

# A Flourishing Family

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[ 0 : 00 ] This past week I've been reading Psalm 128, Psalm 127. Our hearts resonate with those psalms. Psalm 28, blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways.

And then you hear the blessing that comes with fearing the Lord and walking in his way. You will eat the fruit of your labor. Blessings and prosperity will be yours.

Your wife will be a fruitful vine within your house. Your sons will be like olive shoots around your table. Thus, that means in this way, the man is blessed who fears the Lord.

We all long for that experience of a flourishing family. It's wired right into our creation. It was not good for man to be alone.

And the next thing God did was to bring him a wife and to begin a family. And then the Lord looked and said, oh, that is very good. That's part of what we are.

[ 1 : 07 ] But what does it take? How do you get there to a flourishing family? We saw last time, which was July 3rd, so it's been about a month now, that flourishing families always have three core qualities.

I wonder, do you remember what they are that is in the DNA of a flourishing family? Wisdom. 24.3, Proverbs 24.3, by wisdom, a house is built.

And through understanding, it is established. Through knowledge, its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures. Understanding, knowledge, wisdom, that's how you build a flourishing family. Wisdom is supreme. Therefore, get wisdom. Esteem her, and she will exalt you. Embrace her, and she will honor you. One of the crowns that wisdom puts on the head of all those who pursue and find and gain her is the crown of a flourishing family.

It's the words of Psalm 127. It's having a quiver full of sharp arrows. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.

[ 2 : 30 ] So you're honored. You're honored in public with your flourishing family. And that's a crown that wisdom puts on your head. So wisdom. Humility.

The Lord tears down the proud man's house, but he keeps the widow's boundaries intact. The Lord is active and involved to and toward families.

He tears down a proud man's house. So pride is the worst enemy for a flourishing family. Pride is intoxicating.

It's wonderful to experience, but it turns out to be our worst enemy. What causes fights and quarrels, James asks. Well, I want something, and I don't get it.

And that's pride in action. I think I deserve this, and you're keeping it from me. Or I do something wrong, but I don't say I'm sorry. And what happens is resentment builds.

[ 3 : 28 ] So dad never apologizes. Men, do you know how to humble yourself and apologize to your children? Dad never apologizes, and walls just grow thicker.

But humility says, I'm sorry. Humility says, I want to make things right. I want to do better next time. I haven't arrived. I'm not perfect. I want to learn to do better.

Humility opens your hands to ask God into a situation that's hard, that's difficult. Pride says, I'm just going to keep going, or I know I can figure this out on my own.

But humility calls in God, and God gives more grace. And that's what is so sweet about humility. Then the third quality is righteousness.

The house of the righteous contains great treasure, but the income of the wicked brings them trouble. Righteous there is talking about actual lived out obedience.

[ 4 : 35 ] People that actually live out the word of God and obey it, they experience great treasure. Psalm 19 is true.

The law of the Lord is perfect. Reviving the soul. So where the word of God is, a soul is revived.

It's flourishing. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. By them your servant is warned. In keeping them, there is a great reward. One of the rewards of righteousness is to experience and to live in, so often, a flourishing family.

And so, show me a family, obeying the reviving, enlightening, protecting, radiant word of God, and I will show you a flourishing family.

The very same thing could be said of an individual, and it goes towards the family. Well, that's where we start. That's foundational. We ask the question, we want a flourishing family.

[ 5 : 40 ] How do you get that? How do you obtain that? Well, that's where you begin, according to Proverbs. These things are foundational wisdom, humility, and righteousness.

Now, we're not going to be leaving those things, but what we are going to be doing is saying, Okay, now how does that work out in various relationships? We've already spent a lot of time in Proverbs 5 and 6 talking about marriage relationships, and so I'm not going to go back and look at a lot of those things again.

If you want to look at those chapters again about what it looks like to live wisely with your spouse, I would encourage you to do that. But today I want to talk about parents and children, flourishing child-parent relationships.

And so let's talk about that. A lot of this is going to be a reminder for a lot of you. A lot of you, even as I look out, you're not in this stage anymore.

And maybe, as I'm sitting here looking and thinking about your role in this, is to be reminded yourself of these things, and to encourage those people who are in this stage of life, to encourage them to say, You know what?

[ 7 : 02 ] That is true. This is true. And I think you're going to be able to say, These things are true. You're going to be able to say, You know what? I didn't do this, and I should have.

