

God-Dependent Dads

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[0 : 00] We make much of Jesus because we have come to know and understand! We make much of Jesus because we have come to know and understand! We make much of Jesus because we have come to know and understand! Sin had separated us from Almighty God.

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve, the first human beings fell into sin through that rebellion. And it plunged the entire human race into that separation, that spiritual separation from Almighty God.

But God, before He ever made the world, had already made provision to help us through that terrible, terrible fall into that wicked rebellion against Himself.

And the way that He did it defies human understanding. Man could never make up the story of the cross, the symbol of our faith behind us.

We celebrate an empty cross because we understand that Jesus Christ was crucified and buried. He was in the grave for three days and then by the power of Almighty God, God raised Him from the dead.

[1 : 22] And so that cross is empty because we don't need to put Him back on the cross. He's alive at the right hand of God the Father. So our hope is alive. And He is our hope. Amen?

And so we celebrate the reality that God sent His only Son to die on the cross as our substitute. That is, God put our sins on His Son, crediting our sins to Him, and then punish Jesus with the punishment that we deserve for that sinful rebellion against the Lord.

If you've ever lied, if you've ever stolen, if you've ever misled someone, cheated someone, if you've ever committed one sin, that sin is enough to bring the death penalty on your soul and gain you an eternity in hell.

Jesus Christ did something about that by taking your sin on Himself and allowing God to punish Him for the sins that you and I committed. As He hung on the cross, that was the punishment.

And when He died, that sealed the punishment forever. And God poured His wrath out on His own Son. All of His holy anger spent on Jesus for the sins not that Jesus committed, but that we committed.

[2 : 40] Jesus died as our substitute. He died to provide forgiveness for the sins that we committed, not that He committed. Because He was sinless and perfect.

The reason that Jesus was the only way that the Father could bring a sacrifice worthy of Himself. He had to send His perfect Son to do it for us. This is what we celebrate.

This is what we sing about. That the death of Jesus brought us life. And the life of Jesus gives us hope for righteousness in heaven forever. This is what Christianity is about.

This is why we are solid in our faith and make no apologies about honoring Jesus as the Lord and Savior of our lives. And so it is with a great heart and a grateful heart that I come to preach the gospel before you in the way that I will this morning.

I need to be a little bit tongue-in-cheek with you on the throes of that wonderful treatise about the love of God. Now guys, let me say to you, Greg and I are in the habit of just preaching through books of the Bible verse by verse.

[3 : 48] And when we come to different holidays that people celebrate in our world, we just kind of keep our heads down and keep moving through the verses. So we don't really step back to do a Father's Day message or this message or that message or whatever.

But today, I'm going to give you a kind of a Father's-themed treatise here. And I hope it's encouragement. But I want to warn you, we're going to get to about 30,000 feet and it's going to be a little bumpy.

So I'm going to look for some clean air real quick. So don't, guys, stay buckled up with me. All right? Because I'm one of you. I'm a dad. I have three children. And I know what it's like to have the joy of fatherhood and also feel the anguish of it.

I've said before, our kids have the potential to bring us the greatest joy of our life. They also have the potential to break our hearts in a thousand pieces. It's part of being a dad.

And we need to wear that with much grace and joy in the Lord. And so I want to offer you to begin with this morning in this message, the title of which is God-Dependent Dads.

[4 : 55] You see it there on the screen. God-Dependent Dads. And so, ladies, listen in because you'll hear some things that will help cue you in how to pray for your husband as a dad, as a husband, as a leader, as a man.

Let me offer you a tongue-in-cheek list of 11 rules of life they don't teach you in school. Right? They're not...

Now, they taught me this kind of stuff in the school I went to. They taught me a lot of other stuff, too, that I didn't need and wish that I hadn't learned. But here are 11 rules of life that they don't teach you in school.

Rule of life number one. Life is not fair. Get used to it. Number two. The world will not care about your self-esteem.

The world will expect you to accomplish something before you feel good about yourself. Rule number three. You will not make \$40,000 a year right out of high school.

[6 : 05] You won't be a vice president with perks until you earn both. Rule number four. If you think your teacher is tough, wait till you get a boss.

He doesn't have tenure. Rule number five. Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your grandparents had a word for burger flipping.

They called it opportunity. My first job in high school, I worked at Kentucky Fried Chicken. You should have seen me in my little hat and my little uniform back there doing the chicken.

Never will forget it. Rule number six. If you mess up, it's not your parents' fault. So don't whine about your mistakes.

Learn from them. Learn from them. I'm not getting many amens. You parents need to help me out here. Rule number seven. Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they are now.

[7 : 15] They got that way from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes, and listening to you talk about how cool you are. So before you save the rainforest from the parasites of your parents' generation, try delousing the closet in your own room.

Rule number eight. Your school may have done away with winners and losers, but life hasn't. In some schools, they've abolished failing grades, and they'll give you as many chances as you need to get the right answer.

Beware, this doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to anything in real life. Number nine. Life is not divided into semesters.

You don't get summers and Christmas break off, and very few employers are interested in helping you find yourself. Do that on your own time. Rule number ten.

Television is not real life. In real life, people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go work. Number eleven.

[8 : 27] You better be nice to nerds because chances are you'll end up working for one. Alright. Enough of that. Now how do we transition from that into talking about what it means for dads to follow Jesus?

Well, how does the Bible define a faithful father? If someone were to ask you that, if your child was to ask you that, could you tell your child in basic terms what it means for the Bible to define a faithful father?

Now listen guys, not a perfect father. Your pastor is preaching to you this morning as a father, and I'm not preaching to you as a perfect one. But I am trying to be faithful.

