

“Ministry as a Family”

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[0 : 0 0] But yeah, so I got a variety of stuff from Grace Family Ministries, including a hymn book, and this right here, this is written by a family friend of ours, Sheila Wilkinson.

This is a children's book. It's a biblical worldview of economics. Basically, there's two groups of turtles that live in the same town. You got the gimme-getters. They're the Marxist socialists that want free stuff from the government.

And then you've got the wannaworkers. They're the capitalists. They understand how life works. And so if you would like a copy for every one of your grandkids, come and get it. So she gave me a whole case of them, and everything's for free.

And so, of course, we have a donation box as you're compelled of the Lord to partner together with us. So go ahead and put your Bibles up. And so if you got a batch yesterday, let's give somebody else a chance today.

All right, Bibles up? Okay. I'll give you the reference. I'll slow it go. Go. And you know the drill. All right? Joshua 4, 21 through 24. Go. Joshua 4, 21 through 24.

[1 : 0 2] And as you're turning in your Bibles there, okay, yeah, my kid stands up here. The pastor, other pastor's kid. Okay, then Joel Fink. All right, let's give somebody else, let's give some of the poor and huddled masses a chance here.

All right. All right, David, go for it. You got it. Let's see. Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying, Can your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What are these stones?

And then he shall let his children know, saying, Israel, cross over this Jordan on dry land. And the Lord your God, dry up the water, let's go before your eyes, before you, until you be across over, as the Lord your God is in heaven.

So let's see. Let's be right up. Let's see. Let's see. Let's see. That all peoples of the earth may fear the Lord, may worship him forever, know that his hand is mighty.

And that's actually one of GFM's ten biblical convictions as far as the stalwart faithfulness of God's providence in history. All right, give him a hand. Give him a hand. And so you can keep it or give away to a friend.

[2 : 2 5] All right, Bible's up. All right, here we go. All right, you got to put the pages up, so no cheating. All right, Bible's up. Here we go. 1 Thessalonians 2, 11 through 12.

Go. 1 Thessalonians 2, 11 and 12. And what's fascinating about this text of Scripture, as you're turning there, this is actually one of my favorite texts of Scripture to preach on Father's Day.

Here we go. All right, 1 Thessalonians 2, 11 and 12. Go for it. As you know, child, in your church, it's a change of faith. And Christ, everyone is here. As a father, they will not be here.

That you are the greatest of God. You are the greatest of God. You are the greatest of God. You are the greatest of God. There you go. Speaking of Father's Day, you can give this One Nation Under God book to your dad for early Father's Day or Christmas gift or whatever.

But, yeah, so I'm grateful. I mean, that's some really good stuff. And so thank you. All right, one more. Bible's up. Psalm 78, 1 through 8.

[3 : 23] Go. Psalm 78, 1 through 8. This is actually the first and the longest of the historical Psalms. And any time that you see this in Scripture, just take notice.

Because history is very important. All right, Mrs. Beachy over here. So she got it. Tara? Psalm 78, verses 1 through 8.

Oh, I was looking for 108. No, that's only Psalm 119. So, yeah. Oh, you know, his brother already got one.

You need to spread the love here, bub. Psalm 78. Actually, just go ahead and skip down to like verse 4 or so. Or just, you know, hey, you know what you're doing.

So go for it. You're familiar with this text, I'm sure. We will not hide them from their children. Calling to the generations to come the praises of the Lord. And his strength and his wonderful works that he has done.

[4 : 22] For he established the testimony of Israel. And appointed a law in Israel. Which he commanded our fathers. That they should make them known to their children. That the generations of time might know them.

The children who would be born. That they may arise and declare them to their children. That they may set their hope in God. And not forget the works of God. That keep his commandments. And may not be like their fathers.

A stubborn and rebellious generation. A generation that did not set his heart right. And whose spirit was not able to die. Oh, that's good. Very good. Thank you. Give her a hand.

All right. All right. Love it. And so, yeah. Once again, just everything on the GFM table is free. I mean, the Lord has blessed us in manifold measure. And just even our financial services company has hooked us up with, you know, \$500 for this weekend, next weekend.

