

# What I Wish I Knew When My Kids Were Young - 2023 Ohio Grace Family Conference

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 23 September 2023

Preacher: Joel Finck

[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning. Now I promised I would just kind of stand here. I don't roam around like a lot of these preachers. But before I start, I was given permission to have a commercial. So I just want to go through some of my books.

Those aren't my books. I'm going to use those during the message. But people ask, well, what's for family things? What's for kids and so forth?

But this is the book, *Joined in God's Eyes*. So it's a book on marriage, of course. And so that would be one you might be interested in. Besides, it has a picture of my lovely wife on our wedding day on the cover, surrounded by the roses that were used at our daughter's, our oldest daughter's wedding.

So it's kind of got a personal touch there. And then one of the books that some of you might have seen is my, they call it the yellow book or the orange book, *The Mystery*. Anybody ever seen *The Mystery*? Okay, a couple of you.

Well, this is the same book with a different cover. Sometimes when you give *The Mystery* to a new believer, they're kind of like, what's that?

[ 1 : 12 ] So we put out the cover, *The Bible Makes Sense*. Okay? And so when you're pushing it to a grace believer, you get the yellow one, *The Mystery*.

When it's a non-grace believer, *The Bible Makes Sense*. Or a young believer or an unbeliever, an introduction to the mystery. And that's a condensed version, okay? Reader's Digest version of the mystery.

So we know how to milk this stuff to the limit here. *Gems of Grace Truth*, a devotional style booklet covering 60 subjects related to rightly dividing the word of truth.

Very simple, very easy for beginners or those who just like a little devotional thought each day.

Okay? After people read those, they have questions.

And so we came out with common questions about the grace message. And that gets more specific about things that people are wondering after they start getting introduced. You know, isn't Paul just one of the 12 apostles?

[ 2 : 16 ] We get that question. A lot of people actually believe that. Aren't you making too much of the apostle Paul? You ever heard that one? Paul, Paul, Paul, Paul. Well, we talk about that.

Aren't the words of Christ more important than the words of Paul? Actually, the words of Paul are the words of Christ. A lot of people don't realize that. They're the words of Christ to us today.

So we got that one. And then advanced questions. This is for the advanced believer, right? How does 1 John 1, 9 and confession of sins relate to us today?

How many of you grew up in a church where it was confess your sins and he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins? And that's what I grew up with. I mean, you every week, you had to get your sins forgiven again. Because you did something during the week, right?

Okay. So someone has said, that's forgiveness on the installment plan. Or first questions about the faith.

[ 3 : 13 ] Who is God? Is the Bible really the word of God? Okay. Just some really basic stuff. And this one's starting to catch on a little bit. *The Christian in the real world*.

Dealing with doubt. Grace for your guilt. Answer to anxiety. Defeating depression. Tackling temptation. The freedom of forgiveness. So just some real practical down-to-earth things.

And we've got a bunch more. We've got all the commentaries on Paul's epistles. And book of Revelation. Book of Daniel. And we have three out of the four volumes I'm planning for Acts

available.

So just look those things over. If you have any questions, talk to me. Linda's oftentimes out there by the book table as well. Now, one more thing before we get started.

We kind of quit watching the news. Who said that? Who said that about watching the news? I kind of appreciated that. The last couple of years, just the news hasn't been fun anymore.

[ 4 : 10 ] Okay. And so we've kind of stopped watching it regularly. But now that Jim Jordan is in there as chairman of committees and so forth. And he's from here, right? Yeah.

Yeah. It's gotten kind of interesting again. One of the things I noticed is that when somebody gets interrupted or somebody goes too long, they always say, I would like to reclaim my time.

Paul? I would like to reclaim my time. Is that all right? We might go a little past noon, but we'll try to wrap it up. I got it. Okay.

Thank you. All right. Things I wish I knew when my kids... No, I'm starting the message in case you're wondering back there. Things I wish I knew when my kids were young.

When I was given my assignment, I was pretty excited. I like a challenge. And generally, at any conference where I'm speaking, I have either picked the subjects for myself and for all the other guys as well.

[ 5 : 11 ] And so I thought this is going to be kind of a fun change to have somebody pick the assignment and give it to me. However... I soon realized that the subject I was given was one of those no-win subjects.

Kind of like Paul was talking about something like that a little bit ago. If I start listing the 25 things I wish I knew when my children were young, it makes me look like I didn't know anything about raising kids. And you'll all say, no wonder your kids turned out the way they did.

On the other hand, if I get up here and say, you know, I really can't think of a lot of things I wish I'd have known back then. We pretty well handle it, you know. Then you'll think, this guy is a know-it-all.

What an arrogant individual. Thinks he had everything figured out. No wonder his kids turned out the way they did. That's why I can't... I can't win no matter what I do.

And then to add insult to injury, look at the verse they gave me. Job 12.12. With the ancient is wisdom. Really, Tim?

[ 6 : 22 ] With the ancient is wisdom. In length of days is understanding. Okay. We'll see what we can do with that.

But the more I started really looking into it and thinking about it, and I've got all these other books, and I want to put the caveat out. I'm going to recommend some books that are, you know, first of all, pretty old, because these are things that I started researching when my kids were young, okay?

So they've been around a while. They're basically not mid-Acts Grace Dispensational, so I've got to put that caveat. If you find some of these, you know, interesting, you might want to check into.

