

## **Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time***

### **Children, Obey Your Parents**

Scripture: Ephesians 6:1-3

Code: 80-384

Now for tonight, we're continuing our look at Ephesians chapters 5 and 6 and the implications of a Spirit-filled life. We started in chapter 5 verse 18, about four weeks ago or five, and we started talking about being filled with the Spirit and then we talked about what happens as a result of that, "Speaking to yourselves in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." We also talked about what it says in verse 18, "Do not get drunk with wine, that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." Then we kept on moving in Ephesians 5 and we began to talk about Spirit-filled marriage... Spirit-filled marriage. We discussed verses 22 through 33 which give direction to Spirit-filled wives, and their responsibility to their own husbands. And then Spirit-filled husbands and their responsibility to their wives.

The flow of thought in this portion of Scripture is directly parallel to Colossians chapter 3 where you have essentially the same teaching and you might on another occasion want to look at Colossians 3 and you can see the parallel account that is given by the Apostle Paul in that letter as well. There it doesn't say "Be filled with the Spirit, and this will happen," it says, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in your richly," and this is what happens which leads us to the conclusion that being filled with the Holy Spirit is simply being controlled by a rich understand of the Word of God. And since the Spirit is the author of the Word, and since He prompts us through the Word, those things go together.

We come now to chapter 6 and the opening four verses which have to do with Spirit-filled family life. Let me read these four verses for you. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother which is the first commandment with a promise, so that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

There is a very large assumption here in this section of Scripture. The assumption is that people are going to get married. And the last two times we've talked about this, I've made a point to let you know that that is God's intention for most all people, and most all believers with the exception of those who according to 1 Corinthians 7 have a gift for singleness and no need of a partner. That is a limited and somewhat rare gift, so that when the Apostle Paul talks about being Spirit filled, the first and only relationship that he develops through the opening part of this section is marriage and family. And then he tacks on the end how we get along with employers and employees. But the bulk of this entire emphasis on Spirit-filled living is about marriage and the family.

As we come to the verses that I just read to you, a very simple portion of Scripture. "Children, obey," and "Fathers, bring your children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." Just that simple and that direct and that focus is the biblical instruction. Children have one duty and that is to give to their parents obedience and honor...obedience and honor and parents have one duty and that is to give to their children discipline and instruction in the Lord. That's how families work when the Holy Spirit is in control of them.

Now I don't need to spend a lot of time on the issue that we face in our culture today, and that is the issue of the destruction of the family. But I will say this, never in modern history has the family been more devastated than it is now. That is true in the western world and that is increasingly true in the rest of the world. It is especially true here in America. The family had always been under attack by Satan, always from the very beginning, from the very start, at the time of the Fall, Satan has gone after the family. And we chronicled a little bit of that last time.

But in terms of our modern world and our part of the world where we have for many centuries been under a very strong Christian influence, we are watching that disappear very rapidly. And as a result, we have never seen anything like the destruction of the family that is going on in our society today. And if you were to write down a list of things that contribute to the destruction of the family, the devastation of the family, if you will, the demise of the family, your list might go a little bit like this, you might want to go back to the sexual revolution and say that the celebration of fornication that started back in the sixties and the sexual revolution that came at that time, has had a devastating effect on marriage because people can gain their physical satisfaction without being married and society doesn't look down on that anymore. You might want to add a Woman's Liberation Movement in which women have tried to take the upper hand and treat men as if they are second-class human beings. You would have to add the homosexual revolution has had a massive impact on the demise of marriage and while it is destroying true marriage, it is advocating homosexual marriage in its place.

You would probably include child psychology and the development of a self-esteem cult which has produced a massive generation of selfish people and selfish people have a hard time giving themselves up for one other person...which is what a marriage is. Selfishness is a huge problem. You probably would include in your list of things that destroy marriage, drugs. And by that I would even include child medication. You have children on medication because they are dysfunctional, because they are in dysfunctional families and they do dysfunctional things when they don't take their medication, sometimes like shooting up schools, as we you well know. You would probably want to include on your list working wives who have abandoned the home. You would certainly want to include pornographically saturated fathers and men who have no normal concept of what a woman is, should be, no normal of a right relationship to women. You would have to lay the fault at irresponsible men who fail in male leadership and irresponsible women who fail in their leadership of the family as well.