And so, and hence, you know, if you don't have a thriving financial shirt, they're great, comfy, relaxed shirts. And as well as all the other resources. And some of the resources I'll highlight during our session here as well.

[5 : 27] So, anyway. Let's go ahead and get into it, shall we? Okay. Let's go ahead and open our Bibles to Philippians chapter 2. We're going to zero in this morning on ministry as a family.

Living as the salt and light moral back pressure of truth amidst rebel darkness. In Philippians chapter 2. Let's go ahead and start in verse 12.

Invite you to follow along in your Bibles. In fact, let's actually go ahead and stand together as you're able to do so. I know some of you have kids on your laps and it's fine. You can stay put. But let's go ahead and stand together as we read Philippians 2 verses 12 through 24.

Follow along in your Bibles as I read aloud from mine from the New King James Version of the Bible. Hear the Apostle Paul writing by divine inspiration of God the Holy Spirit to the church in ancient Philippi. And to every one of us as members of the church of the body of Christ in this age of grace.

In Philippians 2 and verse 12, the word of God says, Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

[6 : 30] For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for his good pleasure. Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. For the same reason, you also be glad and rejoice with me.

But I trust in the Lord Jesus, in verse 19, to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one like-minded who will sincerely care for your state, for all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel. Therefore, I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me, in verse 24.

But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly. May the Lord add his blessing to the reading of his word. Amen? You may be seated.

[7 : 50] What you do for God beyond your home will typically never be greater than what you practice with God within your home. That's the poignant words of Dr. Timothy Paul Jones from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

In the book called Trained in the Fear of God. And I'll share that with you again. It says, what you do for God beyond your home will typically never be greater than what you practice with God within your home.

Elsewhere in the book, another guy, Michael Wilder, he says this, that developing globally-minded missional families, it's a goal that every church and every Christian family should share.

This will not happen by accident. And it is unlikely to happen unless churches and families work in partnership with one another. God designed families to be missional, or as I describe it, to be living on mission in Christ.

He says, and God has blessed your family so that your children, that children yet unborn and nations yet unknown, would ascribe glory to their Redeemer and King.

[8 : 55] And this is what I describe as the importance of churches and families working in partnership or co-championing and being strengthened together as co-champions of the next generation.

In other words, the church is responsible to equip the home for advancing the cause of Christ to the ends of the earth on the grassroots level, beginning right at home. And the family, the hearth and home on the grassroots, the Christian home and family is responsible for being actively engaged in the context of the local church and therefore enriching the church as together we live on mission to the praise of God's glory in Christ Jesus.

And so what's exciting about this text of Scripture in Philippians 2 is that we can call a host of biblical principles here that speak to the importance of ministry as a family.

And namely, it is built upon, well, about 10 dynamics. We'll grab right out of this text of Scripture. And let's get right into it in verse 12. Here the Scripture says very clearly, Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, worked out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to do for his good pleasure. One of the fascinating truths about the historical narratives of Holy Scripture as we come to the book of Philippians this morning is the all-glorious reality that the Word of God, these historical events, they transpired in real time and space.

[10 : 36] And so I say that because of the tsunami of secularism that we're bombarded with in our culture. We're so prone to relegating Holy Scripture to a Bible story land.

You know, just the myths and the fairy tales of a time gone by. And it's so very easy to think that, okay, that there's the Bible story land and then there's real history.

No, that's not biblical Christianity, dear ones. And what's fascinating because regardless of our educational background, we all live in this world and we're so prone to relegating truth to a Jesus box of a sacred realm of sorts that we might enjoy merely on a Sunday morning unless there's something more significant or more important for our family to be engaged in, especially whether, you know, if it's a ball game or a tournament or these types of things.

I mean, increasingly, as you're well aware, we're living in a pagan culture even here in the United States. And so, but what was biblical Christianity is very different because it speaks to everything in life.

And so what's fascinating about the book of Philippians is that this church is situated in the city of Philippi. And it was in a region known as Macedonia.

[12 : 03] And it was the first place where the light of the gospel was established as a beachhead of God's grace there in the continent of Europe. And you notice that the name of the book, the root is Philip.