And let me encourage you to do it. Or, I did do this. And let me encourage you. It was worth it. I know it was hard at the time, but it was worth it. You know, we as a... The church is not just me or Pastor John speaking to you.

It's all of us speaking to one another. And so we all have a role in teaching and discipling one another in this area. And so whether these years are long gone for you, I hope that you realize that you still have a ministry, and that you still have opportunity to serve the Lord, to encourage, to help our younger brothers and sisters while they're in the heat of battle.

So this is going to be a reminder for many of you. But, you know, reminders are good. The Bible is full of reminders. I think the Bible would be much thinner if God only said one thing one time and that was it.

But you get a lot of reminders. And that's good when we need this. And a coach, when he's at a game and his players are on the basketball court, will yell the same things that he's been yelling in practice a hundred times.

[ 8 : 24 ] He'll say, you need to box out. Box out. Now, that's something he's practiced. That's something he said in a game. But now in the heat of the conflict, the heat of the game, they need to remember that.

Because when you're in the heat of it, you can forget to do something as fundamental as, I'm going to box out and I'm going to get the rebound. And so the coach yells, box out.

Well, or if they are boxing out, you're saying, good job. Keep it up. So take this sermon that way. Maybe you need to remember the things that you already know.

Or maybe you need to just hear again, you are on the right path. And if you are, keep it up. Keep it up. Be encouraged. I actually want to start with a verse in the New Testament.

Paul knew the book of Proverbs. He was raised with it. He no doubt learned it at home, at synagogue. He learned it at school.

[ 9 : 30 ] And so the book of Proverbs is definitely in the architecture of Paul's mind. He quotes it when things come up. It's in his blood, so to speak.

And so as he's writing to the Ephesians, he writes with Proverbs in his blood, so to speak. In Ephesians chapter 6, verse 4, you can either turn there or you could just listen.

Ephesians 6, 4 says, Fathers, do not exasperate your children. Instead, bring them up in the training or the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Now, what I want to say is that is an excellent summary of what you see in the book of Proverbs. It's just wonderfully compact synthesis and digestion of what you see in the entire book of Proverbs.

So fathers, fathers, you are the head of your home. You are the ultimate in responsibility for what goes on there.

[10:38] The raising of children. And now I know that you know this. But remember, and maybe you need to remember, are you doing this with as much zeal and as much life and energy as it deserves?

Are you being distracted, entertained, lost, wandering away? Are you doing it with as much zeal as you once did?

It's very easy, and I just speak completely from experience. We get tired. We get distracted. We get beat up by life.

And we forget. We forget to do what we're supposed to do. But the Lord has given us this wonderful and this immense responsibility.

Fathers, this is talking especially to you. And in Proverbs, you see the father doing exactly what Paul is saying in Ephesians 6.4.

[11:48] Proverbs 6.20. My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Chapter 4, verse 1. Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction.

I can multiply examples where the father is saying, Listen to me. I'm giving you something. He's taking his job seriously.

You cannot read Proverbs without realizing there is a father who is taking his children seriously and raising them up.

And I wonder, men especially, but we can talk to all parents, do you feel that? He's poking us. We're seeing a father doing what Ephesians 6.4 talks about.

And he's poking us. And he's saying, don't trifle. And he's after it. He's showing us what this looks like. And he's after it with zeal. Well, next it says, don't exasperate your children.

[12:50] The idea, that idea is all over the book of Proverbs 2. As you read the book of Proverbs, you don't see a father upsetting and making his children angry or making the word of God to be something that they don't want, that tastes bad.

Wisdom is sweet. Sweeter than honey, he says. That's not cramming bad things down an unwilling child's heart into an angry child's throat.

No, there's these lovely passages about pleasant words promote instruction. He's not interested in upsetting and irritating and exasperating his children.

He wants to promote instruction. And the father warns and he encourages. But you cannot doubt that the father in Proverbs is doing this so warmly, so affectionately, so lovingly.

Is there any doubt how he feels about his children? You know, fools will make it hard for their children to obey.

[14:07] Fools exasperate their children. But is there any doubt, as you read the book of Proverbs, that the father is very affectionate towards his children?

He has their best interest at heart, and he makes sure that they know he has their best interest at heart. And again, this is because ultimately the father in the book of Proverbs is God talking to his children.

And how he speaks to us, there's no doubt that God is on our side as he comes to us in the book of Proverbs.