Even in my age now, with all of my children grown and flown, I'm still trying to prove faithful as a father. But I recognize that I have yet to make perfection as a father.

So I preach to you as one growing and learning and as one having made many mistakes and needing the grace of God in my life. In short then, a faithful father is a God-dependent dad.

[9 : 48] A faithful father is a God-dependent dad. The thing that defines you most as a dad, as a man, as a husband, is your dependency on God.

The recognition of your own life that you know and understand how fully dependent on God you are to be a man and a husband and a dad who is faithful in all that you do in those roles.

You're aware of that. You're becoming increasingly sobered by your need to be completely dependent on God. Now, what I want to do this morning is use the word faithful as an acronym to help us identify eight biblical characteristics of fathers who depend on God in their role and responsibilities as God-honoring dads.

All right? You're with me? An acronym using the word faithful. Eight biblical characteristics that we'll move through quickly. Now, this morning is different in that we're not in one passage where I basically keep you there for the entire message going verse by verse.

We're going to be all over the Bible. You're going to get an exercise in finger-flipping this morning as you go through all these different passages. But I've tried to select them strategically to help emphasize the points that I'm making in this acronym.

[11 : 11] The first one that we'll deal with this morning then in the way of F is that you are a follower of Jesus Christ. We have to start there because that's the foundation for everything in your life as a man.

You are a follower first and foremost of Jesus Christ. And so let me ask you a question, gentlemen, out of the gate. Are you living a Christ-centered life?

Are you living a Christ-centered life? I'm not asking you if you're religious. I'm not asking you if you come to church.

That'll come later. I'm not even asking you if you believe in God. I'm asking you, are you living for Jesus?

Jesus? Are you a living example of the life of Jesus Christ? Did you hear the way I asked that?

[12 : 12] Are you yourself living as an example of the life of Jesus Himself? Now you may say to me right on the heels of that because I know I feel it too.

Jeff, who in the world is up for that? Who, what man on the face of the planet can literally live like Jesus?

Now, we ask that because we're incredulous about the reality that the Bible actually calls us to that very thing. What I'm asking you isn't some pie-in-the-sky, high-faluting goal that we can never achieve or live up to or God would never ask us to do it.

No, look, it is perfectly biblical to think in terms of your life reflecting the life of Jesus. Isn't that sobering?

Right out of the gate. The most important thing about you as a dad is that you are exemplifying or offering as an example the life of Jesus Himself.

[13 : 16] The life He lived on this earth. I want to show you a couple of passages that speak to this and then how the Apostle Paul wrote in his letters of encouragement to different Christians in his time how they could actually pull this off, how they could begin to see this happen in their lives.

If you go to 1 John all the way back to the back of the Bible, the book of 1 John 2, we have a little verse here that is very, very convicting in the way of living as an example of Jesus' life.

In 1 John 2, verse 6, the one who says he abides in Jesus ought himself to walk in the same manner as he walked.

Do you see that, gentlemen? We are to walk in the same manner as Jesus. Now, walk in these contexts. Paul will use this. John's using this.

Walk here has the idea of how you live your daily life. Your walk. You're putting your feet in front of each other day after day. Where they take you, what you do, what you put your priorities on, how you use the resources of your life.

[14 : 35] What does he say? He says, look, if you say you're a follower of Jesus, then you ought yourself to walk in the same manner as Jesus himself walked.

You ought to live like he lived. Now, let's take this over into how Paul uses it. Look at 1 Corinthians with me, gentlemen, if you would. The book of 1 Corinthians chapter 11.

Paul does not leave himself out of this challenge. He says in chapter 11, verse 1, to these Christians he's writing to, be imitators of me just as I also am of Christ.

Boy, that is power packed. Think about this now. Be imitators imitators of me just as I also am of Christ.

Gentlemen, the Greek word Paul uses for imitators here is where we get our English word mime or mimic. So, you know, you've seen them do this and they put they're very annoying.

[15 : 51] I don't care. If you do mimes, don't be offended. I'll watch about 30 seconds and I get it. You're going to do this. But right here he's going to use the word mimic.

Mimic. In the context then of 1 Corinthians chapter 4, remember here he's telling them, be imitators of me as I am of Christ.

I'm following Jesus, so follow what I do as I follow Jesus. Then in 1 Corinthians chapter 4, he's going to say something similar to this.

I'm going to pick it up in verse 14. Paul says, I do not write these things to shame you. See, he's not trying to say these things to pound them down into the pavement here, but to warn you, admonish you as my beloved children.

I'm saying these things to you because I love you. Verse 15, for if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, I became your father through the gospel.

[16 : 57] What he's saying is I led you to Jesus. I lived for Jesus. I came and ministered among you and shared the gospel with you, the good news that I shared with you when I first came into this pulpit a few minutes ago, that Jesus died for us on the cross as our substitute and he was raised again so that we could have life in him.

Paul said, I introduced you to all that and led you to the belief in all of that. He's not taking credit from the Holy Spirit. He's saying, I'm your spiritual father. I'm the tool that God used in that for you.

Now, notice verse 16. Therefore, as a result of all of that, I encourage you, exhort you strongly, be imitators of me.

Wow! For this reason, I have sent to you our brother Timothy. Timothy was Paul's young protegee. He was training Timothy up to be a pastor. Who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord?

And Timothy will remind you of my ways which are in Christ just as I teach everywhere in every single church. Now, guys, think about this with me.

[18 : 06] What is Paul saying? Well, he's using the same word in relation to being the Corinthian spiritual father. The same word is being used here for mimic.