We bought the book you were recommending last night. It looks really good. Looking forward to that. So we'll mention a few of those things. But we're going to look at three things that I wish I knew when my kids were young.

And it's very simple, actually. Number one, I wish I had understood my wife better. Okay. I'm going to talk about that. I wish I had understood my wife better. Number two, I wish I had understood my children better.

[ 7 : 33 ] I guess what number three is, I wish I had understood myself better. Okay. So we're going to talk about those things, and hopefully you'll find something in there that will be helpful to you as well.

One of my favorite cartoons, and I don't even know, I don't think it's one of the far side ones. I kind of like those crazy sense of humor type of cartoons.

But it's a two-panel cartoon, or maybe it's just a one-panel cartoon. There's this scene in a mountaintop scene of two gurus.

So they're sitting up on top of these two peaks, and on the way down the mountain, on one side, there's a long line of people waiting to get to talk to the guru up there. And on the other one, there's like two or three people waiting in line.

And so these two guys are standing there looking at it, and one says, well, why are there so few people waiting to see this guru, and this one over here? There's a whole line. And they say, well, this one over here understands all the secrets of the universe.

[ 8 : 35 ] There's only like three people there. What about the one with the long line? Oh, he understands women. And that's kind of the classic joke almost.

Men are from Mars, women are from Venus, right? And I've often said the only thing stranger than women is men. And I just think it's true.

And so I wish I'd understand my wife better. And I want to start with a proposition for this point. Mark it down.

Write it down. Remember it. Memorize it. The best child-rearing tool is a fantastic marriage. Mark it down.

The best child-rearing tool is a fantastic marriage. If you have a fantastic marriage, you almost have to try to mess your kids up.

[ 9 : 32 ] I'm not sure why you want to mess your kids up. But you almost have to work at it. Honestly, a study done by Amato and DeBoer, I don't know who that is, by the way.

2001, it's been around a while. If a woman's parents are divorced, it increases the chances of her marriage ending in divorce by 69%. If both a husband and wife's parents are divorced, it increases the chances of their divorce by 189%.

Now, I'm not saying this to judge anyone who's been through a divorce. That's not what I'm talking about. God can fix anything in your life. But it just shows the typical trends of how when a child grows up in a marriage that is troubled, likely their marriage will be troubled as well.

And when a child has the blessing and the privilege of growing up in a home where there was a fantastic marriage, it usually works out pretty well for them in their own marriage.

All right? Let's go to 1 Peter 3. And here's a fantastic passage that really lays out the husband-wife relationship.

[ 10 : 56 ] It does it in the context of perhaps somewhat of a difficult marriage, if you know the passage. In 1 Peter 3, which, by the way, the subject of 1 and 2 Peter is suffering, okay?

Peter is writing to the Jews of the dispersion. I think the King James says that the stranger scattered abroad. It's the diaspora. It's the little flock of Israelite believers who continued on as kingdom saints, and Peter is ministering to them.

Now, when the dispensation of grace ends, these passages will really come into their own during the tribulation period, because the believers during that time, kingdom saints, will need instruction on how to deal with suffering, like no other people have before.

But we can gain some things for our learning here with regard to husbands and wives. In verse 1, he says, Let me translate that a little bit for you.

The issue here is if any husband obey not the word. Now, we assume that's an unbeliever, but, hey, any of you know any husbands that are believers that don't obey the word? Hey, that would also apply, okay?

[ 12 : 21 ] So it's whether they're an unbeliever that's not obeying the word or whether they're a believer that's not obeying the word. Here's how you deal with it. And it says that they may without the word. Now, the definite article is not in the original text.

It's without a word. In other words, the point is, wives, you can influence your husband without saying a word. Did you know that? How? And then the King James says, by the conversation. Now, that automatically makes us think of speaking, right? And he's just said you can do it without a word. What's he mean? Well, conversation, this word that's translated conversation, means your manner of life, manner of living. So, in other words, by your very lifestyle, you're going to have a tremendous influence on your husband if he's not obeying the word.

And I'm not going to preach a Mother's Day message here. That's the other thing you have to deal with in those Mother's Day messages. Do you say something that makes them feel really bad or something that makes them feel really good, you know?

And I'm not going to do that because I want to get to verse 7. It says, likewise, ye husbands. And I'm sorry to kind of be on, you know, the wife's side here, but I usually blame the husband when there's a problem in a marriage.

[ 13 : 32 ] And, you know, I've seen some, I think, some genuine exceptions to that. But pretty much you can really, really put the, I guess, the onus on him.

And Peter has an amazing thing to say here. Likewise, ye husbands. Dwell with them. Them, that would be the wives, the wife they're married to.

Dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered.

Now, there are actually two admonitions here. One is dwell with the wife according to knowledge. In other words, you need to understand something about women, right? And particularly, you need to understand something about your wife, your life, husbands, your life.

This is a lifetime goal, is to be a student of your wife from the day you say, I do, until death do us part.

[ 14 : 36 ] There's always more you need to learn about your wife. And you need to approach your marriage with understanding, it says, according to knowledge. The second admonition here is giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel.

And boy, the feminists go crazy. Are there even feminists anymore? Womanhood has totally been destroyed, so how can you have a feminist? I don't know. Something's really messed up, isn't it? Well, the weaker vessel, what does that mean? Does that mean physically weaker? I don't know. Ask these ladies that are losing swim meets to men.