He's on our side. He's going to tell us things that hurt. He's going to pull us up short. He's going to talk about discipline and hard things, just like what we're going to do today. But there is no doubt that the father is on our side.

Now, I'm always saying that to my children. You know, we're on your side. You know, I'm saying this, and it's a rebuke, but I want you to know I am not against you.

[15:14] I verbalize that because it's important for children to hear that. My money is yours. My time is yours. My life is yours. So I'm correcting. I'm rebuking.

And yeah, this isn't the most pleasant conversation, but I don't want you to have a doubt for a second that I love you and I'm for you. You know, and sometimes I make mistakes and sometimes I sin against you.

But you need to know I no one loves you like I love you. They need to hear that. They need to hear that. You can you can say some pretty strong things and some hard things and have some really hard conversations if they know that you love them.

That's crystal clear. And what what's the father's mission in the book of Proverbs? Ephesians 6, 4, bring them up, raise them up, grow them up. That's definitely what you see in the book of Proverbs. He's very interested in taking immature fools and making them into wise men. He's he wants to take people that are they're given to being lazy, to running with the wrong crowd, to be drawn to the wrong kinds of people.

[16:30] And he wants to grow them up. And that's what we are. Parents, we're gardeners. We're shepherds. We're taking things that are young and small and we want to make them to grow.

And, you know, a gardener doesn't just want his flowers to survive. No, granted, sometimes that's where we're at. We want them to survive.

But we don't. That's not where we're cutting the line off. We're saying we want to see them thrive. We want to see them grow. So they become like Timothy, wise unto salvation, growing in wisdom and stature and the fear of God, growing in in favor with God and man.

And what is this greenhouse where children grow up and they flourish and they become trees for God? Well, it's not in the school.

It's not in the daycare. It's at the home. That's what you see in the book of Proverbs. And we could even say, yes, the church plays a part.

[17:46] The church has a key integral role. But the center of instruction for children is the home, a loving dad and a loving, wise mom, giving them attention, giving them detailed, personal attention.

And that's what we want to do. That's what I want to do. I want to be a sun lamp in my children's life. And so that my love and my wisdom, as it shines upon them, it's bringing them up.

And of course, all that love and wisdom is from God coming through. Well, how do we do that? Ephesians says discipline. And again, that's that's correction. That's training away bad behavior, training in good behavior.

It's stopping bad behavior, stopping bad attitudes, correcting wrong thoughts. And then he says instruction. That's pursuing the truth.

And again, we're not just wishing to inform them. This is the kind of instruction that leads to obedience. It's Matthew 28. Go and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey.

[18:57] Now, are we learning that it takes more than just a command to teach our children to obey? That's what to obey.

Oftentimes they need help to, OK, how do I do that? Or this is really hard now. OK, how do I do that? We're not only just teaching them the truth. We're teaching them to obey and we're teaching them what to obey and how to obey.

And we're encouraging them to obey. And so we don't want to give put this task before our children where we're having them build and make bricks without straw.

We don't want to be like Pharaoh. We want to give them everything that they need in order to obey. And so we want to help them and we want to hold them and we want to encourage them and we want to pick them up when they fall.

And just to realize not every single situation is a task where they succeed or fail. But it's a process. It's a growth in obedience because we're growing them up.

[19:59] Like a master blacksmith teaches an apprentice. You show them what to do. And then you hold their hand while they do it.

And then you give them an old horseshoe to practice on. But it's line by line, precept by precept, giving them more and more, giving them more responsibility.

Until the goal is that they become master blacksmiths themselves. And what a happy day that is to see your children walking in wisdom.

What a happy day that is. Now, that's. That's what God is doing in us. That's why it's the fear and the or the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

This is what he is doing in our lives. Everything that you see in Ephesians 6, 4 is God models. God, our father, models for us. And what all we are doing is saying, Father, this is how you're teaching and instructing and training me.

[21:04] And now I'm going to do it. Do it for these these children. He's our model. And so Proverbs 3 says, my son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke because the Lord disciplines those he loves as a father, the son he delights in.

Again, it's hard. And I know your children have said this and my children have asked this like. Well, you don't get spankings. You don't get disciplined.