Well, there was a guy by the name of Philip of Macedon. And I'm sure you're perhaps much more familiar with his boy. His boy was a guy named Alexander the Great.

And what's fascinating about this city here, it was a Roman colony situated along the Ignatian Way, major east-west highway there in the region of Macedonia.

And so it was a strategic beachhead of the light of the gospel to be established. And so this letter is written by the Apostle Paul to them as well as to us as members of the church, the body of Christ.

And so we see here in verse 12, he's exhorting them. And this whole book is about the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ, his preeminence as our life, as our leader, as our goal, and as our power and strength.

[13 : 10] And so it really is a thank you card of sorts, expressing gratitude to them for their partnership in the gospel. And, of course, that's going to give us some insights into how we can proactively, intentionally cultivate ministry discipline as a family.

Because right here in verses 12 and 13, we see particularly on the heels of the previous verses, 5 through 11, as far as the Lord Jesus, that one day that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

We see that in verses 10 and 11, to the glory of God the Father. I heard one preacher earlier this summer, he said that if the risen Lord Jesus Christ were to appear on stage right here this morning, you and I would not immediately run up here and give him a high five.

It would be just like we sang before. Holy is the Lord of hosts. We would be broken in awestruck humility before the sovereign majesty of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

And so in light of that, you see in verse 12, the apostle Paul is exhorting them and us to do this. He says, therefore, my beloved. So he's recognizing them as fellow members of the family of God.

[14 : 33] He says, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only. Isn't that what we want for our kids? To not merely obey and do the right thing, but to take personal ownership of truth, the internal reality of truth in the depths of their heart and soul, knowing that they live their lives, coram deo, before the face of God, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, he says.

He says, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Of course, we understand that why we do what we do is not in order to get saved or stay saved, but because we are saved.

It's called grace. And notice what he says right at the end there. He says, do so with fear and trembling. If there is one thing that the modern church in America, even the conservative evangelical church, grace churches included, yes, indeed, grace churches.

And so regardless of our background, our upbringing, our church experience, what is desperately needed is not altogether different from what A.W. Tozer said some 75 years ago is a fresh glimpse of the majesty of who God is.

It's called awe and reverence, dear ones. And so this is where ministry as a family, first off, is built upon, is what I describe as a doxological passion versus a man-centered legalism.

[16 : 03] And so you see right here, it says, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that, just as Hebrew says, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Our God is a consuming fire. And once again, I'm just reminded of Ted Tripp and his fabulous book on parenting called *Shepherding a Child's Heart*.

He said that, you know, therein, that, hey, if you have teenagers, he says, especially if you have teenagers, you need to read the ancient Hebrew prophets with your teenagers, because there is very little to anything else quite like the Hebrew prophets that strikes a reverential fear and awe of Almighty God into the hearts of young people.

Now, regardless of your season of life, if young people need that, don't you think that the rest of us need it as well? Hallelujah. May it be so indeed.

Because look what it says in verse 13. It says, for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for his good pleasure. We see sovereignty and volition in tandem in that God ordains the ends, he ordains the means, and that he gives us the desire and the power to do so.

[17 : 16] And why we do what we do is not in order to get saved, like I said, or stay saved, but because we are saved. And so how can we cultivate this? And so I submit to you one of the most significant ways, sorry, spiritual disciplines, that we can cultivate a doxological passion.

In other words, a passion for the glory of God. And that's where it starts, because a merely horizontal compassion or a burden for souls, put it this way, that's very commendable.

But listen, sometimes life hurts really bad. And there must be something bigger and greater than just a merely, you know, compassion for people.

Let's face it, sometimes we don't really care about people. All right? You know, it's kind of like Moses. God, I'm not going with these people anymore. You know, they're moaning, groaning, griping and complaining, murmuring.

You remember the wilderness wanderings? And he said, I'm not going with these people anymore. It's kind of like ladies, when your husband comes home from work and you say, deal with your kids. All right?

[18 : 22] It's like, all right. So in a situation like that, it's easy to check out. But remember what Moses, the Lord, he says, I'm not going with them unless you're going with me.

And then one point, and that interchange in the book of Exodus, Moses, he said, I beseech thee, show me your glory.