I don't know. Why aren't there, as soon as I say it, it'll happen. Why aren't there women playing NFL football? I don't know. There's a reason for that, right? And so, but I don't think that's necessarily his point, that women are, as a rule, physically weaker.

I believe he's putting in a much more positive sense. The weaker vessel. Now, vessel in scripture is a word that's used of our body, right? But a vessel, it's an illustration.

[ 15 : 51 ] We have earthen vessels, Paul says, right? And we have a treasure in it. And the treasure is the gospel. That's in an earthen vessel. So the vessel. And Paul writes that men ought to know how to basically control their vessel, right?

Control their body. And so, she's a weaker vessel in some sense. But a weaker vessel also can have the idea of something that's very precious and delicate.

We have a few weaker vessels in our home that, you know, what do they say? It used to be if it's over \$25, it's a vase rather than a vase, right?

I'm sure it's much more now. But usually, there's a vase. Linda inherited some very special vessels from her family, Czechoslovakian and from the old country.

And beautiful vase with just unbelievably beautiful work on it, painting and so forth. And you don't drink out of that one, okay?

[ 16 : 59 ] You don't use it at the table. You put it in a special place of honor, maybe behind a glass door in a cabinet for people to admire and treasure. And to me, that's the point that he's making here.

Husbands, you need to realize what a treasure you have in your wife and treat her that way, okay? So, it's just such a beautiful passage.

So, how do you do that? You need to do it with understanding, with knowledge, and you need to do it with honor. So, I want to talk about three ways that I wish I had understood my wife better when the kids were younger.

And it relates to the basic makeup of every human being. What are the three parts to any human being? According to 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 23.

Spirit, soul, and body. Those are the three parts of us. So, I want to talk about those. Number one, understanding your wife's spirit.

[ 18 : 05 ] Let's turn to Ephesians chapter 5 again. We've already been there with some of our other messages here. And we'll start in verse, excuse me, number 25. Ephesians chapter 5, verse 25.

Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. Now, there's a great message just in there. You know, are you ready to give yourself for your wife?

That he might sanctify. That, the word that, introduces a purpose clause. In other words, here's the reason why Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.

He had the purpose of sanctifying and cleansing it with the washing of the water by the word.

Husband, your number one responsibility for your wife is to cleanse her in her spiritual walk with the Lord.

You are to give her the resources to direct her and purify, whether it be the home itself or your contacts with the world and so forth, to purify her life.

[ 19 : 15 ] And it's all done by the word. It's by the word of God. Why did Christ do that for the church? That he might present it to himself, verse 27. A glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle

or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. So understand her spirit. Men, this is just something that maybe we don't realize.

Maybe I knew it intellectually, but you just don't realize the depth of your wife's desire for a spiritual leader. Wives want a spiritual leader.

And they love to have you take that spiritual leadership. Now, tragically, many times wives, you know, if they aren't getting that, they'll sometimes step out and kind of become the spiritual leader in the home.

But I believe that God had a way of dealing with that to sort of gently nudge the husbands into taking their responsibilities.

[ 20 : 27 ] 1 Corinthians chapter 14, verses 34 and 35. Again, I know that, you know, some people don't like to hear this. I don't know why not.

Yes, I do. It says in verse 34, Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak. And boy, don't people, doesn't the world love to look at verses like that and just say, Look at how sexist and what's that big word, misogynist or whatever.

Look at how the church is. Look at the Bible. Paul hated women. Let your women keep silence in the churches. But they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

This is the guy that said we're not under the law. No, he's just saying the law said the same thing that I'm telling you now. This is not a dispensational thing. This is a universal principle God has always established.

It's that man is given a responsibility to be a spiritual leader in the house. And then how do you deal with that? Verse 35 says, And if they, the women, if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home.

[ 21 : 38 ] For it is a shame for women to speak in the church. You know, why did Paul say that? Well, I believe God is simply, why did God say, why did Christ say that? Remember, Paul's words, in fact, verse 37, If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

So this isn't just Paul saying this. This is the Lord saying this. Why would he say if a woman has a question? You know, I've had ladies that they want to ask me questions. And, well, you know, why don't you ask your husband?

Well, that bum doesn't know anything. He's Bible ignorant. Well, maybe if you would graciously ask him sincerely, Hey, I just had a question about this passage.

Maybe he would be motivated to find out what the answer is. You know, tell the husband, yeah, you can come ask your pastor, your elders, or another friend that knows the word.

Yeah, but see, what Paul is doing, what God is doing, is he's involving the husband in the process, isn't he? He's reaffirming that order that God has placed in the family as far as spiritual leadership.

[ 22 : 45 ] So understand her spirit. Understand her desire for a spiritual leader. And then man up and take that responsibility. Okay, point number two about understanding your wife.

Understanding my wife as the children were young. Understand her soul. Okay, what is the soul in Scripture? I don't have time to give you all the verses, but you can show this from Scripture.

The soul is made up of three parts. The mind, the will, and the emotions. The mind, will, and emotions. And the fact is, regardless of what modern society tells you, men and women think differently.

Okay? And I came across an interesting study. The Amen Clinics of basically the brain.

Forty-six thousand and thirty-four male and female brains were studied. Now, I'm pretty sure because of the results, they were studied while they were alive.