And little do they know that I would trade a spanking for a lot of things I've gone through. The Lord does discipline his children because he loves them. Because he loves them. And so, children, let me just talk to you. Don't despise. Don't despise the Lord's discipline. Don't despise your parents discipline, the painful part of correction. And sometimes your parents do punish you and they spank you and they take away your privileges. Or they make it hard for you, your life hard or painful in some way. [ 22 : 13 ] Well, what is that? Proverbs 3 says, if they're doing it for godly reasons and in a godly way, that is the Lord's discipline of you.

God himself is taking an active interest in your welfare. The Lord is showing you his love. Because sin will ruin your life. You think you have enemies. You think you have problems. The biggest thing of all is sin. Sin destroys you. It destroys your family. It destroys your future. Sin to fear. And so, it is love to strongly say no. And so, there's none of this nonsense about I love my child too much to spank them. Or I love them too much. I don't want to ruin our relationship. I don't want them mad at me. It can be hard. It can be even frightening. It can be difficult. [ 23 : 21 ] But this is what love is. That's what Proverbs is showing us. This is love. If you withhold discipline and instruction, it's not love.

You're actually wishing death on them. So, you have your hand out there. Look at Proverbs 19.18. Proverbs 19.18. Discipline your son. For in that there is hope. Do not be a willing party to his death. We're given the stark alternative of you discipline your son. Or you are now becoming a willing party. A willing participant. This is what you desire. In Hebrew, literally, it's you desire his death. And you say, well, that's not what I want. I'm not desiring their death. And Proverbs is making it very clear.

[ 24 : 24 ] Yes. Yes, you do. That's what you're choosing. When you withhold discipline. Again, parenting is hard. And we're tired. And it takes patience. And they don't get it the first time. And they don't get it the second time. But just to let them go is to be a willing participant in their destruction. And what parent wants to do that? And so, we need to be very clear. And you need to be very clear with yourself. You're choosing your life over theirs. In those moments when you don't do what you're supposed to do as far as discipline. When it's hard. You are choosing your life over theirs. You're choosing your momentary comfort over their life. And that's not how God loves. That's the exact opposite of the gospel. That's not how he loves you. The gospel is Jesus chose his death over your life. He chose our comfort over his comfort.

[ 25 : 30 ] He chose our comforts. He chose our life over his. He did not love himself. He did not coddle himself. He loved us. And if you've been a parent, you know. And you start to learn right away. It's always some form of death to love. It's always some form of, I have to say no to myself. This is going to hurt. But in those moments, we have to say no to ourselves. To meet Jesus where he's at. And we join Jesus in death, so to speak.

When we say, you know what? I'm going to say no to myself and yes to them. And whenever we join Jesus in painful love, you know what? He never leaves us alone. He doesn't leave us there floundering. He meets us with grace. He meets us with sympathy. He meets us with help and strength. [ 26 : 30 ] Help and strength to do the hard thing. And so it's like we're in his territory now. The valley of humiliation. The valley of painful love.

That's where Jesus lives, so to speak. And that's where we go and meet him in parenting. Well, that's good medicine. We need that because parenting is hard and discouraging. Here's some more strong help to do the hard thing of teaching and disciplining. Proverbs 29 and 15, and that's on your sheet. The rod and reproof impart wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother. Now, I just want you to notice this. Look again. What do you need to do as you look at that proverb? What do you need to do to bring death and disgrace?

What great thing, what horrific thing do you need to do in order to bring death and disgrace? The horrible answer is nothing.

[ 27 : 32 ] You just let a child to himself. Literally, just send the child away. Send them on their way. Pat them on the back.

Watch them go away when they needed a reproof. You just let them be and go on their way. And they don't go up. They don't incline. They decline.

And the path is only slightly curved at the beginning, but then they pick up speed, and then they become a runaway train.

I was just thinking of all of that proverb. I'm not going to be able to talk like Barney Fife, but do you remember what Barney Fife used to say about parenting?

He said, nip it in the bud. Today's eight-year-olds are tomorrow's teenagers. And I say this calls for action. And now, nip it in the bud.

[ 28 : 33 ] First sign of a youngster going wrong, you got to nip it in the bud. You go read any book you want on the subject of child discipline, and you'll find that every one of them is in favor of bud nipping.

How times have changed. But there's wisdom there. As parents, we're constantly choosing. We're constantly choosing to address something now or to meet it later.

You realize that. You're going to address this now or you're going to meet the monster later. We're always choosing. And so Barney Fife's, this calls for action. And now is exactly right.

