whether from this week or last week, write those down, and we'll see about taking those at the end.

This weekend, we usually try to do a movie night on Friday nights at our house. And this weekend, we watched a movie called The Happiest Millionaire.

Anybody ever heard of that? It's not a very common movie, but it's a Disney movie. And it's with Fred McMurray. If you know him, he was, I'm trying to remember what he was in, The Absent-Minded Professor or something like that, right?

But it was a sweet movie. It was a bit long. It was about three hours. But we got through it. But one of the things that, as we talked about it afterwards and how everybody enjoyed it or what they thought about it, one of the things that came up is it was a positive view of a good father raising his family.

And we talked last week about the term patriarchy, and that's gotten a lot of bad rap over the last few years or maybe more than just a few years.

[3 : 52] But fathers ruling their households well is something that's a good thing, right? It's not something that's bad that we need to fix, at least that order, that idea.

But we need to have fathers that lead their homes well. And that was something, I think, that was presented well in that movie.

And another thing that was presented well, I think, was part of the storyline was this father's daughter, and she's getting married. And there was some conflict about whether she's going to marry this guy because he doesn't seem like he's kind of being controlled, whether it's by his parents or her parents.

And she's like, I don't want to marry this guy. And finally, at the end, he kind of gets the gumption, and he kind of decides to what we might call man up, you know.

And then, you know, she kind of has a change of heart at the very end when he does that.

[5 : 00] But it's a picture of what we talked about. Sons and daughters, or sons specifically, right, grow up to start their own households. And then our daughters grow up to join a man as he starts a household.

And that's what we want. That's what we want to see. And we want to see that done well. There was another thing that came up in the news this last week or two.

And, you know, if you're familiar with kind of conservative circles and things, there's a guy whose name is Dave Rubin. And I don't even know if he considers himself, quote, a conservative or not. But he announced this week something really interesting that got a lot of attention, that he's having two babies.

And he kind of explained the process. You see, Dave Rubin is not married to a woman. He's, quote, married to a man.

[6 : 05] And explained the process where he, him and his, quote, husband, are having two babies through surrogacy.

And they've gone through this whole process where they've done all the things that you do, right, to have a baby, but through test tubes and things like that, if you will.

And it's really a tragic situation. And one of the things that I've noticed is that there are certain, quote, conservatives who have been very positive about this thing.

But, you know, just because in our day we have the technology, the ability to do these kinds of things doesn't mean that we ought to, does it?

God designed the family for there to be a mother and a father, and for a mother and father to raise children, not two dads, not two moms.

[7 : 16] And we've seen over the years, as we've experimented with these new ideas, how things break, how things break when we stray from what God's design is.

It's difficult talking about some of these things because many of our families have brokenness in them. Brokenness sometimes because of sin.

Sometimes it's our own sin. Sometimes it's the sin of others. Sometimes it's just tragedy and death can break families apart from the original way that God designed.

God didn't design that we would die, right? That was something that came after the fall. And so we can tend to stay, you know, avoid talking about how the family ought to be because, well, we don't want to offend people or hurt people's feelings, but it's something that we have to talk about.

There is so much confusion today, and not just in the world. We see it even in the church. We need clarity. God's gracious.

[8 : 31] You know, if we make mistakes in our family, he forgives us. He's merciful when it comes to our weaknesses and our vulnerabilities. But we ought to know the way God intended, the way God designed for the family to be.

It's especially important when it comes to children. You know, when I think about the husband and wife relationship, who is the most vulnerable person in the husband and wife relationship?

It's the wife, the woman, right? The Bible uses the term when it comes to wives or women in general, the weaker vessel. And sometimes people get offended at that. But, you know, I think it's plain, especially when it comes to, you know, physical strength.

But when it comes to a marriage, the wife, the woman, is the one who's in the most vulnerable position. And it's good that we want to see good marriages where husbands treat their wives well. And the Bible specifically talks about that. But if you think about it, when it comes to children, children are the most vulnerable, aren't they? Right?

[9 : 41] At least with women, right? They get to choose, at least most of the time, right, who their husband is going to be. But do children get to choose who their parents will be? No.