[ 23 : 53 ] Okay, through actual brain wave measurements and so forth. Okay? Seven differences between, or seven interesting things about men's and women's brains.

Number one, female brains are busier. It's scientific fact. Okay? The prefrontal cortex of men's brains are sleepier.

However, this isn't just, no, this is scientific facts. The brain's emotional centers are more active in women.

Yes. The anterior cingulate gyrus, or gyrus, works harder in women. Did you know that? You say, what does that do?

Oh, that's, among other things, this is the portion of the brain's worry center. Isn't that interesting?

[ 24 : 56 ] This is scientific. The visual and coordination centers work harder in men. Interesting. Women's intuition is real. The part of the brain that tracks gut feelings is larger and quicker than men's, than women's.

They can just assess a situation and get a sense about it. And, you know, I don't feel good about that guy over there. I think we better watch out.

You know what? You guys better listen to her. I'm not kidding. Scientific. Point number seven.

The serotonin production in men's brains is 52% higher than women's. Serotonin is what produces a calming effect. Just calm down, honey.

[ 25 : 56 ] We'll take care of it. Okay? Does any of this ring true to any of you? I say it's pretty accurate. Okay? We need to understand that.

How many of you have read any of Gary Smalley's stuff? Okay? And I don't even have any of his up here. He's not. Is he the guy that did the five love languages with that?

Someone else. Jerry Chapman. Jerry Chapman. Okay. Okay. Gary Smalley makes a point that scientifically, and I've never, you know, I'm not a scientist. His claim is that after birth, the brains in baby boys are subjected to an enzyme action that tends to separate the two lobes, two halves of the brain.

Okay? And this doesn't happen in baby girls. So at any given time, a man is typically only using half a brain.

Now, wait a minute. What? You knew it, didn't you? Now, that doesn't mean he's not thinking.

[ 27 : 03 ] Okay? But women tend to be able to incorporate. And, you know, we talk about left brain, right brain, and all of that. And they're able to incorporate both sides of the brain. The men usually just.

Now, his explanation. I just love it. His explanation is it probably was something God introduced after the fall in order to deal with things that were going to come up.

What's the man going to have to do, especially after the flood? What's the man going to have to do? You're going to have to kill some animals. And I love the way Gary Smalley describes it. He says, you know, what does a woman do when she sees Bambi?

Oh, he's so cute. Oh, he can't. They say when Bambi came out, deer hunting dropped by a significant percentage. Okay? Oh, what a beautiful little deer.

And Gary goes on. He says, well, what does a man do? He takes his 30-06, blows Bambi off the trail, cuts his head off, and hangs it on the wall. It takes only half a brain to do that, right?

[ 28 : 05 ] You can't be thinking about emotionally here. Why? Because you need to eat. You've got to eat Bambi. All right. Okay. So we need to understand that.

Look, I'm going to give you a biblical example of how women and men think different. Go back to 1 Samuel 1. 1 Samuel 1. Oh, brother.

I'm not going to get through the first point. Okay. 1 Samuel 1. And you know the story. That's Ruth. 1 Samuel. All right. Come on. My fingers are. There we go. The story of Samuel's birth.

Okay. And you know the story. Elkanah, the husband. Well, the first problem is he had two wives. Okay. That never seems to work out the best.

[ 29 : 04 ] But Penina and Hannah. Okay. So he gives gifts to them, right? In verse 5. But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion, for he loved Hannah.

But the Lord had shut up her womb. So Hannah can't have children. And so he gives her a little extra gift every year. Okay. Verse 6. And her adversary. Who do you think her adversary is?

The other wife. All right. Also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the Lord had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, so she provoked her.

Therefore she wept and did not eat. Then said Elkanah, her husband, to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? Okay.

See, he's only using half of his brain. You've got to remember that, right? Why weepest thou? And, of course, she says, he knows the answer, right?

[ 30 : 09 ] Because you're not able to have children, right? So what's he say? Does he say, oh, honey, I'm sorry. I know that you'd love to have children. And I feel so badly that we're not able to have these children.

You're not able to. I can. You know. But what does old Elkanah say? Why is thy heart grieved? Am not I better to thee than ten sons?

What a genius. There's that half of brain at work again. Right? Come on, guys.

You've got to learn that when your wife comes to you with something that's bothering her, she does not want you to fix it.

She just wants you to feel with her, to empathize and just love her. And that's such a hard lesson for us. But that's just something we need to learn.

[ 31 : 13 ] The Old Testament spelled this out. There's no way I'm going to get you through this message. Look at Leviticus chapter 15.

Here's just a little example. And here was something I learned. We already had small children. But it took me a while. And I, you know, while you're looking that up, Leviticus 15, starting in verse 19.

I am blessed beyond measure. My parents had a fantastic marriage. Linda's parents had a fantastic marriage. And we just kind of started emulating them. And we have a fantastic marriage.

It's just a wonderful, and it gets better every year. I mean, you hear that. It's almost, you know, but it's just true. And I'm not saying it's a gloat or anything. But it's just been wonderful.

And here was something that Linda helped me learn. And she had a book, Emotional Phases of a Woman's Life. Anybody ever seen that by Jean Lush? It's back from the 90s before most of you were born.

[ 32 : 28 ] But I needed to learn something about her body. And it had to do with a woman's cycle.