Be imitators in verse 16 of me. Mimic me. You've seen my ways. You've watched my life. You've listened to my words.

You've been a part of my life. I've lived before you. You've seen the warts. You've seen the wonders of God's grace in my life. Imitate me as I follow the Lord.

Why is he saying that? Because I'm your spiritual dad. And you're my spiritual kids. He's saying to them. And so I want to be for you this spiritual father. I just want to be an example to you.

Not a perfect one, but an example nonetheless. And so he encourages these Christians to mimic his life. The emphases of his life.

[19 : 02] The priorities of his life. The focus of his life. Now dads, listen. What if we take the following verse I'm going to put up here on the screen.

What if we take the following verse and make it our prayer for our own life lived before our wives and our children? Here's the verse. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me practice these things and the God of peace shall be with you.

in other words, what we're saying here as we follow the Lord is we should be able to tell our wives and our kids, follow me as I follow the Lord.

In other words, step where I step. Do as I do. In terms of our spiritual growth, our love for Christ, follow me in my spiritual life.

In other words, guys, we could look at our wives and our kids and say, the things that you have learned from me as your husband and your dad, the things that you have received from me, the things that you have heard from me, the things that you have seen in my life, practice these things.

[20 : 26] Guys, is that not convicting? Alright, I told you, we're getting to 30,000 quick, quick, right? And it gets a little bumpy because it gets convicting for us.

But all of us are in this boat together. This is why we have a men's ministry where we come together and pray for each other and encourage each other to walk like this. I'm spending the most time I'm going to spend on any of these points on the first one and you can see why.

Following Jesus is all about everything else I'm going to say, but I have to say these things because they become the foundation for what God does and how He uses this in our lives.

Let me take you to one other place before we get to the next point. It's in Ephesians and I'll begin in chapter 4. Gentlemen, Ephesians chapter 4. Once again, this is the Apostle Paul instructing and detailing out what John spoke about when he said, you are to walk as Jesus walked.

Now, Paul's giving us some more detail about that. Ephesians 4. 1. Therefore, I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you've been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another, in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

[22 : 00] What does he say? Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called. And then if you go over to chapter 5, verse 1. Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children and walk in love just as Christ also loved you and gave himself up for us an offering, a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

You see, Paul is using the gospel as the foundation to encourage us in walking in a manner, living day-to-day, step-by-step in a manner that reflects the character of Jesus and our lives to others.

And that would be humility and gentleness and kindness and patience. And let me tell you, let me be the first to tell you, none of that, none of that is innate to you as a man.

Every bit of that is the opposite of what you are as a man without Jesus. Every bit of it. Do you understand? If you have a question about that or want to challenge that, let's do it after the service.

I'll be right over here. And I'll take you back through these scriptures and show you where there's not a man on the face of the planet who lives that kind of character apart from the love of God in his heart.

[23 : 35] Not a one, including me. The difference in my life and living with Suzanne and my children in the ways that we're describing now, the difference is Jesus. It's a person.

He makes that difference in me and he'll make it in your life as well. The second point that I want to bring to you, you'll see the faithful acronym there on the left. Let's light the A up here.

And it's an always dad. What do I mean by an always dad? An affirming dad in matters of truth and integrity. You're a man who is constantly affirming the gospel.

Adorning. I could have used adorning an adorning dad, but that sounds a little feminine, so I backed off of that and went with always dad and just explain it. An always dad is always teaching and applying and living out God's truth.

This is who you are. This is what defines you. You cannot do it perfectly, but you are a man who repents quickly from any measure of falling away from that always teaching living the character of Jesus.

[24 : 41] See? This isn't always dad. You're a man of integrity. Now I want to take you to the Old Testament in this one. You're going to go all the way back to the beginning Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy. And I'll have you in Deuteronomy chapter 4. Everybody there?

Deuteronomy 4 and I'll show you some of the teaching that Moses is giving to the children of Israel particularly now he's speaking to the parents the leaders specifically to dads those in households who are charged with this spiritual leadership and he says in verse 9 of Deuteronomy 4 only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life but make them known to your sons and your grandsons remember the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb when the Lord said to me assemble the people to me that I may let them hear my words so they may learn to fear me all the days they live on the earth and that they may teach their children so gentlemen take heed to yourself make sure that you are reflecting on and remembering the goodness of

God to your life are you a thankful man a grateful man a humbled man are you a man committed to honor the Lord Jesus Christ out of a grateful heart that's first and now turn and reflect on that goodness of God and reflect on the ways that God proves that to you every day and turn to your children and teach it to them that is pretty straightforward isn't it all right but he doesn't stop there he's going to have more to say in chapter 6 about this this is a very familiar passage of scripture that Jews often reflect on called the Shema the Shema or the hear hear O Israel and so we'll look in chapter 6 verse 4 hear O Israel the Lord is our God the Lord is one you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might so again notice notice where he's going first before he brings in this instruction about teaching your kids these words which

I'm commanding you today shall be on your heart you shall teach them diligently to your sons you shall talk of them when you sit when you lie down and when you rise up you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead in other words they are right there at the forefront of your mind your heart you shall write them on the door post of your house and on your gates this is another way of saying guys this should define you as a dad and a husband you don't have a choice if you're following God if you're a God dependent dad seeking to be faithful you don't have a choice this is your mandate you must speak the truth of the Lord to your family now you do it with humility patience kindness!