Charles Bridges on this verse says, many a hardened villain on the gallows was once a pleasing, susceptible child, only left to himself. Left to his own appetite, pride, self-willed obstinacy.

So, again, children, what are we trying to do when we discipline, when we spank, when we rebuke, when we're calling you, calling you up short?

[ 29 : 41 ] We're trying to save you from yourself. We're trying to save you from yourself. David had a son named Adonijah, and he loved Adonijah.

Adonijah was a handsome man. He must have been, have a fairly good personality. And David loved him. But it was a sick kind of love. And it was really no love at all in the end.

David spoiled him. He never corrected him. And Adonijah, when he grew up, he wanted to be king. And God had said, you know what? You're not going to be king.

Solomon is going to be king. But Adonijah wanted to be king. Adonijah didn't want Solomon to be king. So he got his chariots and he got horses and he got 50 men to run ahead of him.

And he's full of pride and self-will. And he said, I'm going to be king. Now, do you know what happened? We don't have time to finish the story.

[ 30 : 41 ] But I will tell you this. The whole operation, the whole plan blew up in his face. He didn't get to be king. It ended in his humiliation, first of all.

And then two chapters later, 1 Kings 1, you read about Adonijah wanting to be king. I think it's chapter 3. Adonijah makes another sort of ploy.

And it looks like he wants to try to be king again. And Solomon cuts him down in the middle of his life and kills him. And it's terrible.

One brother killing another. It's terrible. How did this person turn into a wild, cocky, arrogant, rebellious man?

There's one line of explanation. His father never interfered with him by asking, Why do you behave as you do?

[ 31 : 49 ] David never interfered. Never interfered. He let him go his way. You know, maybe Solomon had Adonijah in mind when he composed Proverbs 29, 15.

A son left to himself disgraces his mother. Children, the worst thing that can happen to you is for your parents to let you go on your way.

God disciplines us because he loves us. And, you know, if we're children of God, we can, let's easily just take this verse on board too.

When the Lord is disciplining us, when it's hard going, when we're brought up short by our sins, or God is exposing our sins, we need to realize that God is up to something very good.

And behind it is this heart of love. He's doing this because he loves us. And he doesn't want to see us turned into Adonijahs. Why didn't David interfere?

[ 33 : 00 ] I don't know. It doesn't really say. Maybe he didn't want to have a bad relationship with Adonijah. Maybe he didn't want to disappoint him.

Maybe he was getting tired and it was just easier not to. Maybe he was distracted. I don't know. It doesn't say. But the worst thing that David ever did to his son Adonijah was just to let him go. Now, I, as a parent, am no different from David. And so I need to pray, Lord, help me do the hard thing. Help me do the hard thing. And Proverbs helps us because it gives us this clear-headed, strong medicine.

Proverbs 19, 18. Discipline your son, for in that there is hope. The implication is no discipline, no hope. 23, 13, and 14.

Do not withhold discipline from a child. If you punish him with a rod, he will not die. Punish him with a rod and save his soul from death. You know, it is hard. But the alternative is hopelessness.

[ 34 : 14 ] The alternative is death and disgrace. A child left to himself disgraces his mother. Again, remember I said we're always choosing whether we address something now or meet it later.

This is one way that we end up meeting something later. This momentary pain for them now or a lifetime of pain for us later. Charles Bridges, again, in his commentary quotes Bishop Hawkins.

He says, and Bishop Hawkins said this, Take this for certain, that as many deserve stripes as you spare from your children, you do but lay upon your own back.

And Bridges says, moms, you won't be able to hide this trial in your heart. You won't be able to hold this where no one sees. A child left to himself disgraces his mother.

Private failings become public disgrace. And so, again, this is strong medicine, but we need to hear it.

[ 35 : 27 ] It's clear-headed. This is telling us this is how this works. This is the shape of God's world. But I want to show you the other side of this.

You know, it's not just warning. There is promise there. There's hope. There's hope in all of these passages. Again, 19:18, discipline your son for that. In that, there's hope. There is hope.

That's the point. There's future good. That's what hope means. You have this confident expectation of future good. Well, you discipline your son in that.

There is hope. There is future good stored up in that. So, don't be a willing party to his death. So, what's the hope there? It's life for them. They'll experience life because, in some way, this will save them from sin and becoming like Adonijah.

Or look at Proverbs 23, 13 and 14. Punish him with a rod and save his soul from death. Again, it's not for nothing. You're not doing this for nothing.