Okay? I knew that that happened, but I didn't really understand it all very well. And back in Leviticus, it's kind of interesting. Starting in chapter 15 and verse 19.

If a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days. And whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even.

And everything that she lies upon. And it goes on all these different rules. But let me paraphrase what God is telling his people under the law. When your wife goes through her cycle, don't touch her.

Isn't that what it says? That is what it says. Leave her alone. I mean, we're not under the law.

[ 33 : 33 ] You know, all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is what? Profitable. For doctrine. For reproof.

For correction. For instruction in righteousness. Believe me. I'm one of the last guys that's going to tell you to get back under the law. I hope you understand that. Okay?

But God wrote some things down. For example, he said if you have a vest, like a clay bowl. And it develops a crack. Throw it away. He didn't tell them why.

Why do you think he told them to do that? Well, there'd be bacteria growing in that crack. And it'd be unclean. It'd be unsafe. It could lead to food poisoning. He didn't have to tell them all of that.

He just said just throw that thing away. Okay? That's the law. Right? What did he tell them about the woman's period? Leave her alone for seven days.

[ 34 : 31 ] Why is that? I wanted to read all these. This is so good. Describing. And I'm just going to read a little bit of this.

Start on page 27. You can get these on eBay. I should put my books on eBay. You know, I go on there sometimes and I find the mystery like for 50 bucks. Who's buying it for that?

You can get them for \$8 from me. I'm selling in the wrong place. Dramatic hormonal changes occur. Think about it.

Why does Satan hate women? Why? Look at what they can do. Their body is equipped to produce new human beings.

It's just so amazing. And God keeps it up to date for a certain time of their life where, okay, nothing happened this month.

[ 35 : 29 ] We'll clean things out and start again and make it all ready for another opportunity. Okay? Over and over again. What an amazing thing that God has created in a woman.

But there's a whole process to this. Okay. So she starts with the surging tide. The first week of her menstrual cycle, just as her menses begins, estrogen advances.

And like the rising tide, floods her body in preparation for ovulation. It's passionate, energy-giving time. Jane springs out of bed, creeps down the stairs of the old farmhouse.

It's 5.30 a.m. But she feels too energetic to stay in bed. She spends half an hour in thought-provoking Bible study and prayer and still has plenty of time to set the table with a white linen cloth and special blue willow mugs for milk and adding the finishing touches.

Jane is confident in herself and her relationship with the Lord and all mankind. It's as though the universe is spinning to the beat of her song. What a lovely day, she whispers. I'm so glad I talked John into buying this place.

[ 36 : 33 ] Jane hurries up the stairs to wake youngsters. She pauses at the doorway to admire their angelic faces. Irritation threatens to mar her perfect day as she stoops to pick up the socks and jeans scattered about the room.

But she lets the minor frustration pass. After all, it's up to her to work with them on more tidiness. And I will, she promises herself. She drops a light kiss on each of their foreheads as she says, Time to wake up, darlings.

After sending a hubby and the child. And it goes on and on of how she feels that first week. And then you get to the second week and she's doing pretty good. And then you get to the, during week four.

She hears John pattering around downstairs. Her nerves grate with irritation. Her head throbs in pain. He's probably trying to make me feel guilty for sleeping in.

She mutters. But getting up is the last thing she wants to do this morning. It's almost as if she's afraid of what the day might hold. Finally, she rolls out of bed. Feeling listless and irritable, she staggers into the children's room.

[ 37 : 38 ] The little socks and jeans strewn about the room are not cute. But the children awake to their mom's exclamations. And what a mess. How many times do I have to tell you to put away your clothes?

And you know, we husbands, we're back in week one, right? What a sweet wife I've got. And then in week four, we're thinking, I'm not doing anything different than I did back then. What's wrong? We need to understand.

We need to live, dwell with them according to knowledge. Okay, let's talk about the children a little bit. I wish I had understood my children better.

We have six children. And I hope you're not thinking, unless it really turned out, you know, like, whoa. Some of you know our children. Some of you don't. I'm glad to report they all profess faith in Christ.

[ 38 : 41 ] I mean, to me, that's pretty much the main thing. They all attend a grace church. Five are married. They are raising their children.

26 grandchildren. Raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. So the Lord overruled my lack of understanding. And I wish I had known my children better.

Our first, Jessica. She's not here, so I can do this. I used to give the kids a quarter every time I mentioned them in a message. So that I, you know, recompense.

So I'd give them something for their trouble. What's the world's name? I just got this in the church mailbox the other day. Yankton School District's three- and four-year-old screening. It's free.

Can you believe that? Parents who are residents of Yankton School District have concerns about their three- or four-year-old child's development are invited to a schedule of free screening.

[ 39 : 44 ] Now, why do you think they're offering a free screening? Because a few years ago, they just started a district-wide preschool. Free!

Isn't that cool? What's wrong with you guys? We've already heard the preachers talk about it. The world wants your children as soon as they can get them. The sooner they can get them, the better in their mind.

They'd come to the hospital or the home birth or whatever and take them if they thought they could get away with it. They want your children. And we planned on homeschooling right from the start. So when our oldest got to be four years old, Jesse was four years old. And, of course, we already had purchased the reasonable facsimile reprints of McGuffey's readers.

Right? And those are really good. Teaching reading by telling the children, In Adam's fall, we sinned all. How do you like that?