[28 : 24] gentleness grace always taking into consideration where the members of your family are in their life in the situations they're facing because you want to be that balm of instruction in their life you want to be the instrument that God uses to encourage them the godly progression here is godly teaching one generation deliberately teaching the next generation so that they don't forget these things and this is meant to be a way of life this is a lifestyle and it's to characterize your life with your kids it's very interesting to me let me throw this verse up on the screen for you Ephesians 6 4 look at this and you fathers do not provoke your children to anger but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord now that's a command guys that's not a suggestion we need to heed that so we're talking about a lifestyle of teaching the truth you say

Jeff what do you mean am I supposed to sit them down every minute of the day I mean there's things no no no no you have formal times of instruction where you teach your family you share the truth with them and you model that but most this is a lot of this is the teaching of going do you see it's the teaching of momentum it's the everyday of your life reflecting the priorities the spiritual priorities you're putting on your own life and that's getting reflected in the way that you live your lifestyle shows that you are a Jesus man you're not ashamed of it you don't wear it like a badge you know so that you're easily offended a meek and humble man is not easily offended or provoked that's part of being humble is you're willing to take suffering and a lot of it without wanting to give it back or if you do want to give it back you repent and deal with it in the moment fathers listen to this statement gentlemen please fathers are taught to teach this is what you're seeing fathers are taught to teach and to live out a disciplined life now you don't hear much about this anymore not even from pulpits why because preaching and teaching a disciplined life typically run people out of the church not bring them in well the people who care about holiness want to hear about a disciplined!

life if you care about holiness in the Lord you want to hear about this and be instructed in it right so when I talk about you being taught to teach and live out a disciplined life here's what I mean guys you are not a man of excesses we have enough of that in the world right now man the news right now and maybe it's always been this way the news is nothing but a proliferation of excesses that's what Lord didn't we just have a senator shot didn't that just happen next week God willing I'm going to take you into a passage of scripture that will define for you what God said thousands of years ago about why ballistic missiles are raining down on Israel today it's in the Bible in the

Old Testament thousands of years ago God wrote this is going to happen how about that the news may not tell you all the reasons why ballistic missiles are raining down on Israel right now but the Bible will and it will do it definitively definitively we are in a world of excess and we need men who learn how to stay steady steady I remember there was a man in our college youth group again you guys know I was saved in college so this was all brand new to me I was still learning how to talk like a Christian much less act like one and think like one I was all brand new but I remember there was this guy who was spiritually more mature than me had been with the Lord been raised up in a Christian home that wasn't the case with me at all and I remember watching his life and the way he dated because we were all great friends and

I remember looking at him and thinking that is the most steady guy I have ever seen and at the time I was a little put off with it because I thought how boring because I was not like that I know you can't imagine that at all but I was not I was this night let's go sunny come church is over let's go play football let's get out there but God was tempering me and teaching me right he was getting me ready to be married to Suzanne Suzanne is that's tempering to my life and sometimes God help her it's tempering with a hammer but you know you need what you need and you know who I'm talking about Doug and so I came to admire the steadiness of that man's life and he's on the mission field to this day with his wife still married still serving the

[34 : 08] Lord he's a doctor still serving the Lord and I admire that not a man of excess is a man of steadiness it's good to be passionate but not to excess and we need to reign that in gentlemen truth helps regulate your life biblical truth regulates your life it helps you understand what's important it helps you understand what to give your life to what to give your soul to so that you don't end up wasting your life you want to know how to get to the age I am and not be filled with regrets don't be a man of excess be a man of truth because truth will help regulate your life and focus your life on what God says is most important you can't be an always dad if you're distracted by self and sin because an always dad is a dad who lives a disciplined life in the

Lord that's going to be hard for you to discipline your kids or even provide loving correction for your wife if they don't see in you a similar discipline about self and sin in you if you if you are not dealing with your pride how are you going to speak to the pride in your wife's life or your kids lives you see what I'm saying I need some nods guys help me please yes alright I told you it was going to get bumpy don't let this it's all going to end fine trust me trust me let me throw a!

couple more up here for you to encourage you this is from the word a fool now children sons and daughters listen to this a fool spurns his father's discipline but whoever heeds correction shows prudence you want to be wise kids you want to grow up wise listen to your dad let your dad teach you watch your dad's life and then this one a wise son heeds his father's instruction but you know what they won't do that if they see a ton of inconsistencies in you right is it hard for you to take orders from a boss who doesn't do and live what he tells you to do and live how much harder is it for our wives and our kids if they don't see us dealing with the stuff in our lives that we're pointing out about their lives you with me it's tough isn't it but this is the way it is this instruction and correction that we're talking about are for right thinking and right living that is in the

Lord this is not about being earthly! wise this isn't even about common sense this goes beyond that this is about the wisdom of God for life so it's teaching your kids to think and behave with propriety!

dignity and respect and kindness and integrity boy these things are getting lost aren't they you see what's going on today and you see 20 years you see a generation or two of people being taught in public schools they can be whatever they want to be do whatever they want to do say whatever they want to say and so they take it out in the!