And the Lord gave him just a majestic vision of who he is. And so point being is that there must be something greater than the horizontal left and right.

We need to go vertical, as it were. And I submit to you, one of the most significant ways that we can cultivate that, regardless of our season of life. And so whether or not you have young kids at home, the holidays are coming, especially, hey, your kids, grandkids, great grandkids come in and say, hey, we're going to, we're going to crack the book.

We're going to open up the word of God and we're going to sing perhaps some Christmas carols or some, you know, hymns of praise to the Lord. You know, for example, years ago, about three years ago, four years ago, this Christmas.

[19 : 30] It was Christmas Eve around thereabouts and my mom was pretty much in, you know, hospice care. And, you know, at one point, my mom asked, you know, so I put it this way, you know, we sang some Christmas carols with mom and I think one of our only musicians at the time was Elijah.

He had a ukulele and so we were doing, you know, Hark the Herald Angels Sing and some other just great anthems of the Christian faith and celebrating incarnation of our Savior. And then immediately, Elijah broke into Phil Wickham's Living Hope.

I was like, well, this isn't a Christmas song per se, but it was glorious though. It's like, and we sang it and it turns out the Lord gave us the opportunity to also sing that at mom's funeral.

So point being is that whatever situation, season of life, season of the year, just a tremendous opportunity. Basically, as far as what I call as far as PM spiritual disciplines, particularly as far as what the saints of old champion, especially the 17th century Puritans coming out of the Reformation era, as far as family worship and these types of things, as far as, hey, read the Bible, sing, pray together as a family.

And I submit to you, this is one of the greatest ways that we can cultivate a doxological, a passion for the glory of God. Look at verse 14 here. Verse 14.

[20 : 55] It says right here, Do all things without complaining and disputing that you may become blameless and harmless children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation among whom you shine as lights in the world.

And it says, it says there, Holding fast the word of life so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. Particularly, you see in verses 14, you see where the Apostle Paul, he's speaking of the importance of our godly character being resident in the heart and the life of these saints.

And he says that you may become blameless and harmless and say, wait a second, I thought they were positionally complete in Christ, blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ and seated in the heavenly places.

Yes, indeed, they're redeemed, forgiven, blessed with the gift of imputed righteousness in Christ Jesus. But that's the positional identity of members of the church, the body of Christ in this age of grace.

But that doesn't mean that's necessarily the practical reality. Because foundational doctrine of these identity truths are absolutely necessary in order for us to live out the functional doctrine of the practical reality of life in Christ Jesus.

[22 : 09] So he's exhorting them toward godliness and holiness and elsewhere like in 2 Corinthians 7 or it talks about therefore, beloved, it says, having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

And so in other words, he understands as he's speaking of here like in the end of verse 16 that I may rejoice in the day of Christ. In other words, there is coming a day in tandem with the pre-tribulational rapture of the church of the body of Christ that every member of the church will give an account of their lives.

Our lives will flash before our eyes as it were and we will give an account of our lives before the Lord Jesus Christ at what's called the bima, the judgment seat of Christ.

And so in other words, the ministry as a family is not only built upon a doxological passion but also stewardship responsibility. And this is very much in contrast to rogue unaccountability and that's a serious issue in the modern church as far as the need for integrity and accountability and these types of things as far as in particular here is that Paul, he's emphasizing the importance that hey, there is a time in which what we do with our time, our talent, and our treasure, how we invested our lives or in eternity or in the temporal reality of sensual lust or just hey, me, myself, and I because that's my favorite subject.

And listen, God has not mocked, dear ones. So in other words, he's emphasizing here the importance of living our lives before the face of God.

[23 : 49] And so therefore, I submit to you that is one of the most significant ways that we can be proactive at cultivating stewardship responsibility and it flows out of the reality that hey, the word of God is sufficient.

The sufficiency of scripture is such that God's word speaks to everything in life. Ministry is not merely relegated to some soul winning evangelistic crusade, as it were, or just being some church planting missionary going cross-cultural in Southeast Asia.