[ 36 : 34 ] You're saving their soul from death. 29, 15. The rod and reproof impart wisdom. Again, it's not for nothing. Sometimes it feels that way.

But what Proverbs is saying is, this is how God will impart wisdom to your children. And it's these two things. The rod and reproof.

It's not one or the other. It's not one to the exclusion of the other. It's both together. It's imparting wisdom. And it might seem like it's taking forever.

But God says, together, these things impart wisdom. You're not, again, the main point I'm trying to get across here is, you're not hitting your head on the wall for no reason. There's hope.

It's doing something good. It's bringing wisdom. It's bringing life. And perhaps, eventually, salvation. And not that this is going to save them directly or anything.

[ 37 : 30 ] But it puts the child in a position where you're guarding his heart. You're making his heart sensitive to sin and to consequences.

Timothy's mother and grandmother poured scripture into Timothy. And they no doubt corrected and trained Timothy. And what was the end? What was the end of that?

Well, he became a man that Paul could say, I have no one like him. No one like him. Useful. Useful to God. Useful to other people. Paul would say, so useful to me.

Timothy was loved and appreciated. Proverbs 22, 6 was true. Train a child in the way he should go. And when he is old, he will not turn from it.

And I don't know about you, but like, I think we can tend to say, well, this is a proverb. And this isn't always necessarily true. And again, I would say, yes, that's true.

[ 38 : 30 ] But is that really what God wants you to take from that proverb? Uncertainty and doubt and fear. No, I think the point is there's hope.

Train a child. That means literally dedicate a child. It's the same word for dedicating a temple or altar. You dedicate your child to the Lord in the way that he should go.

That's in the discipline and the instruction of the Lord. And you do it with love and you do it with wisdom. You do it with kindness. You do it carefully. With all the wisdom that God gives. And the point is there's hope. There's hope. They won't leave the path. You know, there's a whole modern theory of teenage rebellion and going off to college as prodigal sons and all the rest. And it's just not true. That whole premise is wrong. No, what Proverbs says is, you know what? These young people, they start to take it on board themselves. [ 39 : 35 ] They go through life and they start to see, yeah, mom and dad knew what they were talking about. The word of God is true. And they start to live it out themselves. And so what have we seen?

We've seen teenagers coming to Jesus Christ. We've seen 22-year-old coming to Christ. Tonight we're going to vote on one. And it was the sticky words of mom and dad following that, following him, that wouldn't let him go. So I've seen 50-year-olds coming to faith in Christ with the words and the love of mom and dad still back there, still holding on. And they're ringing in their ears. And the point here is God means for you to be encouraged in all of this. Yeah, they're strong, negative. Watch out. Be careful. But Proverbs is not a pessimistic book. And Proverbs is not meant to train up people that are thinking that it's all going to be dreadful. There's hope. [ 40 : 39 ] Proverbs is realistic. It's sober. But it's not pessimistic. Because God saves. Because God is at work. God gives wisdom. And he gives wisdom to our young people. And he gives wisdom to our children.

And so he's the God of hope. And so we do our part. But the whole time, what are we doing? And we're looking to God to bless. We know that we can't do it by ourselves. But he can. And so we make Psalm 127 our prayer. Unless the Lord builds the house. That's what we say. Lord, unless you build this house. The laborers labor in vain. And so we do our part. But the whole time, we want to take this prayer on of, Lord, build this house. It's not going to be enough. It's just not going to be enough. I need you to bless. I can't do it on my own. We can't do it on our own.

[ 41 : 37 ] And so we do our part. But the whole time, we need to be saying, Lord, build the house. And it is my prayer that he does it here for our joy.

For our joy and for his glory. Well, parenting is some of the most first hands-on, first line of defense and first line of offense of discipling. And so our closing hymn is about bringing people to God. Bringing people to God. And so that's what we're doing with our children. It's him 493. Please pray with me. Our Heavenly Father, we do commit to you our families, their cares, their concerns, their difficulties and struggles. We also commit to you their opportunities and their strengths and their possibilities and their potential.

[ 42 : 41 ] We do want to have families that reflect your love, your care, your beauty, your wisdom. And so, Holy Spirit, come and take what is yours and shed it abroad in our hearts.

And make us strong for these difficult days that we live in. We do pray that you would raise up our children and save them, equip them, and then make them your servants for your glory. We pray. In Jesus' name, amen.