But there's one other thing that I'd like to add to the list that you might not think about. There is one other element that really does the family in, and it is this, singleness...singleness. Think about it. Genesis 1 says it's not good for man to be alone. God makes a helper and says, "This is your wife, go have children." Deuteronomy 6:6 and 7 says to the people of Israel, "Now that you're in the land, all that I have commanded you, teach to your children." All My commandments, all My statutes. The standard behavior for people in the world is marriage and child-bearing. The standard behavior for Christian people is marriage and child bearing. But we're living in a world which has a pandemic preoccupation with singleness. And it is significantly a sign of selfishness. There are, just giving you a little bit of statistical input, there are one hundred million unmarried adults over the age of 18 in the United States, 100 million of them. Forty-four percent of the population of adults in America is unmarried. Only 50 percent of households have a married couple in them. Fifty-six million American adults have always been single, and another 44 to make up the hundred million were married are now single by death or divorce.

Since the year 2000, that would be for the last dozen years, the most common household type in the U.S., there are more of these than any other kind of household, the most common household type in the United States is a person living alone. That's pretty devastating to family. Oh there are twelve million unmarried people living together in fornication. And by the way, people living together without marriage is a relatively new phenomenon. There are ten times more people doing that than there were in 1960. And the number has increased a hundred percent since 1990. This is a kind of singleness. This is not marriage, this is not a family. Consequently, nearly half of all children born in America are born in an illegitimate fashion. They don't have a mother and a father who are married to each other. And the numbers are increasing all the time.

Why has this happened? I'll tell you why, because you can go back to 1995 and a Harris Poll was conducted in 1995, the conclusion was this, ninety percent of Americans said, "Society should value all types of family equally." That's the consensus.

Further, the Harris Poll determined that the majority of people in America think that whatever way you want to live has absolutely no negative effect on children. And now, just recently, the U.S. Government solution to this disaster is to aid immorality and sexual promiscuity by passing out contraception and making tax payers pay for it.

Now we're all very, very much aware of the massive onslaught on the family. And sadly this...this preoccupation with singleness and the living with all the temptations and vices that go along with singleness has spilled over into the church. The church of Jesus Christ, those who are committed to Christ and to the Word of God, need to lead the nation and lead the world in upholding marriage and childbearing as God's most precious blessing in all of human life. Unless you're one of those rare persons who is given a gift for singleness, if you're a widow, the word of Scripture is, "Get married." If

you've been divorced and you have legitimate grounds, the reason that that divorce is legitimized in Scripture is so that you can get married. In the familiar language of the Old Testament Psalm 127, we read this tribute to the family. "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. Unless the Lord guards the city, the watchmen keeps awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early to retire late, to eat the bread of painful labors for He gives to His beloved, even His sleep." In every situation, you have to trust in the sovereign care of God.

And then He uses the family as an illustration. "Behold, children are a gift of the Lord. The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate." Children are a blessing from the Lord. Marriage is called the grace of life.

I've been encouraging you for the last three weeks, just kind of generally, to get married if you're single and it all led to this point right now where you can see very clearly that singleness poses an immense threat to marriage. And therefore to raising godly children, to receiving children as a heritage from the Lord.

The norm is to be married, to find someone you can serve with your life and with whom you can raise children in Christ. Your children are a gift from the Lord, they're borrowed, in one sense. They're on loan for a season. To be led to the knowledge of Christ, through the gospel so that righteousness can extend to the next generation.

When single people, single Christians leave this world, they leave no heritage. They leave no offspring. They have passed down nothing because they've received no new life from the Lord. Now it's not say they don't witness and evangelize. But the intimacy and the power of evangelism within the family, between the parents and the children, they miss. So it is true that Scripture says it's not good to be alone. And Scripture also says it's a blessing from the Lord to bring up children.

Now let's look at the family from the vantage point of the four verses that I read to you, okay? And just two points, the submission of the children, then the submission of the parents, because everybody submits, right? We submit to each other, that's the premise of verse 21, "Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ." Wives submit to their husbands, husbands submit to their wives, in a sense, that they anything and everything they can do lovingly to meet the needs of their wives. Children submit to parents, and parents submit themselves to the needs of their children. So the submission of the children, and then the submission of the parents.