So children are the most vulnerable. And we as parents and as a society need to do what's right by kids and make sure that as far as it's within our control, to see that they get brought up according to

God's design.

So we need to oppose these kinds of things that we just talked about with Dave Rubin and that kind of thing. There's a website that I came across in kind of thinking about all this in the last week. It's called, and I don't know if it's a Christian ministry, I'm not even sure if it's Christian, but an organization called Them Before Us. Has anybody ever heard of that? It's the first I'd ever heard of it. Them Before Us.

Have you? Okay. And everything that I read, and I'm not sure exactly all the things that they do, advocacy is a big part of it. Them Before Us.

[10:57] And the title of this organization is all about how children, the needs of children, need to come before the desires, the wants, the preferences of adults, right?

And so many people are making choices to make themselves happy, right? Instead of thinking about the kids and how things are going to affect their children.

So if you have an opportunity to check that out, Them Before Us, I think it's worthwhile. Let's open up our Bibles to Genesis chapter 1 again.

Genesis 1.28. We've read this a time or two already over the last couple of weeks.

Genesis chapter 1.28. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, he's talking both to the man and the woman, Adam and Eve, be fruitful and multiply.

[12:08] Fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, over every living thing that moves on the earth. So he gave, we call this the creation mandate, or sometimes the dominion mandate.

And he gave to the man and the woman a command. He said, be fruitful and multiply, then fill the earth and subdue it, and then have dominion.

This is part of God's created order. God created, God intended that the man and the woman together would, one, bear fruit and multiply.

That households would multiply. Let's turn over a few more verses to Genesis chapter 5, verse 3.

Somebody pointed this out. I can't remember who. Somebody here in the congregation pointed this out to me. The other day. Genesis chapter 5, verse 3.

[13:17] So this is after Adam and Eve already had some sons. They had Cain and Abel. And there was conflict and ultimately murder between those two sons.

And they lost them both. But Adam and Eve had another son, and it talks about this here. It says in verse 3 of chapter 5, And Adam lived 130 years and begot a son in his own likeness after his image and named him Seth.

Isn't that interesting? The Bible says that we are created in God's image. We're made like God. And theologians debate what that means. And I think to a certain extent we have to...

There isn't any place in the Bible where it says this is what it means to be made in the image of God. But we can imagine and kind of try to discern what that means.

God is a person. He's personable. God's relational. We're relational. He made us to be that way. And a whole list of other things. But we are made in his image.

[14:30] Here it says that Seth was made in the image really of his parents, right? And this is a reference, I think, to the beauty of genetics.

Isn't it amazing? Two parents, a mom and a dad, they come together and they have kids and they look like them. And a lot of times they share personality traits and quirks.

You know, sometimes they're personality traits that we don't even like or, you know, things like that. But we see them. We see them in our kids. And we have fun talking about, well, does the baby look like mom?

Or does the baby look like dad? And sometimes you can totally see, right? It's 50-50. A 50-50 split. God created us in his image and he designed us that when we have the ability and the privilege to be co-creators with him, to have our own children, and that they would be in our image.

And our image is also in God's image. So our children are created in our image, which in turn is created in God's image. One of the things I see happening today is there's somewhat of an idea that when we get married, that having children is something that is one of those optional things.

[16:05] Well, should we have children or should we not have children? And really, again, it's kind of technology. It's kind of a modern thing where we have that choice. And I've seen people decide, well, I'm not going to have children because I've seen from people way on the left, I don't want to increase my carbon footprint.

Has anybody ever heard that? For some people, you know, I've got too many things. I've got big plans for my life, and I don't want children to get in the way.

Because children are a lot of work, aren't they, Joe? Yeah. I've also seen from some Christians, well, the world is a rough place.

There's a lot of evil in the world. And I just don't think I want to bring children into an evil world. And that's something I think we can all sympathize with, right?

It's a difficulty. But has there ever not been evil in the world? No. And I don't see God anywhere saying in the Scriptures that, well, we should avoid having children.

[17 : 24] Now, there are warnings, right? Even when it comes to the tribulation, the Bible says, you know, nursing mothers, it's going to be especially difficult for them during the tribulation.