[37 : 32] we need! raise our kids and propriety and dignity respect kindness integrity that's such a gift of love to give your children I remember my dad wasn't saved I was not raised in a Christian home and my dad was not a believer raising me did the best he could and I remember my dad used to say to me Jeff don't do as I do do what I say and I remember even as a child I didn't know what to do with that I didn't that didn't compute that's a terrible thing to say to people to children don't do as I do do like I say because my dad lived one way and told me to live another and I resented him for it now much later in life my dad and I got super close and I'm just so thankful for my dad's life and all that God used to do in my life through my dad but that was tough that's not how we want to do it the third one that

I want to give to you the I is involved and it just grows! there are attitudes which work against dads being involved and faithful in a godly way and they stem from pride they stem from selfishness we'll call it what it is now I want to say this to you because this is something that you see a lot in the comedy shows and movies that come out a lot of the Disney mess that comes out when they talk about authority or especially about a dad dads are not babysitters do you get this you're a father you're a dad and so when the wife leaves and you're at home with the kids you're not babysitting you're fathering big difference fathers don't leave their kids to be raised by nannies and nannies and daycare centers and babysitters they raise their children and they're invested they're involved

I could have used invested it works as well dads godly dads god dependent dads are invested in their children they raise their kids it's messy it's time consuming it's personally a cost to you to invest in the life of your children in this way no matter what age they are but it's what we're called to do it's impossible for fathers to be faithful to what we've been talking about when you're absent from your children's lives when you look on your kids as a liability or an intrusion on your privacy an intrusion on your hobby an intrusion on your other interests even an intrusion on your work your job I've seen all this children get in the way of your life and boy you communicate that to them if you're not careful so dad listen gentlemen please no one can replace you in

God's economy you and you alone are God's choice to be the dad of your kids Ben you're you're Rowan's dad not me you're Aiden's dad not me so I come alongside of you and encourage you to be a dad to these boys love them you come alongside of me and encourage me to be a dad to my kids right that's the way we do it dads you you are God's choice you're the man of the hour for your children nobody else you're that man but are you you see where we are now are you if you're!

absentee you're! not don't abdicate the privilege of being a dad by being absent from your children's lives and don't make excuses for it because they'll be this tall and looking down on you like that and then it's gone then it's gone be involved by being all there that has a lot now here's how I say this please listen to this being involved by being all there has so much more to do with what you do with the time you make for them than with the time you have to spend away from them did you catch that make the most of the time you have that you can be with them first of all make it a priority and second of all be all there when you're there I remember many times with my dad when I was with my dad but I wasn't right and I felt it I can reflect on those moments then the

[42 : 40] T trustworthy your life and your walk your talk they all match so that your kids can consistently rely on you they can trust you they can trust their dad to model God's truth for them they don't have to look to somebody else's dad it's fine if they want to look to pastor Jeff or pastor Greg and they admire and respect some things in their pastor Jeff and Greg that's fine that's great but you're the man in their life that they look to right they don't look past you to see what they want to see in another man they see it in you why listen now we're back to the beginning because you are disciplining your life in godliness it's a priority it's a thing and you're not willing to abdicate because you know what's at stake we don't say this stuff anymore do we we're not telling people this stuff this is the opposite of do what

I say not what I do no we're talking about integrity you're a reliable source of truth in what you tell your kids you're a reliable source of truth in what you live in front of your kids so you can see how this dovetails with being a follower of Jesus because what you're saying is look kids wife follow me as I follow Jesus I'm not going to do it perfectly there are going to be times when you're going to see too much of me and not!

Jesus but please forgive! I may not think I'm being prideful but you know maybe in that moment I'm not the best one to ask Psalm 112 look at this it's up on the screen praise the Lord how blessed is the man who fears the Lord whenever we talk about fearing the Lord we're not talking about being terrified!

of him because we're scared of him oh don't hurt me God it's not that the we've come to know him as a loving God who provides for us and wants the best for us he's good he's good praise the Lord how blessed is the man who fears the Lord who greatly delights in his commandments look if you're terrified of God you're not going to delight in his commandments and his truth he will not be afraid!

of evil tidings because his heart is steadfast trusting in the Lord see this is what I'm talking about these are not men of excess these are steadfast men they know who they are and they're firmly planted in the truth of the Lord and that truth is defining and guiding their life and so what comes of that a confidence it's not cockiness you understand the difference between cockiness and confidence!

[45 : 48] the hearts of the people I serve that I love that I care about now this keeps me humble so that I have a steadfast and trusting heart not a weak and wandering heart but a steadfast and trusting heart our wives and our kids need to see that our world needs to see that in Christian men they need to see that Christian men are not wimps we're not man but we're also not guys out here walking around strutting our stuff we're humble and meek men who want to follow Jesus and make a difference for him now if your children are convinced that you trust God with both the big and the small things of life they will be more inclined to trust you and your judgment because they see that steadiness I remember even when my kids my kids are adulthood and they began to strongly disagree with our faith and the life we had lived in our faith and continue to live and they began to find ways to voice that to us

I remember that our kids would always say this to us we'll give you guys this you guys have remained rock steady about the way you live your lives you have never ever stepped back from what you believe even when it cost you everything they would say that to us that's the one thing right that's the one thing they gave us they didn't give us anything else but they gave us that one thing they saw the steadiness they saw the persevering through the hardships!

that we would not capitulate or lay down our faith or back off of truth we kept! it! And that's what you do and the world needs Christian men like that don't they we need Christian men who will walk like that in the meekness of Jesus when your kids see the benefits of you trusting God's truth in your life they will know what it looks like when God proves himself faithful over and over again in your life you hear that that's what you're showing!

walking with Jesus and staying even if it means this happens or that happens or you lose this or you lose that and they see you staying steady in your faith they come to understand this is something deep here this has some roots this has some substance and then you show them God's faithfulness in your life the faithfulness of God over and over they see that over and over again God provides everything and here's our kids and here's us there's no job there's no money there's no place to live now what now what and they watched God provide for us in ways that astounded them like I had a guy call me that I hadn't seen from seminary in forever forever he's not we're not friends like that we just knew!