Now we are very much aware of the fact that children have a dominating role in our culture, which is not good. Once we had a patriarchal society. And in some cultures, there's a matriarchal society mama is sort of the key player in the culture. Now with no one home, because the father's gone and the mother is also gone, there's no adult at home, you have a child-centered home and a child-

centered society. Kids have been liberated from regular routine, constant, parental care and authority and are being raised by their peers, or by the media. One school teacher put it this way, teachers are afraid of the principals, the principals are afraid of the superintendents, the superintendents are afraid of the board. The board members are afraid of the parents. The parents are afraid of the children. And the children are afraid of nobody. It's a disaster in a society when children make their own way.

Let's look then at the responsibility of children. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. Honor your father and mother which is the first commandment with a promise so that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth."

The word "children" here is not a word for infant. There is a Greek word for infant, it's not this word. This is *tatekna* which simply means offspring. I will always be the child of my parents in the sense of this word, no matter what age I am. This is without regard for age. It is a common word used to speak of believers, those who are born of God who are children of God at any age. It has reference to anyone from small children, through young people before they start their own adult life. It includes all children. But it is not in particular pointing to infants, or tiny children because they can't be commanded in the simple way this verse does it. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right," means nothing to your three-year-old. Your three-year-old is not swayed by that command at all, as you well know...or for that matter, by most commands that you give that aren't divine. We're not talking here about tiny little children, small children who cannot obey based upon a biblical mandate. This is referring to those that are old enough to understand the nature of the command as coming from God with promise.

So for those children who are responsible and reasonable and understand the place that God has, as the sovereign, and understand that God blesses obedience, it is to those children this command is given. And it is essentially the basic command that makes a home work...Children, obey your parents. It is so basic to civilization that this command is given in Exodus 20 and verse 12 as a part of the Ten Commandments, right? But the backside of that commandment which you find in Exodus 21, verses 15 and 17, and Leviticus 20 verse 9, is that if a child doesn't do that, you are to kill that child, capital punishment pronounced upon a rebellious, disobedient child. This is so basic to civilization, to the well-being of the family that God literally designates capital punishment as a just punishment for a disobedient, rebellious child.

The book of Proverbs calls on children, and again I'm emphasizing those who are still under parental authority and reasonable enough and rational enough and old enough to understand divine commands to listen to their parents and obey. Let's go to Proverbs for a bit. This is well worth an exercise. The Proverbs, chapter 1 verse 1, of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel, given that we might know wisdom and instruction, discern the sayings of understanding, receive instruction and wise behavior, righteousness, justice and equity to give prudence to the naïve, to the youth knowledge and discretion. That's what this is all about, to give you wisdom, instruction,

understanding, discernment, all of that. That's what the Proverbs are all about. And they are initially addressed from parents to children. Verse 8, "Hear, my son, your father's instruction. Do not forsake your mother's teaching; they are a graceful wreath to your head and ornaments around your neck. My son, if sinners entice you," and there's the alternative, where instead of being raised by your parents and obeying your parents, you follow the peer group and it's a disaster. Don't go with them. And he goes on to describe why you don't do that.

In the second chapter of Proverbs, the beginning, "My son, if you will receive my words and treasure my commandments within you, make your ear attentive to wisdom, incline your heart to understanding. If you cry for discernment, lift your voice for understanding. If you seek her as silver and search for her as for hidden treasure, you will discern the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God, for the Lord gives wisdom." And where are these words of God going to come from to the child? They're going to come through the parent.

Chapter 3, Solomon says, "My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments for length of days and years of life and peace, they will add to you." And it goes this way all the way through. Chapter 4, "Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, and give attention that you may gain understanding cause I give you sound teaching. Don't abandon my instruction. When I was a son to my father, when I was tender and the only son in the sight of my mother, then he taught me and said to me, 'Let your heart hold fast to my words. Keep my commandments and live.'" This is the theme. Chapter 4 verse 10, "Hear, my son, accept my sayings and the years of your life will be many." These are just repeats of Exodus 20:12. Obey your parents and you'll live a life of quality and quantity.