And there are realities with that. But he didn't say, you know, you shouldn't have children. Children are designed to need a mother and a father, as we discussed.

And even though sometimes through tragedy, sometimes sin, children do grow up without a mother or a father, sometimes both, right?

That's not the way God intended it to be. And we should never make choices in our lives that would take away a child's opportunity, at least, right, to have both a mother and a father.

I remember years ago, I don't remember when this was, I think in the 90s maybe, there was a show called Murphy Brown. Anybody remember that? And there was a thing that happened, and I think it was part of the show, where the main character got pregnant and decided to have a baby without getting married.

[18 : 43] And it was somewhat controversial at the time. Today, it's like nobody even talks about it, right? That's just, you know, hey, we all get to do whatever we want with our lives, right? And the vice president, Dan Quayle, got in trouble with the culture because he came out against that whole idea being promoted.

Children need fathers. They need mothers. They need them both. And when they don't have a mother and a father, there's difficulty. And it can't always be helped, right?

But still, there are consequences regardless. You know, one of the things the Bible teaches clearly against is sexual morality, that sex is something that is exclusively for marriage.

Because babies, you know, we know where babies come from, right? And that's one of the reasons why God forbids sexual morality, sex outside of marriage.

You know, there's a story. One of the things, there's a lot of sexual morality today and pregnancy outside of wedlock.

[20 : 18] But did you know that there's a great solution that the Bible has for when a woman gets pregnant out of wedlock? The solution is to get married.

And that used to be kind of a common standard thing, right? So I was at an event, like an old-timers day or some kind of event where they had, like, settlers.

You go back and see how people, like, cook their food and did all kinds of things back during the settlement of America. And I was off with some of the kids or something, and this police officer tapped me on the shoulder out of the blue and said, excuse me, sir, I need you to come with me.

And I was like, I'm not driving, you know. I didn't, like, go past the speed limit. I'm like, what did I do? And so I walk with him, and he walks me over to this building, and there's my wife, Jamie, standing there and all these other people.

And what they did was they set me up for a shotgun wedding. Does anybody know what a shotgun wedding is?

[21 : 43] Have you ever heard of a shotgun wedding? Back in the day, you know, if a young man and a young woman produced a child and they weren't married, the father would get out his shotgun.

At least that's kind of how the illustration goes. It says, okay, it's time to get married, right? And so, you know, people make mistakes, but there are solutions to these, right?

And so it's good to get married, especially when there's children involved. So shotgun weddings. We need to bring back the shotgun wedding.

Psalms 127. Psalm 127. Let's turn there. Psalm 127, verse 3 through verse 5.

I'll give you a second to get there. Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord. The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth.

[23 : 07] Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them. They shall not be ashamed, but shall speak with their enemies in the gates. Do you know that children are expensive?

It takes money. They eat all kinds of food, three meals a day, and sometimes snacks in between. They need to be clothed, and they need to be housed.

They need a roof over their head. I'll throw this out there. The Department of Agriculture, I can't remember what year this is from, but in the last five, ten years, I think. The Department of Agriculture has an estimate of what they say it costs to raise one child through adulthood. And this doesn't include college. Any guesses on how much it is? Anybody? Anybody? They said it costs \$250,000.

\$250,000 for one. And that can be intimidating, right? Yikes. It's probably... Yeah, and you throw in college and other things, right?

[24 : 23] There's a lot of pressure. How could we possibly do even one? There's a neat book, and it turned into a movie, actually a few movies, called Cheaper by the Dozen.

Anybody ever heard of that? There's the old black and white film, and then they came up with a new version with... I can't remember who's in it. But neat, neat book and film.

But, you know, first of all, you need to take those kind of statistics with a grain of salt, right?

Everybody, we make choices in life, and raising children doesn't have to be as expensive as your neighbor, right?

We don't always have to keep up with the Joneses. But we shouldn't let those kinds of worldly matters intimidate us.

Children, as the Bible says here in Psalms, are heritage from the Lord. The fruit of the womb is his reward. Children are like arrows in the hands of a warrior.

[25 : 32] The children of a man's youth, of a woman's youth, bring joy to families, to moms and dads.