each other in seminary hey how you doing man God put you on my heart really hey dude yeah good to hear from you how's it going catch up I'm going to send you something okay thanks I didn't know what the next thing we know what do we get in the mail \$20,000 tax free \$10,000 for her \$10,000 for me I was out of work for one year due to a lot of circumstances we made more money in that we go out to the mailbox and there would be an envelope in there we take it in the house it had \$1,200 in it there's my rent my mortgage now I don't know if God does stuff like that for you I'm just saying that God knew where we were and he knew why we were there and God took care of us he does stuff like that he does stuff like that because he's good and he's faithful he also does a hundred other littler things smaller things that are just as important

[50 : 03] I gave you some big ones that are wow but all the day-to-day stuff he provided places for us to live he provided work for me he blessed me in that work I did jobs that I had no idea what I was doing I went in and I said you think I can do this job she said I think you could do it you just got to make it you I said I'm going to try it and I go in and I do it and God blesses me and we make a great living and I'm like wow look at that who did think it what did I know all of this produces this next one humility when God takes care of you like this it's humbling and so gentlemen here's my encouragement to you in humility be who you are let me say it a different way be who you are you don't have to be a dad and do dad just like I do it or just like Dave does it or Ben does it you're a dad you need to be you as a dad because you're the man of the hour for your family if there are things you want to incorporate in your life that you see other men in our church doing you go to go to

Clyde I'm going to pick on you bro because you can take it pick on Clyde he's tough skinned he's learned no I love this brother he's gone through a lot in life God's taught him a lot of lessons and so God is going to use you use him in your life you can go to Clyde and you can see something in Clyde's life as a dad now you're a dad all over again right how old is mace four years old this is granddaddy and he's raising a four year old again God bless him and so you see Clyde and you watch his life and you say boy I want to know more about that well go to him and ask him say hey can we go to lunch and then go sit down with this brother and pick his brain and ask his weaknesses he'll tell you how God is using him and his strengths and he'll encourage you in the Lord these are the brothers that we have in here so go you younger guys go to these men who got some bumps and knocks and you think we look the way we look because we been through it come and ask but at the end of the day you're the dad and so step up the world absolutely knows nothing of biblical masculinity and fatherhood so don't ask them the standard today is to depict dads as buffoons!

out of touch losers clueless clowns mousy nerds womanizing abusive dictatorial tyrants selfishly absorbed and hopelessly distant okay pretty much used to sum me up but not since Jesus images of tough guy vengeance a real man can beat anybody up who gets in his face times four that's a real man a real man puts his lust on display and does it in a way that charms people you see this carnal conquests I won't even go there materialism rude behavior disrespect and disregard for women selfish egomania personal pride is license for anything these are all the common pictures of manhood and fatherhood and they have absolutely nothing to do with the meekness and humility of our

Lord and Savior Jesus Christ he is the most manly man that ever walked the face of the earth let me give you two references I'm not going to go there for time I want you to have these and I want them on the recording Philippians 2 3 and 4 speaks profoundly to personal humility and putting the interests of others ahead of your own 1 B It gets it wrong in big, big ways.

The world can't find any balance. Hear me now, gentlemen. The world cannot find any balance at all between masculine gentleness and masculine genteelness.

[54 : 58] That used to be a word, genteel. The question is, can a real man be tough and tender? Was Jesus tough?

You think about what Jesus experienced. You go 40 days and 40 nights without anything to eat, without anything to drink, in the middle of the desert all alone, and then get attacked by the devil himself.

And we'll see how you do. Yeah, he was tough. Was he tender? Was he tender? Woman, go and sin no more.

He said that to a harlot who'd lived all of her adult life giving herself away to any man that came along the pike. And Jesus forgave her, and she followed Jesus the rest of her life. Go and sin no more.

He loved her. He loved her. And she loved him. Micah 6.8 He has shown you, O man, what is good and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

[56 : 09] Guys, I want to ask you this question before we move on. Most of you in here, most of these men, I know you, you're my brothers, and I know you pretty well. Are you guys, do you guys feel like you're able, within five minutes, to tell if a guy you've just met has a sincere humility about him or is more about himself?

Okay, Ben is going, oh yeah. Oh yeah. You see? That's right. That's right. You know, and so do they. People pick up on fake.

And so we're not talking about fake here. This is not fake it till you make it. That's horrible. That has no place in the Christian life. Do not fake it, period. Because there is no making it, faking it.

You can't get there faking it. Fake it till you make it is stupid. Sorry. Sorry, Nathan. I'm good. I'm good. It is wrong.

It is wrong to do that. He's going to talk to me after the service. I'm not supposed to use the S word. We have our example in Jesus.

[57 : 24] He was the very, very best of men. He was tough. He was tender. He was gentle. He was genteel. He was masculine. He was meek. Alright?

Full of the Holy Spirit. We're winding down. Full of the Holy Spirit. What could be more powerful or helpful or more of a blessing to your children than a dad living out the very character of Jesus?

Wow. If you look at Luke... Now, I'll just take you there and I'll tell you the story. I'm not going to read it. We're going to go to Luke 4.

Luke 4. So, Luke is one of four what we call Gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. So, these were men walking with the Lord who wrote about Jesus' life.

They shortened it, obviously, because too much to write about if you told everything. But Luke 4, beginning in verse 1. This is where I referenced just a second ago when I talked about Jesus goes out into the wilderness for 40 days, verse 2.

[58 : 33] He was tempted by the devil. You see that? For 40 days, he was tempted by the devil. Verse 2 tells us that Jesus ate nothing during those days and when they'd ended, he became hungry.

And so, the devil came to him in verse 3 and he said, if you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread. Notice the first thing out of Jesus' mouth. It is written.