Chapter 5, "My son, give attention to my wisdom." Chapter 6, "My son," and so it goes. Chapter 7, "My son, keep my words, treasure my commandments within you." This is the emphasis. Chapter 8 verse 32, "Now therefore, O sons, listen to me and blessed are they who keep my ways."

This is what every father and mother taught the children, to follow the wisdom that came from God through the parents. This wisdom was supported with discipline. Chapter 12 verse 1, "Whoever loves discipline, loves knowledge. Whoever loves discipline, loves knowledge." Chapter 13 verse 1, "A wise son accepts his father's discipline." So it's the commandment, it's the instruction undergirded and supported by discipline. Chapter 15 verse 5, "A fool rejects his father's discipline. But he who regards reproof is sensible and great wealth is the house of the righteous but trouble is in the income of the wicked." There are benefits, temporal benefits and economic benefits to obeying parents as they disseminate wisdom that comes from God.

Now the assumption here, of course, is you have a Christian family, under the control of the Holy Spirit. Chapter 28 of Proverbs and verse 7, "He who keeps the Law is a discerning son." He who keeps the Law is a discerning son. So there in the book of Proverbs, you have the wisdom of God

that parents are to give to their children, primarily, of course then first to sons because they had the responsibility for the leadership in the marriage and in the home.

Children must be taught to obey and they must be disciplined because they lack in four areas...they lack in four areas, yours and mine, everybody's. Those four areas are demonstrated to us in Luke 2:52 in the case of the Lord Jesus. And we're not—we're not talking about sinful things, we're talking about childish things. It is true of young people because we read in Luke 2:52 that our Lord Jesus grew, increasing in wisdom and stature and favor with God and men. Now here are the four categories in which children need to grow. Wisdom, that's the mental capacity; stature, that's the physical capacity; favor with men, that's the social capacity; and favor with God, that's the spiritual capacity.

So as parents, we come alongside our children to increase their mental capability, to increase their physical strength. We care for them mentally by what they learn and what they come to understand. We care for them physically by the very care we give to them through what we give them to eat and how we take care of their physical needs. We want them to develop socially. We want them to learn social graces, how to interact with people. And then we want them to develop spiritually. This is what parenting is about, helping our children develop mentally, physically, socially and spiritually. This is what we have to provide for our children. This is the parenting process. And, of course, all through that process, we're laying on our children commands that they must obey in order for them to reach the level they need to reach in these four areas.

Now let's go back to the idea of "Children, obey your parents," back to Ephesians chapter 6, just a couple of comments about it. The word "obey" is from *hupakouo* which means to submit. Actually it comes from a word from which we get the English word acoustics, sound, to hear. It's a present-imperative. Children, you could even translate it this way, come under what your parents are saying. Come under, submit to what your parents tell you to do. And do it in the Lord...in the Lord. That is because that's what the Lord wants you to do. Do it to honor Him. Do it to please Christ. Can't tell you how many times a conversation like that has gone on with our children and grandchildren, something like this, "Do you think the Lord is pleased with your attitude? Do you think the Lord would be pleased if he saw you do what you're doing? Does the Lord want you to treat your sister that way?" You're constantly reminding them that this is bigger than mother and father, this is about the Lord, because as much as Mom and Dad can do for you, what you really need done for you only the Lord can do, and His blessings are so much greater and so much more infinite, you want to put yourself in a position to be blessed by Him. Obey your parents in the Lord, as if you are obeying the Lord because you are. And then this, "For this is right."

I love that. How many times have your children said to you, "But why?" And you've said, "Because it's right." "Well who made it right?" God made it right. God determines what is right. There is right and there is wrong, and the world isn't going to tell your children that You have heard this conversation,

“Everybody else is doing it.” Well, we’re not everybody else. We’re different, we’re unique, we don’t do what everybody else does, we do what the Lord says we are to do. We follow the Lord. We follow God’s Word, God’s commandments, God’s Law. We love Him, we want to honor Him.” That’s all this is saying. It is right, *dikaion*, it is righteous. Used often, by the way of the very nature of God and Christ for God is righteousness in and of Himself.