It says, Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them. There's another verse, Psalm 128, just one chapter over.

It says this, Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house. Bless your children like olive plants all around your table.

Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord. Children are a blessing. They're not a curse. There's kind of a general idea in the culture that children kind of get in the way of our bigger plans.

And we ought not to allow that cultural idea to impact us. When I was a young Christian, I started to read a lot of heroes of the faith, people who were great missionaries or preachers or evangelists.

[26 : 55] It was quite inspiring. One of the things that I noticed, though, that bothered me was that a lot of these heroes of the faith, their families were a mess.

Their children walked away from the Lord, different things like that. I think about William Carey in particular.

If you've ever read the life of William Carey, he was a missionary to India. And if you read about his family, it was a mess. And I took note of that, and I, as a young man, and said, You know what? Regardless of where my life takes me, what I pursue, I think it's important that my family comes first, that my family is a priority.

A lot of us, I think, a lot of people consider their family as kind of a side gig, a hobby, something that they do. But really, our family should be the highest priority.

[28 : 03] Does the Bible say anything about that? 1 Corinthians chapter 7, Paul talks about the family. And it's interesting, he's actually, in this passage in verse 32, if you want to open up there, 1 Corinthians chapter 7, verse 32, he's actually trying to convince people, both men and women, to not get married.

He's saying, Listen, if you're not married, you can be like me, doing all kinds of ministry work, and having your life in danger, and, you know, having people throw rocks at you, and being in danger of drowning, and persecution, and all these things.

And so, but in that, he makes an interesting observation. He says this, verse 32, But I want you to be without care. He's talking about people who are single. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord.

But he who is married cares about the things of the world, how he may please his wife. There's a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord,

that she may be holy, both in body and in spirit.

But she who is married carries about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And he's making an observation here, and he's saying, listen, those of you who are single, don't go out, you know, insisting that you have to get married.

[29 : 33] You know, you can be like me. And then he says, of course, that's not for everybody. Not everybody has that gift, he calls it. And I think very few people do. But he's making an observation that there's a priority here.

He's saying, if you're married, then your first priority is not to the ministry, it's to your family. That's your first ministry.

I've seen so many, I've even seen it in churches where people kind of have this idea, and I think there's even a saying, you know, for ministers, you know, if the minister takes care of the people, God will take care of his children.

Anybody ever heard that before? Is that, is there any truth in that? No. No, no, no, no. Not at all. It's the father and mother's responsibility to take care of their children.

God delegated it to them. Right? Raising children is a responsibility.

[30 : 47] And it comes with authority, right? Parents have authority over their children. When it comes to raising children, I think there are three important things to consider.

Three duties or responsibilities. One is to teach. Two is to discipline. And three is to love. To teach, to discipline, and to love.

And that requires wielding some authority. And God gave parents authority. Because there are responsibility. There are many, especially the state today, right?

The state wants to take away the authority of the parents so that they can have some control.

There's this thing that the UN has called the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

And that sounds great, right? They're thinking about the children. But really, it's another one of those things that the name really doesn't tell you the insidious nature of the thing.

[31 : 51] It really ought to be called the UN Convention on Taking Away the Rights of Parents.

That's what it's all about. A few years ago, there was a lady who hosts, a host on MSNBC who made quite a stir, and I think rightfully so.

And she said this in some kind of advertisement they had. She said, we have never invested as much in public education as we should have because we've always had kind of a private notion of children.

Your kid is yours and totally your responsibility. We haven't had a very collective notion of these are our children. So part of it is we have to break through our kind of private idea that kids belong to their parents or kids belong to their families and recognize that kids belong to whole communities.

There is a concerted effort, especially by states, and it's not just this country.

You see it in many other countries to gain control of your kids. And we as parents need to recognize that and resist it with everything that we have.

[33 : 07] Authority must be exerted. We have a responsibility as parents, as fathers and mothers to train, to discipline, and to love our children. And we must use our authority to do that.

It's easy to neglect that responsibility, neglect that authority, and over-delegate it. We have other people in our lives, right, who can speak into the lives of our children.

children. But we need to understand that as parents, even if we do delegate certain things, training, teaching, even school, right, that we maintain our responsibility to be the ones that oversees their education, their spiritual life, their training.

speaking of, let's talk about training, teaching, instruction a little bit. Just for the interest of time, I'm going to go through some of these verses real quick.