Drop down to where Satan is going to offer him all the kingdoms of the world. Look at verse 8, how Jesus answered him. It is written. Verse 9, Then Satan led him to Jerusalem.

He had him stand on the pinnacle of the temple. And he said to him, if you're the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written. Now Satan changes his strategy. Now he's quoting Scripture.

You see how much he schemes? This is a very wary adversary and he's very real and we know it too well. Satan says, I'm going to quote some Scripture at you.

[59 : 34] It is written. He will command his angels concerning you to guard you. And so he's telling Jesus, standing there, maybe hundreds of feet down, and he says, throw yourself off because this Bible said that his angels will come and take care of you.

How's Jesus going to deal with that? Now he's got the devil quoting the Bible at him. And he goes on and says this, Satan does in verse 11, On their hands they will bear you up so that you will not strike your...

Go ahead, jump. The angels will save you. Verse 12, And Jesus answered and said to him, It is said. Who said it? That's right.

You shall not put the Lord your God to the test. Guys, there it is. Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, used His greatest weapon against spiritual attack, distraction, deception, discouragement, the truth.

If you're a man of the truth, this is how you fight. You don't get out and duke it out with other people just because they cut you off at the intersection. You fight that stuff spiritually with the truth.

[60 : 39] Mitch is laughing because Mitch and I know that this is a thing. Right? And so, I'm saying about me, not about you. It might be for you, but I know it is for me. And I have to check that stuff in my spirit.

Because really, that's pride, isn't it? It's pride. How dare you cut me off? Well, who am I? Well, how dare you think you're all that? See?

It's a total different mindset. Full of the power and character of the Holy Spirit and God's truth. Jesus followed God and faced down the devil. Galatians 5.

Here's a reference. We won't go there. Galatians 5, 19-24 rehearses the contrast between the character of the flesh or self and there are all kinds of bad...

Okay, let's go there. Galatians 5. Galatians 5. This is just too good to pass up. Beginning in verse 19. Now the deeds of the flesh.

[61 : 38] When we talk about the flesh, we're talking about you and yourself in pride and selfishness and greed. This is you making it about you. You with me? When you make it about you, here's how ugly it gets.

Verse 19. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, impurity, sensuality. Those all speak to sexual lust and sexual sin in your life.

Idolatry, sorcery, enmities, that's war, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and all these things of which I forewarn you just as I forewarned you.

Those who practice these kinds of things, they're not going to inherit the kingdom of God. They're not going to heaven. But, notice the contrast in verse 22. But the fruit, the outworking, the product, the fruit of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit working in your life is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such things there's no law. Those who belong to Jesus Christ have crucified that self, that pride with its passions and desires. If we live by the Holy Spirit, let us also walk daily, take steps in the Spirit daily.

[62 : 58] That's what it means. And so, gentlemen, I'll leave you with this in terms of the F here. How do you explain you? In other words, who are you and why are you who you are?

Are you who you are because of the Holy Spirit working in your life? Is that the best explanation for you? If you were to say to somebody, let me tell you what most defines me.

I'm not complicated. I'm really not. I sometimes might seem that way, but I'm not. The thing that defines me most is the fact that the Holy Spirit lives in my life.

I'm defined by the Spirit working in my life to help me honor the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why I am who I am. That's why I do what I do on the whole.

So who are you? Who are you? Are you that man? And then this one. Under authority.

[64 : 01] Now I just say a couple things here. Your children need to see you submitting to God's authority as you pray and live God's truth. Your children need to see that you're a man taking orders.

You're a man under authority. But they also need to see that that authority you're under in the Lord is not burdensome. You don't wear it like a big, you know, your own cross, you know.

Look at Daddy crucifying Himself every day. You see what I go through. It's not that. This is you joyfully bearing the reality that you get to serve Jesus.

It's a privilege that you wake up with every morning. It's an honor for you to honor the Lord that gave His life for you. It's not a burden to serve the Lord.

People will say that to us. We started long ago to learn don't use the word sacrifice about you and your life. Sacrifice. We'll talk about sacrifice.

[65 : 01] And my name's not going to get mentioned in that sentence. The primary emphasis of Jesus' life wasn't so much anti-world as it was pro-God.

So let people know you as a man under authority, but let them know you as a man under authority who is displaying more about what He stands for than what He stands against.

I'm for Jesus and I want you to see that. If I just stand for Jesus and make Jesus the priority, the stuff that isn't Jesus will be very clear. So I'm going to lift up Jesus.

I'm not going to come to you and challenge you about all the things that I'm not or that I stand against or that I'm not for. This is how we witness to homosexuals. Homosexuals are not our enemies.

They're people to be one to Christ. Loved to the Lord. And so when we witness to people like that, we don't come with this chip on our shoulder and this pride in our heart and we're going to look down on you and talk about you and make fun of you and all that kind of thing.

[66 : 02] That was junior high school. Now we want to bring a pro-God mentality to them. We want to talk to them about what we stand for in the Lord and what God brings to this equation.

Pro-God. That focus put Jesus at odds with most men. Didn't it? He meekly manned up for any situation at hand.

We talk about manning up. Jesus manned up in every situation He met because He was so pro-God. He just wanted the Lord to be honored. It doesn't matter if it's a context of submission to your boss, your pastors, your government, any other authority.

Your kids need you to show them biblical submission in action. They need to see you when you have to say no to an authority. They need to see you handle that with grace and wisdom, don't they?

Because we have to say no, don't we? They come here to shut this place down. They're going to see two pastors standing out there saying that's not going to happen. You could put chains on these doors and we'll meet out here under this tree.

[67 : 10] But we're going to meet. We say no. Anytime the government asks us to do something that betrays our faith to the Lord Jesus Christ, we choose Jesus. And we just go with it.