So here we have this very simple command to children, “Obey your parents. Obey your parents.” Come under what they say and do whatever they tell you to do for the Lord’s sake, for the honor of the Lord and the blessing of the Lord and because we love the Lord.”

There’s a second responsibility, as well. There’s more than just obedience because verse 2 says, “Honor your father and mother.” Honor your father and mother. This is the attitude that goes along with the behavior. The action is obedience, the attitude is honor. This is the attitude that corresponds to the act of obedience. Our obedience is not to be selfish; our obedience is not to be reluctant. Our obedience is not to be unwilling. Our obedience is to be coupled with honor, respect, reverence, regard, love and affection for a parent.

Now, let me give you some insight. Your kids don’t come hard wired to conduct their lives this way. They don’t come ready-made to obey you or honor you because they’re little reprobates. I know, there’s the view in Reformed Theology that says if your baby was baptized, your baby is ostensibly regenerate. If you baptize an infant, they have a doctrine called Presumptive Regeneration which means that based on infant Baptism, you can presume the regeneration of your child. Some will even go so far as to mix the elements of communion in a blender and spoon-feed them to a baby. Listen, I presumed that all four of my children were reprobate, unconverted, enemies of God, alienated from the life of God, and then I had a responsibility to teach them how to obey and honor their parents so that they would know what it means to obey and honor the Lord. And that is the primary challenge of being a parent. They’re not going to do that on their own. They need, first of all, to be led to the knowledge of Christ but they also, in the meantime, need to be taught obedience and honor and what tool do you use? Discipline...discipline. We read about it. We read about it.

If you are wise, you welcome your father’s discipline, we read. But there’s also promise. Honor your father and mother which is the first commandment with a promise. And what is the promise? That it may be well with you, first, a quality of life comes to an obedient child, a quality of life. Obedient children will enjoy life, they’ll enjoy life because they will enjoy the blessing of God. And by the way, this comes from the fifth commandment in Exodus 20 and verse 12. The first commandment with a promise among the Ten Commandments, and it’s the first of the commandments with regard to human relationships. The first four have to do with our relationship to God and the last six, with our relationship to one another, and the first one is to obey parents. And that comes with a promise. And the first aspect of the promise is a quality of life.



An obedient child, a child that honors parents will be a child that enjoys a rich, full, quality of life. That is the promise of God. There's also a promise of a quantity of life, that you may live long on the earth. What does that mean? For us it simply means your life won't be cut short by some divine discipline. You'll live a full life within the purpose of God.

How do you get your child to do that? How do you get your child to obey and honor parents? Well, let's go back to Proverbs and find out what Proverbs tells us. Chapter 3, verse 11, "My son, do not reject the discipline of the Lord, or loathe His reproof, for whom the Lord loves, He reproveth, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights. It's by correction. That's part of discipline.

In chapter 10, we get an idea of some of the means of correction. A rod, Proverbs 10:13, is for the back of him who lacks understanding. When your conduct demonstrates that you don't understand the importance of obedience and honor, then the instrument for helping you get a better understanding of that is a rod on your backside. In the nineteenth chapter of Proverbs, and verse 18, "Discipline your son while there is hope and don't desire His death." Discipline him while there's hope because if you don't discipline him, you might be looking into his casket.

In the twenty-second chapter of Proverbs, and the fifteenth verse, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, the rod of discipline will remove it far from him." We're talking about corporal punishment, behavior that has consequences, painful, immediate, painful, physical consequences. Chapter 23 of Proverbs, verse 13, "Do not hold back discipline from the child. Although you strike him with a rod, he will not die. You shall strike him with a rod and rescue his soul from Sheol." Wow! You mean corporal physical punishment of a child by striking him on the backside could actually be used by God to save his soul from hell? Maybe now you understand why there's such a movement in the non-Christian world to get rid of corporal punishment.

In the twenty-ninth chapter of Proverbs and verse 15, "The rod and reproof give wisdom. But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother." You've seen them at the market. Right? You say, "What kind of mother is that?" Right? Verse 17, "Correct your son and he'll give you comfort and delight your soul." You don't want to produce a disobedient child because—I'm not going to take you through these verses—but Proverbs says all of this, "A disobedient child is a grief to his mother, a rebel to his father, a sorrow to his father, a disaster to his father, a disgrace to his parents, a humiliation to his parents and an abuser of his parents." It actually says that, Proverbs 28:24, that he robs his parents.