Proverbs 22, verse 6, train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it. If you spend the time training a child when he's young, then when he's old, it'll stick, generally, right?

[34 : 30] These are, proverbs are rules of thumb. You know, there certainly has been plenty of cases throughout history where the training didn't stick. But in general, if you spend the time and energy when they're young training children in all kinds of things, if you train a child to love work when they're young, then they'll tend to love work when they're old, when they get older.

If you teach a child to be respectful to elders when they're young, they'll tend to be respectful when they're older. Another verse, Deuteronomy chapter 6, verse 6 through 7, and these words which I

command you today shall be in your heart.

You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. As parents, we need to be the shepherd over the souls of our children.

We need to teach them God's word. It's so easy and one of the things I see today so often is parents neglecting that responsibility and saying, well, the pastor will teach my children what they need to know or the youth pastor or the children's pastor or whoever, the Sunday school teacher. And are pastors and youth pastors and children's Sunday school teachers bad? Not at all. They're all good. But if we make the mistake of delegating all of that authority to the spiritual nurturing and training of our children to others, it won't turn out well.

[36 : 13] also, it should be parents that lead our children to trust in the Lord. Right? We're the ones that should be presenting the gospel on a regular basis to our children, presenting the gospel of the grace of God, letting them know that God doesn't have any grandchildren that they need to choose and decide to be part of God's family for themselves.

Also, I think it's important to note, if you look at Proverbs 1.8, Proverbs 1.8 says this, My son, hear the instruction of your father and do not forsake the law of your mother.

And there are several places in the Proverbs you see this. It talks about the instruction of the mother and the father, both. And the Bible doesn't always do that, right? A lot of times you'll see a reference just to the father, but you know that it's talking about both parents.

But I thought it interesting specifically in these cases that it brings up mother and father. And I think it's important to note in thinking about families, parents need or kids need mothers and fathers. You know, can a young girl learn how to be modest with just a father? You know, I know lots of fathers, right?

[37 : 37] In fact, my wife has, you know, stories with her father. He was a good father who, you know, she found a dress or something and dad said, you're not going out like that, right?

That's a good father, a good dad. You're not dressing like that while you're in my house. But that can only go so far, right? That's just a rule.

But a young lady who looks at her mom and sees how she is modest not only in her dress but in her behavior and attitude in life, gentle and kind.

The Bible talks about having a gentle and quiet spirit. that's not something a father can really teach or train. Both boys and girls learn from their parents, from their mother and father, how a man ought to treat a woman, right?

by looking at mom and dad. And sometimes they learn the wrong thing, right? But what God designed is that children, little boys and girls would learn, boys can learn how I ought to treat women by seeing how my dad treats my mom.

[38 : 55] Little girls teach how I ought to be treated by seeing how my dad treats my mom. boys learn how to balance strength and masculinity with gentleness by looking at their fathers.

And there's all kinds of just little things, sometimes things we don't even think about, but just through observation. Next is discipline.

Hebrews 12, for the sake of time we won't read through the whole thing, but in Hebrews 12, verse 5 through 9, it talks about how the Lord loves those whom he chastens or whom the Lord loves he chastens.

And it talks about the Lord's discipline over his people, but it's all a figure, right, of the family. Proverbs 22, 15 says this, this foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him.

Children thrive with boundaries and order. When children don't have order, when they don't have rules, when they don't have discipline, their life feels like there's no foundation, that they're on quicksand.

[40 : 19] Even though discipline, does anybody like discipline at the moment? Nobody does, none of us. Yet it brings so much stability to a home, doesn't it? As I was reading a book, and I'll reference this in a second, the author mentioned talking to a psychiatrist and mentioned he was dealing with a family and this little girl, seven years old or some age like that, made this comment that her parents didn't love her.

And she said, the reason she said why is she said, my parents don't spank me. Can you imagine that observation from just a little girl?

My parents don't love me because they don't spank me. And you'd think that for a child, you know, they'd think the opposite, right? But no, children get it pretty early, don't they?