But listen, if we're going to do great things for God over there, it must be built upon living on mission in Christ here, dear ones. And so regardless of what we do for a living, as far as whether as a butcher, baker, candlestick maker, as far as a mechanic or a farmer, you name it, or similar to that song that some of my family sang last night as far as godly men from the, what was it, from the Wall Street broker to, you know, just all those different names, different kinds of what stations of life people do for a living.

So regardless of what we do day in and day out, be God's man, be God's woman, as far as regardless of our season of life, understanding that scripture speaks to absolutely every direction of the compass as it were.

and therefore apply the word of God to all of life. And frankly, there's a booklet on our table. It's an 80-question biblical worldview quiz and if those of you that are familiar with the truth product from Focus on the Family, Dr. Del Tackett, fabulous resource.

[25 : 21] Lori and I took an entire year going through that when our kids were young. We put them down for the night and we'd get through maybe sometimes just half of the 60-minute tour and there was like 12, 13 of them and it was just fabulous stuff and eventually it came to a point and it was like what are we going to do with this?

We can't keep this to ourselves. And so whether it's great resources like that or the late Francis Schaeffer, Dr. David Noble, Erwin Lutzer and just a lot of great resources as far as cultivating our understanding of our stewardship responsibility before God and I would submit to you one of the things to consider is this.

As far as the testimony of your life is consider what kind of testimony what will your grandkids when they're 85 years old what will your grandkids tell their grandkids and great-grandkids about what it was like growing up in the early 21st century?

Well, early to mid we're getting there, right? what was it like growing up in your family? Tell me about grandpa. Tell me about grandma.

Tell me about the difference that the Lord Jesus Christ made. Maybe you're a first-generation Christian. Maybe you're just coming to understand more truths than the word of God or maybe you're the first-generation in your family as far as being invested in parent-led home-based family discipleship, homeschooling, these types of things or just tell the glories of God to the next generation and consider that.

[27 : 02] But look at the zero end in verse 17. It says, yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all for the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

So Paul, he's in prison and so he's understanding that, hey, that his life is not about himself. In the book of Acts, he says in Acts 20, 24, this is Dr.

Luke in his Journal of the Lives and Times of the Apostles there, the Apostle Paul, he says that but none of these things, he's recounting the adverse circumstances of his life that the Lord had allowed into his life for his glory and for Paul's good and for the good of the saints to whom he was ministering.

He says, but none of these things move me, neither do I count my life dear unto myself. but so that I may finish my race, my course with joy, joy and gladness, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify of the gospel, the grace of God.

He understood like similar to what Oswald Chambers from my utmost for his highest described as far as he understood that his life was to be basically a drink offering of praise unto the Lord.

[28 : 15] In Romans 12 it speaks of like to present our bodies unto the Lord as a living sacrifice or as the Francis Habergall as far as the old hymn writer says, take my life and let it be consecrated Lord to thee.

Because he says in verse 18, for the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me. So ministry as a family is built upon a doxological passion, stewardship responsibility, but also a joy filled sacrifice.

And this is very much in contrast to grumpy selfishness because we're all selfish. like it was emphasized in the panel discussion yesterday. And so one of the best ways to cultivate a passion for joy filled sacrifice and teaching our kids and our grandkids that hey, life is not about you or your happiness.

Life is about the glory of God. And is this, is like it was mentioned already yesterday as far as the value of missionary biographies. Yes, imperfect people and yes, there's some whacked out crazy stuff that many people did that over my dead body would we ever do.

But having said that, there were a lot of good things that did happen in the testimonies of the early Christian martyrs or just other, you know, missionary biographies like Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret or Through Gates of Splendor or Borden of Yale or even just the animated series of the Torchlighter, you know, just DVDs.

[29 : 42] I mean, just these are powerful testimonies to really to remind our children, remind ourselves that joy, the joy-filled sacrifice from man's perspective, oh, it's not worth it.

But much rather the point is, is he worthy? And we must honor the Lord in every arena of our life. And certainly not just go win the world for Christ and let our kids go to hell as it were, but honor the Lord because scripture is sufficient for everything in life and not merely soul winning.

Look in verse 19, it says, but I trust in the Lord Jesus. Look at this dependency of Paul upon Christ. But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state.

But look over to the beginning of verse 24. He repeats the same phrase. He said, but I trust in the Lord. Here, this ministry as a family is built upon dependent trust versus self-reliance.