[ 40 : 46 ] That's the kind of stuff they used to teach reading back in the early stages of our country. And Jessica was not having it.

Which just puzzled me because my mom was a school teacher and she didn't push us. But, and she only taught one year during my growing up years.

But, two years actually. When things got tough on a farm, okay, she'd go teach for a year. Never affected me much. But, but, but she, she would always have books around.

And I was reading, you know, Aesop's fairy tales by the time I was four. And so I thought, well, if I could do it, surely she can do it too. And so I'd sit there and she just, and then somebody, I don't know, we came across a book called *Better Late Than Early* by Raymond and Dorothy, wasn't it? More. Anybody heard of that? I mean, that's, they were the pioneers of the homeschool movement, modern homeschool movement in the country. And, and they're like, well, you know, if your boys don't read till they're like 10, there's no problem.

[ 42 : 04 ] They'll figure it out sooner or later. We set McGuffey's readers aside for a few years. And they point out, the Moors pointed out that a study was done among the Inuits or Eskimo peoples up in Alaska before they introduced the mandatory public education and after.

And they found that after they introduced it, all of a sudden all the children needed eyeglasses. Why? Because the eyes aren't developed fully enough to do this intense kind of work until you get to be 8 or 10 years old.

And so here they're all being forced to do this and it's detrimental to their eyes. So that was one lesson that we did learn while their children were either young or didn't have them all yet.

But here's another one that I really wish I could have applied better. I wish I had understood my children better in this area. And that is the extreme individuality and sensitivity of children.

And we didn't have our children all that close together, usually, you know, two, two and a half years apart. But when you have several, you know, little children close together, you tend to treat them like a little herd of people rather than individuals.

[ 43 : 32 ] At least I found out. And you tend to, you know, you want to treat them the same, right? Everybody's got to be equal. And so you tend to deal with them the same way. Well, no.

That doesn't work too well. And you need to learn the individuality. A good verse for that, Proverbs chapter 22, verse 6. You know it, I'm pretty sure. But let's just take a look at it quickly.

And I'm sure you've heard this interpretation. You know, a lot of times I've heard people say it this way. Train up a child in the way they should go. And when they're old, they shall not depart from it. And then they end that verse by saying, I sure hope my children get old enough so that that still will come true in their life.

Okay? When they are old, they will not depart. They've been living like the devil for the last 20 years. But when they are old. No, that's not the point of that verse.

[ 44 : 33 ] As I understand, I've had it explained. And I think it's a valid interpretation. Train up a child in the way he should go. In the sense of find out the direction of their bent, their abilities, their way of thinking and so forth.

Find the way they should go. And if it's a natural inclination for them, you know, other than sin, of course. But if they're bent towards, like say in a physical thing.

We had one boy that he was like Paul. He could take anything apart. But he could put it back together and it worked. Okay?

So we started, you know, giving him stuff that related to mechanics and things like that. So find out. Learn. Start to learn the individuality of children and their extreme sensitivity.

Now what do I mean by sensitivity? Well, the good news is children are very resilient. They really are. I mean, I'm not recommending it.

[ 45 : 49 ] But you can mess up big time. And if you get back on track, it's amazing how kids will adjust to that. And they'll be right back with you. That's the good news.

The bad news is they tend to remember all the times you messed up. And they don't mind reminding you about that. Okay? I was out with Jason one time.

We were cutting firewood. And, you know, if you guys, how many of you cut firewood? That's a real trick. You know, you got to get that undercut. You got to get a certain direction. And then there's twisting in the tree.

You got to be able to read that, you know. And the long and the short of it is I got my bar caught to the point where it bent the bar. And, yeah, wow.

And Jason, I don't know, he's probably 16. He says, Dad, I just want you to remember this. The next time I wreck something.

[ 46 : 52 ] But on a more serious note, kids can be easily traumatized without us realizing that we're doing it to them. And that's something I don't think I learned well enough.

They can really be traumatized. I won't give any examples with my kids, but I'll give you an example with me. And I grew up long before the modern age of homeschooling, okay. But I kind of had a

taste of it because we went to a country school.

I literally, now I'm not kidding. We walked through the snow to school uphill both ways. It's true. There was a dip from our house down. So no matter what, if you're coming or going from school, and it was winter, and it snowed back then, not like nowadays.

You were walking to school uphill both ways through the snow, okay. But when I got there, the only people there were me, my two brothers, and my sister. There was no other kids.

[ 47 : 48 ] And the teacher. And so we were kind of homeschooled by our teacher. And, oh, I can tell you about my teacher. I was traumatized by her. She would get you, to get you to learn, she would stand you in front of you, in our case, the brothers and sister, and embarrass you to tears.

Oh, it was awful. That's this one over here. That's like, I don't have time for the funny joke.

By the way, I used up all my funny jokes in South Dakota, and I've got half of you were there. So I can't reuse all of those good jokes. It's a bummer. But anyway.

And then, you know, I'm not blaming my folks. You know how people blame, well, what was your mother like? Maybe it's her that's caused you all of your problems.

No. We have to learn to deal with some things with the Lord, right, no matter what. But they closed the country school because it was just when my brother graduated from the eighth grade, there were only three of us.

[ 48 : 58 ] And so they closed the school, sent us to town. And it was traumatic for me. It really was. I didn't think of it that way at the time. But looking back, it really messed me up in some serious ways.