So you discipline while you instruct. And godly children will live a blessed life qualitatively and a full life quantitatively. They'll live out their days as God has ordained, and there will be no need to shorten their life because of some iniquity.

Summing it up, Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in—what?—the way he should go and when he’s old, he won’t depart from it.” And you want your children to be a blessing, don’t you, to you? And they should be and they can be and the plan is laid out in Scripture, if you can’t listen to the myriad contrary voices of the world. We’re not talking about child abuse, we’re talking about what is reasonable and in the context of love as we all understand. And we’ll see that in the second point, the submission of the parents...the submission of the parents.

I don’t think I’m going to have time to develop all of this tonight. So let me just introduce it to you and then we’ll cover it...well we don’t have a service next Sunday night, right? And I think I’m gone the one after that. Can you hang on for two weeks? You won’t forget anything I’ve said, promise? But let me just introduce this second aspect because I don’t want to leave this sort of hanging in the air that this might be appear to be abusive. Chapter 6 verse 4 says, “Fathers, do not provoke your children to...what?...to anger.” And if you cross the line, what will happen? Your children will be angry.

If you cross the line of discipline, your children will become angry and they’ll resent you and they’ll resent the Lord, and they’ll resent the church, and they’ll resent the gospel. This is the most mitigating statement that could ever be rendered to the discipline of the home. “Do not cross the line that makes your children angry.” What you want to do in discipline, listen to me, is make your children sorry, not angry. You want to make them sorry that they violated your love and care for them. You want to make them sorry that they hurt you whom they love so much. You want to make them sorry that they dishonored the Lord. You want to make them sorry that they forfeited blessing, that they’ve gone down a path that could actually not only be qualitatively disastrous, but quantitatively disastrous, could shorten their life. But what you never want to do is make them angry at you and at God and at Scripture and at the church. Always sorry, never angry. That’s why the flip side is you’re always nurturing them in the discipline and the instruction of the Lord.

Now what does that mean? That’s for two weeks. So we’ll leave it at that for tonight.

Our Father, again it’s such a wonderful thing to come with these folks before your Word and bow in submission to its great clear truth. Thank You for all that we have been exposed to through this entire day, for the glories of Christ that brought to us this morning and for the responsibilities of parenting that we’ve talked about tonight. I pray for the families in this church, I pray for the single people, Lord, bring them together with single people and start to make marriages and families take place so that they can enjoy the grace of life and the blessing from You that comes when children come. I pray, Lord, I pray that You’ll do a mighty work in that area, bring people together, make families and of the families that are already together, Lord, may godly children come from those families, children that love the Lord Jesus Christ because their parents have demonstrably, visibly consistently loved the Lord Jesus Christ before them. We pray for moms and dads and we pray for the children. There are hundreds, thousands of children represented by the folks who are here tonight and throughout our

church and we pray for them, Lord, we pray for the ministry that their parents have in their lives and the ministry that teachers and leaders around this church in so many areas of ministry have in their lives and other families that connect and come together. We pray, Lord, that all of those influences might drive them down the path of obedience and honor for their parents because they want to honor the Lord. And we pray that You will save the children in this church, save them from disobedient rebellious lives that will cost them dearly, even their own souls. Save them, bring them to the Lord Jesus Christ. Make the gospel attractive to them. Make Christ irresistible to them. We ask You, Lord, to save our children. Thank You for the promise that if we bring them up and train them up in the right way, they'll follow that path. Give us wisdom in all our relationships inside the home and may the fruit of it be another generation of children that love Christ, who can carry the gospel to the ends of the earth.

We know this church has done that, this generation has caught up in ministry, here and around the world and we would pray that you would enable us to raise up another generation to do the same thing. Fill our church with godly, Christ-exalting families and marriages for the blessing that it is, for the magnificent picture that it is of the church and for the sake of another generation of faithful believers who can proclaim the gospel of Christ. We pray in His name. Amen.

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