Because listen, as Americans, this is a very difficult thing for many of us to get down. That as far as, yes, there is the quintessential American spirit, the rugged individualist, as far as blazing a trail in the wilderness.

[31 : 06] In many respects, God has called every one of us to a similar dynamic. But in doing, by doing so, we do so by living in total dependency, not upon self, but on the Lord Jesus Christ and his word.

And certainly we need to, just as we see right here, but I trust in the Lord Jesus. He has some aspirations. Hey, I want to send Timothy here to you so that he can minister to you so that I also may be encouraged when I hear about what God is doing in your life.

Every one of us, I submit to you, that's one of the most significant ways that we can be sensitive to God's leading, guiding, and direction. And like the old adage goes, God save me from the ministry opportunities that you're not calling me to.

And hence the life of faith. And so cultivate dependent trust. How do we do so? Well, like Dr.

Eddie Bedore taught us back at Berean Bible Institute years ago when I was in Bible college. He says there's no shortcuts to learning. It takes hard work.

[32 : 21] Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. And that's where spiritual disciplines, spiritual disciplines, you know, we're not talking about some type of man-centered legalism. Spiritual disciplines are Christ-centered, Christ-dependent methods, as it were, to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

Discipline yourself to godliness. And one of the most significant ways that we found just as we were exhorted and challenged by the late Don Webb, the author of Basic Bible Doctrines, you know, it was, you know, he told us about the one-year Bible as far as, hey, you make time for what's important for you.

I understand. Sometimes the press of life prohibits, you know, this weekend is obviously just very, you know, everything's all out of whack and just we're ready for a Sunday afternoon nap, you know, whatever.

But you understand. There's flexibility in life and there's ebb and flow. But as far as what's your normal? What's your normal? And just the simplicity as far as cultivating morning spiritual disciplines, as far as reading through the entirety.

I guarantee you, if we do not discipline ourselves by the grace of God and read through the entirety of the word of God, there's vast swaths of scripture that you will seldom, if ever, read. And that's shameful.

[33 : 33] It's not virtuous. And so that's the issue as far as, but also other avenues. One of the things I encourage young and old to do is that, hey, write stuff down.

Keep a prayer journal. I mean, what that forces you to do is to slow down. As Chuck Swindoll said before that, you know, silence and solitude before the Lord is, you know, the absence thereof, it translates into lack of spiritual depth in our lives.

Lack of spiritual depth. Superficiality in relationships and conversations and these types of things. You know, what do we talk about? You know, what's important to us in these things? Yes, you know, there's fun things we enjoy, you know, in life and these types of things, but that's not the sum and substance of our passions or ought not to be.

And hence, you know, reading, you know, also other good robust devotionals and books and like a host of the variety of resources that we have on our table very intentionally. But look at verse 19 at the end there.

He says, that I may, he says, I want to send Timothy to you shortly that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. And so, so Paul here, you look at verse 23, he says, therefore I hope to send him at once as I see how it goes with me.

[34 : 46] And so there was a visionary courage. Ministry as a family is also built upon visionary courage versus passive cowardice. And so he saw, when we see needs, Paul's life testimony is a case in point example as far as when you see needs, it's like, wow, why doesn't somebody do something about that?

Wow, I just wish, I hope, I pray that somebody would do something about that. Well, did you ever think that when God opens your eyes to a need, he wants to very well wants you to be part of the solution, not part of the continual ongoing problem of that being a festering issue in culture, in the community.

And hence, Paul here, he says, hey, I want to send Timothy to you so that he can bless you and encourage you along in Christ. And so how do you cultivate that?

And do exactly that. Step out in faith. One of the things I've encouraged my sons, especially as they're coming of age into manhood, I mean, Timothy's there and, you know, and as he's rapidly accumulating more and more, you know, tools needed to lead, provide, and protect as a man.

And one of the things I've encouraged, you know, all my sons is that, hey, as the Lord opens doors of opportunity for you to minister, to serve, you don't have to have everything figured out.

[36 : 03] But if there's an open door, you just take that baby step of faith. You say, here am I, Lord, send me. And you step out in faith and total dependency on the Lord. And you trust him as you're going through that situation.