That discipline is good, discipline is healthy, especially for children who are learning how the world works. How many of us in this room have stories of the great spanking in my life?

That day that I'll remember forever etched in my mind when dad took me out to the woodshed.

Which one do you think? Or for many of us, those many days where dad took me out to the woodshed because some of us are more hard-headed than others.

[41 : 57] But I think if you had a good father, even though the discipline was difficult, you look back on that with kind of a fond memory, right?

It's something that I'm glad my dad did that. I'm glad. And for some of us, you think back at that and you think that was a pivotal point in my life.

I was going the wrong direction and my dad put his foot down. I said something nasty and mean to my mom and my dad took me out to the woodshed and I never did it again.

That changed my life forever. Discipline is good. The last one is love. Ephesians 6, 4 says this, And you fathers do not provoke your children to wrath but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

You know, we've talked about teaching and discipline and those are both aspects of love. If you love your children, you'll teach them, you'll discipline them. But I don't think it's enough. I've observed over the years families where the families do all kinds of teaching and training and instruction, have rules, they have discipline, but there's something missing.

[43 : 20] That something is there's a lack of a relational bond. You can have all the rules in the world that are all great and all good and godly.

You can have discipline, you can have all the right instruction. Read the Bible with your kids every day, which is a good thing to do. But if you don't form those connections, if you don't love your children, if you don't form bonds with them, it might be all for naught.

In this verse, Ephesians 6, 4, and you fathers do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. If we're just constantly harsh with our children, that's provoking children to wrath.

we don't want to be overly harsh. I think we ought to consider that our children will be adults someday. And we should ask ourselves, do we want our children, do we want to have good relationships with our children when they're old, when they're older, when they become adults? And don't we all want that? We all want that with our kids. But if we don't build those connections when they're young, because we're busy, because we've got better things to do, then we might lose that.

[44 : 38] All the love verses that you find in the Bible, loving your neighbor as yourself, 1 Corinthians 13, those all apply to loving our kids. Love is patient.

Do children need patience? Yeah. Love is kind. Love is gentle. Keeps no record of wrong. Even relationships between parents and children, even though there's that strong authority there, do parents sometimes need to ask forgiveness of their children?

So important. We can make mistakes. Then I'll finish up with this. I think the number one thing as parents that we ought to do with our kids that we should never, ever, ever forget is that we ought to enjoy them.

And that's what God intended. The children would be a joy to us as parents. There's a verse, there's a ministry out there called No Greater Joy.

Has anybody ever heard that? Michael and Debbie Pearl? They can be somewhat controversial, but they have a lot of good material too.

[45 : 53] But their ministry is called No Greater Joy. It's based on this verse in 3 John. Who reads 3 John anyway? But it says this, and this is not geared towards, he's talking about spiritual children, but he says, I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth.

He's talking about spiritual children, but does that apply to our natural children as well? Well, the greatest joy in my life is to see my children walk in truth, to do what's right, for its own sake, not because mom or dad told them to, but because they know it's the right thing to do.

That I can enjoy spending time with my kids. And also, not that just that I would enjoy them, but that they would enjoy me too.

And that takes some work and effort and investment. Well, we'll finish there. I didn't leave much time, but I am going to at least take five minutes.

So who's going to be my rowing microphone? David? All right.

[47 : 12] Joe's the first to volunteer. in Ephesians chapter 5 and 6, it talks about a Christian household.

Yeah. and in there, it really stresses the relationship, how it should be between husband and wife. It spends quite a bit of time. And then it also talks about children to parents.

There's only one verse in there, and this is Paul, of course, in Ephesians, one verse where he talks about parents to children. children. And I'll read that for you, and maybe you can explain.

I'm not quite sure of the meaning. Okay. You can put me on the spot. All right. I'm ready. It's chapter 6 in Ephesians, excuse me, verse 4. chapter 6, verse 4.

It says, Fathers, do not exasperate your children. Do not exasperate your children. Instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

[48 : 21] Now, that last part, you know, I think we all pretty much understand the meaning there.

But that first part, it almost seems like if you do not bring up your child in the training and instruction of the Lord, you're going to be exasperating them.