And that's consequences, huh? So we model respect for authority. If you look at Romans, there's just a couple of verses in Romans that kind of sum this up so we don't have to say any more about this.

We just went through COVID not long ago and this was something that we taught and preached on quite a bit. Romans 13, verses 1 and 2 make it pretty clear.

Every person, do you notice that? Every person is to be in subjection or in submission to governing authorities. There's no authority except from God.

There's your reason for your submission to governmental authority because there is no authority except from God. And those which exist are established by God. And so he's going to go on to say if you try to throw that off, you're throwing off on the Lord.

[68 : 15] Whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God. That's pretty serious. And they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. So again, I say to you, we follow the governmental authorities even when we disagree with them until it comes to the place where those authorities are trying to get us to do something which we know counters what we're told to do in loyalty to Jesus.

Then we have to say we can't do that. Can't abide by that one. We'll do a lot of things. We'll suffer a lot of things. We'll do distasteful things. But when you get us to the place where we have to pick between you and Jesus, it's an easy choice.

And that's where we're going to stay. And so we don't wear that like a big old badge. We don't fly banners out there, you know. We just walk. We just walk.

And then finally, we get to loving. This is a good one to end with. How does the Bible tell you that God and Christ love you? Now gentlemen, think about that. Don't let that go by you.

We're almost done. How does the Bible tell you that God and Christ love you? Guys, can you think of passages that reflect God's love for you?

[69 : 24] Because that is exactly how you are to show love to your kids and to your wife. When the Bible talks about how much God forgives you, that's a cue for you to know you need to be a forgiving man.

When the Bible talks about how much God loves you in the sense of giving you mercy and providing for you, that's how we need to show love to our families. We need to provide for them and show great mercy toward them.

When the Lord says that He loves us and He's steadfastly patient with us, we need to be steadfastly patient in loving our wives and our kids.

You see? Reflecting the character of the Lord. I do want to give you a few passages before I conclude. If you look back at 1 John with me, back toward the back of the Bible again, let me give you just a few references, okay?

Hang in there with me. 1 John 4. This is very important. I wanted to conclude with these passages. 1 John 4, beginning in verse 7.

[70 : 30] I so much appreciate how these authors of the Scriptures refer to God's people so often in these tender ways. Notice the first word of verse 7.

Beloved. That means, those loved of the Lord. Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. By this, the love of God was shown in us that God has sent His only begotten Son, Jesus, into the world so that we might live through Him.

In this is love. Not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the satisfaction for our sins.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. You see that? Verse 11 tells you how you're to love each other. You're to love each other exactly like God loves you, and that's all described in those verses right before that.

[71 : 42] The question is, are you loving your wife and kids like that? Let me give you another one. It's very familiar to you. It's in 1 Corinthians 13. This is what we call, Christians often refer to as the love chapter.

You know that it's actually a rebuke. Paul is saying, you need to be doing more of this, and you're not. So let's remind each other what love really is all about.

And in verse 4, he says this. 1 Corinthians 13, 4. Love is patient. Love is kind. And is not jealous.

Love does not brag and is not arrogant. Love does not act unbecomingly. It doesn't seek its own. Love is not provoked.

You see? Love does not take into account a wrong suffered. In other words, love doesn't keep a list of wrongs. And so we're ready to throw them down in front of people at any moment.

[72 : 51] Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things. Love believes all things. That means love believes the best.

Love hopes all things. Love remains hopeful. And love endures all things. Love perseveres through tough, hard, trial. When you're not getting what you want the way you want it, love presses through and keeps you steady in serving others.

Look at verse 13. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three. But the greatest of these is what?

Love. I want to end with one other Scripture. It's in 1 Corinthians and it's in chapter 16. Men, you will recognize this passage. We have adopted this passage for our men's ministry.

We have taught extensively on it. 1 Corinthians 16, beginning in verse 13. Be on the alert. Stand firm in the faith.

[73 : 57] Act like men. Be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. So in love, be on the alert.

In love, stand firm in your faith. In love, act like men. In love, be strong. Strong. That's our mandate, isn't it? So dads and fathers, this is the...

That's what this was this morning. I told you the air would clear and we would end in love. The Lord loves you, gentlemen.

And He chose you to be the dad and husband for your family and your kids. And so let's step up to the plate and let's be faithful in that.

The best way I know to end all of this is to tell you that you need to bookend your ministry to your family with prayer. Bookend all that you do in your ministry to your family by praying and praying.

[74 : 56] Everything in between, before and at the conclusion. Be a man of prayer. That's how you remain a God-dependent dad. You go to God in prayer because you need Him.

You're desperate for Him and you know it. Let's pray together. Father, I thank You for my brothers. They are so good to allow me the privilege to stand up here and say these things to them.

I know that each one of these brothers in their own way and at their own level could have said many of these things. They believe them. They're trying to live them. They're trying to be repentant and wise and caring.

And I pray for the wives this morning and for the kids because obviously when we rehearse the standard like this, we're always going to have to face up to the fact that there's failure.

There's weakness. And it becomes glaring. And so I pray for the wives and the kids who see these glaring weaknesses and failures in their husbands and in their dads.

[75 : 59] And I pray that You will help them to be forgiving and careful and prayerful and loving and kind and patient. I pray that You will help us all to invest in each other in our growth and the character and likeness of Jesus so that we will be able to maintain this harmony of humility as we minister to each other.

A harmony of humility in our church life and in our home life. Help us to wear it with joy. We pray all of this in Jesus' name and for His glory.

Amen.