And you know what happens? You build spiritual muscle. You grow. You grow. Like, wow, I've never been through a situation like this. And you grow. And then there's another opportunity.

And you say, yes, Lord. And you grow. And so be part of the solution. Be a catalyst toward positive change for the glory of God. And therefore, ministry as a family, like I said, is built upon visionary courage versus passive cowardice.

But look in verse 20. It says, for I have no one like-minded. He speaks specifically about Timotheus here. What kind of man he was.

What are you made of? In other words. He says, but you, for I have no one like-minded, verse 20, who will sincerely care for your state.

[37 : 05] Ministry as a family is built upon genuine compassion. You see, Timothy, I have no one like-minded who will sincerely care care for you. What do you care about?

And it's interesting because I heard a statistic just last week that supposedly 51% of faith voters do not plan on voting this year.

And just being kind, that is a dereliction of duty. And like John Stonestreet from the Colson Center of Christian Worldview said that, you know, not voting because you want to keep your hands clean, as it were, that's not Christianity.

That's pietism. And he cited also a principle from the book of James that says, if there's good that we can do, we ought to do it. Otherwise, it's wrong. And so, in other words, if there's anything in life that is precious to you, that you care about, what do you love?

Do whatever you can by the grace of God to ensure that you can pass on, you know, the preamble of the Constitution to preserve for ourselves and our posterity these blessings of liberty, which lead to human flourishing, let alone gospel truths rooted in the word of God.

[38 : 25] Because he says right here, for I have no one like-minded who will sincerely care for your state. So Timothy had a heart of compassion for the Philippian believers.

How about you and I? If you remember in the Lord Jesus' earthly ministry, the nation of Israel and the gospel records, at one point, you know, the scripture says in Matthew 9 where that he looked up and saw the masses and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

And he said, pray the Lord of the harvest, the sun for the laborers into the harvest. And it was fascinating because he doesn't say necessarily to pray for them, but to pray for yourselves as the people of God that they would go.

That God's people would go to see the need and go to the need and make a difference. And it doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that we need reformation, revival, and revitalization of the church and family here in America.

And hence, God has called every one of us to be the salt and light, moral backpressure of truth amidst rebel darkness. So cultivate this. I mean, the simplicity of where is that?

[39 : 31] Where did I put that? Oh boy, where is that? Oh, somebody took it. Do you subscribe to the Voice of the Martyrs newsletter? Just the simplicity of that ministry started by Richard and Sabina Wormran.

He was in a communist Romanian prison as a pastor. And listen, this is real stuff. This is real history. So just the simplicity of being on mailing lists of different ministries like Voice of the Martyrs as far as cultivating genuine compassion by visiting the elderly, going Christmas caroling at a nursing home or in the neighborhood, volunteer at a rescue mission around the holidays, short-term mission trips, write to missionaries, practice hospitality, and for crying out loud, pass out gospel tracts especially around Halloween, these types of things.

And it was interesting because right in our neighborhood, one of our neighbors had a rainbow flag in the yard, and there was just some interchange in the past, and just this confused young lady, along with some of her friends, it was a year or two ago, they were coming by our house there, I'm at the end of the driveway, I think with Paul Sather's epitaph gospel tracts, and she just said, this is the Jesus house, twice to her friends, this is the Jesus house.

And you're looking back and it's like, I'm sure there's more I could have said or whatever, but just be actively engaged and do something for the cause of Christ. And look at verse 21, he says, for all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

Ministry as a family is built upon eternal priorities versus temporal pleasures. So cultivate eternal priorities. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

[41 : 11] And how do we cultivate eternal priorities? I submit to you, it's largely built upon four things, namely the places we go, the people we meet, the books we read and the challenges we face as far as cultivating family solidarity.

We've been emphasizing all weekend and redemptive hobbies and these types of things. And being engaged, you know, even in leisure times, being engaged in redemptive hobbies where we can perhaps work with our hands, especially if we do what we do for a living is working with our head or vice versa.