It just seems like that's what's going to happen to them unless you bring them up in the training of the Lord. What's your take on that? So, in my, that was the, what are you, is that the King James you're reading from?

But exasperate, NIV, that exasperate, is that the word I use? The word exasperate. Okay. In mine, it says, do not provoke your children to wrath.

Similar ideas, but yeah, there are lots of things we can do to provoke our children. When you have authority, you can, it can be abused, it can be misused, it can be neglected.

All those are bad, right? You shouldn't abuse authority, you shouldn't neglect it. You should wield it wisely. And so, the latter part is training, admonition, encouragement.

[49 : 38] And there are all kinds of things we could do as fathers and mothers to exasperate our children. Having expectations of them that we never talk to them about, right? Well, disciplining them for something that they didn't know that they were not supposed to do, right?

How many times has that happened? I think back in my life, you know, whoops, I should have actually provided instruction about how we ought to do this thing or that thing, but I just got mad when they didn't do it, but I never provided any instruction.

Think how frustrating that is. We can put ourselves in our children's spot, can't we? Has everybody here been a child before? Yeah.

We've all been children, right? Try to put ourselves in their shoes. Does that answer a little bit?

Yeah. Any others? Scott in the back. Yeah, you talk about first spankings or one that you remember.

Yeah. I'm going to relay one. Okay. And for those who know me, it probably doesn't surprise anybody. But I was about six years old playing out on the playground at recess.

[50 : 45] Now, I had grown up knowing not to steal and not to lie, you know, but this kid came up to me on the playground who had found a watch and he said, is that your watch?

And I said, yeah. So he gave it to me. Now, I didn't quite connect that as stealing but lying and stealing were, you know, really closely connected.

So when I came home with a watch that didn't belong to me, I learned the error of my ways. and you never forgot it. Never. Never.

That's neat. You know, kids get this and, you know, there's things like abuse and things like that that kind of soil and muddy the waters, unfortunately.

But I've been, I've had young kids and I've seen this multiple times with many of my kids, young age, three years old, four years old, or at the store and there's some kid that's just out of control and they'll say, Daddy, she needs a spanking.

[51 : 58] It's like, yeah, she probably does. She probably does. Up front. Loretta. In this day and time, there are so many grandparents raising their grandchildren.

creates a whole new perspective in this. So, it's sad, but it's, that's the way it is.

And so, now the, so when, it just confuses the children. Yeah. Because if the parents are still involved in any way, the kids don't know who is the authority anymore.

Yeah. It's difficult. There's lots of things that we have to deal with and figure out that are outside of just the natural or in which way God, in which God designed things.

But we do need to figure them out. We need to come up with, you know, something. We're friends with a family where, it's a homeschool family and they've got five or six kids and they also have three or four that are grandchildren because their daughter, I think, is a drug addict.

[53 : 12] And so, she's had three or four kids that they're raising because she is not able to. And, it's hard.

It's hard. Grandparents don't have the same amount of energy, right? And it's easy, you know, even for me, you know, in my 40s, like, I didn't have the energy.

Sometimes it's easy. The easiest thing to do is somebody does something they shouldn't and she's like, I'm too tired to address this right now. I've had a long day. But we can't do that, right?

We've got to stand up and say, all right, we need to address this thing. Grandparents aren't necessarily equipped in the same way that parents are, but, if the need arises, we can do our best.

So, that's all I'll say about that. There's lots of things we could say, but, anyone else? All right.

[54 : 17] Sounds good. Well, we'll finish up there, but I did want to, well, let's do this.

Let's pray, and then I've got a few books I wanted to share. Is that all right? Father, thank you for your idea of the family. You created it. You designed it.

When we look out at the world and how people are coming up with their own ideas about what family should be, I think we are impressed more and more with how you designed things to be.

It's just so incredible and so amazing when we follow your order and your design for the family. How wise that you are. we ask that you would work in us continually every day to help us with our families and give us, Father, the wisdom to help others who might need it to provide instruction and guidance from the scriptures on how to do this your way.

Thank you for your instruction, for your care, for your grace, for your mercy, for your forgiveness, and for your love. Amen.