I mean, I started going to town school in third grade, third and fourth grade. And these kids were, you know, curse words I'd never heard. I didn't hear them talk like that at home.

That's where I learned I didn't use them, but I could tell they weren't good. But that's where I first heard them. I distinctly, and I know we've got children in the crowd, I distinctly remember. I'll try to be discreet here.

I distinctly remember in the fourth grade, one young fourth grader talking about his sexual exploits with his sister. I remember, this is in 1964, 1964, when Johnson was running for president.

I remember that. I remember when Kennedy was shot. Right where I was sitting. I was in the country school yet. I remember exactly where I was sitting. And they sent us home.

[ 50 : 09 ] But I was traumatized by that. I remember going to a, I won't tell you all the details, but I remember going to a slumber party for, I think we were probably junior high.

It was our class from public school. So, at the Baptist minister's parsonage, his son was in my class, in their basement.

Now, what could be safer than a slumber party at a Baptist minister's basement? And, I can't tell you what these guys came up with. Just traumatized me.

Oh. Okay. The next point with, and I'm going to try and finish this up. I got one more main point. But, under, I wish I had understood my children better.

The next point is almost a cliché. They grow up so fast. And, I wish that parents with young children, that you just, you just grasp that.

[ 51 : 19 ] Psalm 103, 15 and 16. As for man, his days are as grass.

As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone. And the place thereof shall know it. No more. Those kids are gone before you know it.

I've never heard a parent say, I wish I hadn't spent so much time with the children. You ever heard any parents say that? And you always have this debate.

Well, I don't have that quantity time, but we have quality time. Well, good. Well, good. But, did you know that from a biblical standpoint, quantity time is quality time?

Teach these things to your children. When you rise up. When you walk by the way. When you sit in your house. When you lie down to sleep.

[ 52 : 22 ] What part of the day are we missing here where you're not with your children, by the way? That sounds like a lot of quantity of time.

And why is quantity time such quality time? Because you don't know when something's going to happen with your kid that needs your attention physically, emotionally, or some other way.

You need to be there, particularly in those younger years. Okay, my third point.

I wish I had understood myself better. And we can go through this quickly. Our identity in Christ.

Now, I actually was first exposed to the basics of identity truth before we had children.

But it took me a while to grasp it. And I just wanted to show you a few books that I think are pretty good. Here's a, literally a, no pun intended, classic Christianity by Bob George.

[ 53 : 25 ] Again, I'm sure I don't agree with everything they say. But he's kind of one of the first pioneers of, I call it the alternate grace movement. Because some of these authors understand the Pauline doctrine of grace, not dispensationally, but by application.

Now, wait a minute. What's more important to our everyday life, knowing how to rightly divide the word of truth, or knowing how to apply the principles of grace that we learn in Paul's epistles? Isn't that the whole point? And I think they've kind of bypassed, in my opinion, they've bypassed the important element of right division and gone right to the candy.

Right? And they've gotten right in there to the application of grace. So that's, you know, good for them as far as they've gone. Here's Steve McVeigh, grace walk. And then he's being a little ironic here, grace rules.

And what he means by that is grace rules. Okay. I have found these very helpful for kids. There's none better than turkeys and eagles. Anybody ever read turkeys and eagles by Peter Lord?

[ 54 : 36 ] I don't know if it's in print yet. You might have to go on Amazon and, you know, find it there. But it basically explains that most Christians who, by God's design, are eagles, are living like turkeys.

And it just very graphically shows how ridiculous we are sometimes not realizing who we really are in Christ. And, you know, if you've got younger kids, you need to get this one and use it.

Very helpful. Galatians 2.20 and Colossians 3.1-4. You know the passages. You know the thing, right?

And so I'm going to read it for you. Nobody even got that joke. Where are you? You know the thing? All right.

Galatians. I don't want to get political here. We'll have to take another few minutes. Okay. I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me in the life which I now live in the flesh.

[ 55 : 49 ] I live by the faith. Not in the Son of God. We do that. The faith of the Son of God. It's his faithfulness. Living through us. Who loved us and loved me and gave himself for me.

And Colossians. Whose message was that at ours? Was that yours, Paul? On our identity with Christ. Colossians chapter 3.

It's one of our favorites. This is one Linda taught the kids to memorize. If you then be risen with Christ, seek those things. By the way, that's since you be risen with Christ. Seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead. And your life is hid with Christ in God. I want to tell you there's no safer place to be than to be hid with Christ in God. It doesn't get any better than that. When Christ who is our life. And look at the wording. It's not when Christ who gives us life. Now that's true. But it's Christ who is our life.

[ 56 : 52 ] When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. A second thing I wish I had understood better when raising the children.

And this truly was something I didn't know about when the kids were little. They were all grown up by this time. And that is, how many of you know who Michael Pearl is?

How many of you have been to his place? Oh yeah, Jared was. I've been to his place. Okay, that's my. Now I don't agree. He's Baptist. But he's better than a lot of Baptists theologically.

He's pretty good. He actually believes the gap theory. He calls it the gap fact. It's kind of interesting. But the science of addiction in the brain.

And I highly recommend this. He's dealing with how addictions, various addictions, affect our brain chemically. And he does it all with secular scientific data.

[ 57 : 51 ] First of all, because they're really the only ones who have really calculated some of these figures that he has in here. And then he shows the biblical viewpoint of what do we do with this information about how addiction affects the brain.