These types of things and also doing things together as a family in that whereby you can use, invest, even leisure time in redemptive ways to encourage people in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Look in verse 22. It says, but you know his proven character that as a son with his father he labored, he served with me in the gospel. Ministry as a family is built upon godly character versus superficial nice.

You know the 11th commandment? Is not thou shalt be nice. You know what I mean? It doesn't mean that we want to be like banty roosters with a chip on our shoulder looking around, you know, looking for a fight.

[42 : 24] These types of things. But it's being merely, you know, Mr. Christian nice guy. That's very different than being, you know, having godly character resident in the depths of your soul. Because this right here, this was the testimony of Timotheus.

But you know his proven character. And he cultivated this in the context of an intergenerational relationship. And so cultivate godly character very practically. And it's like, yes, not only as far as daily and weekly chores within your own home, but as far as seasonal opportunities, whether it's showing, shoveling snow for a neighbor, raking leaves, mowing their grass, especially if, you know, elderly folks in the neighborhood, regardless where you live.

Or it's thank you cards, similarly to the book of Philippians. And it's precious. You know how seldom most people ever receive a self-addressed stamped envelope, handwritten note anymore?

It makes a difference. It's a tangible expression. My hand and my heart is invested in this. My hand has touched this. And I'm reaching out to you to encourage you in Christ. But look at the end of verse 22.

That as a son of his father, he served with me in the gospel. Ministry as a family is also built upon intergenerational relationships versus, you know, what I call the modern youth culture. And it's fascinating because historically, generations have interacted with one another.

[43 : 44] And it's fascinating because I'm really encouraged, you know, by men by the likes of a former U.S. senator from Nebraska, Ben Sass. You know, he talks about in his book *The Vanishing American Adult*.

He says this. He says, he talks about the importance of breaking free from the tyranny of one generation by spending time with people that are roughly not your own age. And he talks about how it's prudent and it builds character and understanding and compassion, the whole kit and caboodle.

I have those on our table, by the way. And that's exactly what Timothy did here working alongside Paul. But look at in verse 23. Therefore, I hope to send him at once as soon as I see how it goes with me.

And so you see at the end of verse 24, by trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly. Ministry as a family is also built upon an unquenchable optimism. How many times have you heard somebody say, oh, things are so bad.

Christ is coming back before Christmas. Did you know, with tomorrow being Columbus Day, did you know that because of momentous events on the world stage, Christopher Columbus, he believed that he was living in the last days before Christ?

[45 : 00] Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Blew me away. Yeah. So in other words, if we're going to, just like Paul here, he says, hey, I'm going to send Timothy to you and I would like to come there myself.

He was looking, what are you looking forward to? What are you looking forward to? I submit to you one of the best ways to cultivate this kind of unquenchable optimism versus doomsday hopelessness is becoming familiar with the Mayflower Pilgrims.

If you're not familiar with the classic quotes from William Bradford as far as them being, seeing themselves as stepping stones, as one light, you know, to shine as a candle in the darkness, glorious stuff.

Share that with your kids and therefore cultivate. Hey, what are we looking forward to? What's on the deck? What's the next adventure, Dad? Remember what Timothy Paul Jones, where he said about what you do for God beyond your home will typically never be greater than what you practice within your home?

It's not either or, it's both and. And similarly, with keen insight to the challenges facing the American family and church, Erwin Lutzer, in his most recent book, *The Eclipse of God*, and the subtitle of the book, it says, is our nation's disastrous search for a more inclusive deity and what we must do about it.

[46 : 15] That's this right here, good stuff, right on our table. He says this, the culture war has come to us. He says, we didn't seek it, but win or lose, we must stand against it without losing our testimony for the gospel.

All throughout history, watch this, he says, all throughout history, Christians have been called to faithfully represent Christ in the midst of a pagan culture. I argue for faithfulness to Christ and his church above all other loyalties, whether we can stop the moral and spiritual freefall of our culture or not.

We are given the privilege of standing for Christ, he says, with grace and strength, even at great personal cost. If we have faith to believe it, this is a day of great opportunity.

Lord God, heavenly Father, may it be so. Give your people greater wisdom, vision, and courage to invest our lives in a transcendent cause of life that will echo an eternity to the praise of your glory, both now and forever.

Hallelujah. In Christ Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.