And, of course, he gets heavily into the idea of addiction of pornography and how that affects the brain. But he points out and he calls them happy chemicals.

You know, our brain is able to produce or something in our body produces chemicals. Dopamine. Okay, I mean, you heard of dopamine. All right. That's one happy chemical. Okay.

You feel good when you get dopamine surge in your brain. Right? Serotonin. That's, remember, that's that calming one. Oxytocin. Endorphins.

So these are the various different things can stimulate these chemicals in our brain to give us basically different sensations and even emotions.

[ 58 : 54 ] And it's just amazing from a biblical standpoint of how that all works. But he points out some facts that have been discovered, like I say, from secular studies about the actual effects of different things to these substances.

And, again, trying to be discreet here, for just a normal human existence to go from zero to 100, that's the scale. And so he says the highest release of these happy chemicals in the brain is human sexuality, normal human intercourse.

Okay? And so that's 100. So it's zero to 100. And then he points out, normal everyday living, you know, you're living a happy life, doing good. That release is about a 10%.

Okay? So you feel good about just life, right? Alcohol can shoot you up over 200%. Did you know that? Yeah, wow.

That's interesting. Methamphetamines put you over 1,250%. Do you think God designed our brains to be functioning with that level of chemical wash being sent over it?

[ 60 : 13 ] No. I mean, just doesn't nature itself teach you, like Paul says with the men and the hair and so forth. Doesn't nature teach you that if the highest experience that God created normally for us to have as humans is our 100%, doesn't it seem like it's something that's not quite right if you're trying to get up over 100% some way?

Pornography can shoot you into that 200 to 250 level. To the point where it makes it very difficult to experience the normal 100% the way God intended you to experience it.

Okay? And so now you need to find something else, right? Something gives me more of a rush. Another interesting thing about these facts are the normal dopamine dose is in nature naturally dissipates or is pulled out or is counteracted by other chemicals within a few minutes.

So it's like God says, okay, I'll let you have a little fun here for a while but not forever. Okay, we're going to just give you this and then you're back to normal. Cocaine lasts one to two hours of the effect.

Meth acts eight to 12 hours before the brain is cleansed. Pornography, other than, you know, there might be guys or gals, I understand, which kind of puzzles me, that sit there for hours and hours.

[ 61 : 57 ] But just that action can last four to five hours. So you're getting this constant. And what Mr. Pearl points out is there is a certain portion of the brain that, and again, these are scientific studies done by secular scientists.

But the particular part of the brain that pornography affects the most is actually linked to the area of your brain that processes rewards and motivation.

And because of that, it's basically your center of moral values. So isn't that great? You spend a lot of time with pornography, you lose the ability to process moral values.

Well, I guess it shouldn't surprise us that that's the way it works. What does Psalm 101, verse 2, tell us?

I will set no wicked thing before my eyes. That was written a long time before some of the modern garbage that we have.

[ 63 : 13 ] But it's that principle that certainly exists. That's one thing. And when our kids were all grown up and we got access to it, I invited them all over and we sat down and watched this.

And, like I say, I highly recommend it. To me, what it does, and he points out that our brains tend to, you know, you've got your neurons and you've got your synapses that make the connections.

And then certain things will follow a certain track the more you do it. And so you're literally like you burn a CD to use that old technology we've been talking about.

You're literally burning whatever that particular addiction is into your brain. And in order for you to deal with that problem, you can't just go unburn that.

It's there now. You have to burn in new tracks for Scripture, for the remedy to these things into your brain so that your brain becomes accustomed to following that track now rather than the one that it was following before.

[ 64 : 24 ] I mean, this is just, like I say, it's scientific data, but doesn't that ring true with what the Scripture, Romans 12, you know, the renewing of your mind.

Your mind needs to be renewed. So I wish I had known more about the physical effects of various addictions on the brain. When the kids were young, we could have been teaching those things to them.

And, you know, just think of it. Use that as a temptation check and balance. Just think, next time you're tempted in some area of addiction, just say, do I really want to go down that track again? Do I want to burn that track a little deeper today? Just use that mental image as a deterrent and say, no, I don't want to go down.

I don't want to burn that track in there deeper. Very, very good stuff to understand. And the last one I'm just going to pretty much skip because it would take a whole message to talk about.

[ 65 : 29 ] And I might hurt someone's feelings. Particularly mine. Okay. You can ask me about it later. All right. Praise the Lord.

He gives us, as long as we're breathing, living and breathing, he gives us opportunity to go back and rethink some of the ways we've been thinking about things, you know.

Oh, you haven't had the greatest marriage? Hey, why don't you start now? Well, it's wonderful. A great marriage is wonderful. You messed up with your kids in some way? Hey, they're still around? Look them up. Say, hey, you know, I'm sorry about doing this. Here's what I really think is important in life. They'll forgive you. It's amazing.

So let's just use these past mistakes to spur us on to looking ahead. Looking ahead to what God has for us in the future.

[ 66 : 27 ] It's a wonderful path out there for believers who just really want to walk with the Lord and bring their families along. Let's pray. Father, thank you for your word. Thank you for ministering to us in so many ways.

Lord, we know that your word is the source of all truth that you desire us to know. And we pray that we might take it in, learn it well, and then be ready to share it with others.

We pray all that in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.