

MESSAGE ONE

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Genesis 1:26-28 (NASB)
26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

MESSAGE GOAL:

This sermon will help people understand that God created the family unit to display His Triune image.

INTRODUCTION:

There was a man who noticed some cracks on his living room wall. So he called a painter to repair and cover the cracks. It looked like the painter fixed the problem but a few weeks later the cracks reappeared. So the man called the painter back and he once again covered the cracks with putty and paint. The problem looked like it had been fixed; however, in several more weeks, the cracks came back but this time they brought all their friends. So the man called the painter again. After looking at many more cracks than he had seen before, the painter said, "Sir, I can't help you because you don't have a problem with cracks." The frustrated homeowner said, "Can't you see my living room wall? Of course I have a problem with cracks!" But the painter said, "The problem isn't the cracks in your wall. Your problem is that you have a shifting foundation. The cracks you see on your wall are the symptoms of a deeper issue—the foundation of your house is moving. If you want to fix the cracks, you have to fix your foundation. But unless you fix the problem, you will forever be doing patchwork."

I'm sure that most people in our country agree that our society is crumbling. There are all kinds of cracks—social cracks, economic cracks, and relational cracks. In our society, chaos often describes the state of the family. Relationships between wives and husbands, children and parents are strained. Divorce and redefinitions of the family abound. While there are many

efforts to fix the cracks, they are just the symptoms of a shifting family foundation. The breakdown of the family is the single most basic reason for the disintegration of our society and culture. If we don't solidify the foundation of the family, we will forever be doing social patchwork.

One philosopher put it, "The saga of a nation is the saga of its families written large." That's why when God created the world and originated society He started by establishing a family with a specific purpose in mind. Let's explore God's purpose for the family unit.

SERMON POINTS:

1. RECOGNIZE THAT GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR FAMILY IS TO REFLECT HIS KINGDOM. (GENESIS 1:28-30)

- God's kingdom agenda for family is dominion—that the family would reflect God's rule on earth.
- Our society has redefined family so that its purpose is to fulfill our individual happiness and personal fulfillment.
- God created the family to mirror and reflect Him throughout history and to serve as a visual representation of the invisible God on earth.

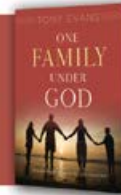
2. BELIEVE THAT GOD WANTS TO DISPLAY HIS TRIUNE IMAGE THROUGH YOUR FAMILY. (GENESIS 1:26-27)

- Our Triune God—Father, Son, and Spirit—made man and woman in His image
- Family is a unit on earth to reflect the unity of the Godhead in heaven.
- God commanded Adam and Eve, the husband and the wife, to be fruitful and multiply and fill the world and history with God's image.
- God wants people to see how the Father, Son, and Spirit work together in harmony by looking at the inner workings of the family.

3. SUBMIT TO GOD BECAUSE HE IS THE HEAD OF YOUR FAMILY.

- Our society has accepted a social definition of family instead of the theological and spiritual definition of family.





- Family is God's idea and He intends to be the authority in every family.
- When God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1), He identified Himself as Elohim, which points to His creative power.
- When God created man and woman and began to explain His relationship with Adam and Eve's family in Genesis 2, He added "the Lord" (Yahweh) to the title "Elohim," which combines a relational element with the creative power of God.
- When God wanted to relate to the family He had created, He used the name "the Lord God" because it points to His power expressed in the context of relationship.

4. UNDERSTAND SATAN'S SCHEMES SO YOU CAN PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM HIS ATTACK

- When Satan showed up to tempt Eve in Genesis 3, Satan left the relational part of God's name (Yahweh, "Lord") out.
- Satan said, in essence, keep your religion, but abandon your relationship with God and don't submit to His authority over you.
- When Adam and Eve fell, sin destroyed their relationships with God and with each other, and as a result the family unit fractured. (Genesis 3:8-19)
- Our society today can accept God, but it doesn't want "the Lord God" because it doesn't want to submit to anyone other than itself.
- When families submit to the Lord, He will enable them to stand against Satan's attacks.

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

FAMILY IS OUR FOUNDATION: When you see a sky scraper being built in the center of a city, they block off the area and the construction workers dig a huge hole. You always know how high they plan to build up by how low they dig down because it all starts with the foundation. You can't build a skyscraper culture on a shallow family foundation.

OBEYING GOD'S DIRECTIONS FOR MARRIAGE AND

FAMILY: Have you ever tried to put a bicycle together? Unless you are an engineering genius, you can't just take all the parts out and start assembling them. If you do, it may take hours or days to put the bike together. But if you read the directions, written by the bicycle maker, you can put that bike together

in no time and your son or daughter can enjoy his or her new toy. Likewise, when we read the directions for marriage and family, written by the marriage and family Maker, we will enjoy a more fulfilling, God-honoring life, and we will display His image to the watching world.

BUILDING OUR FAMILY ON GOD'S WORD: We have all heard the story of the three pigs. Three pigs built three houses to protect themselves from the threat of the big, bad wolf. As we know, the big, bad wolf huffed and puffed and blew the first house down because it was built of straw. And then he huffed and puffed and blew down the second house because it was built of wood. Finally, with all three pigs huddled inside house number three, the big, bad wolf huffed and he puffed and he blew with all his might. But the house stood strong against the assault. Why? Because it was made of brick. Whether your house stands or falls depends on what materials you used to build it. If we build our families based on God's Word and His purpose, our families will stand against the assaults of our culture.

QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:

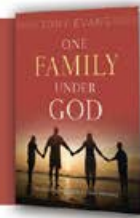
"The breakdown of the family is the single basic reason for the disintegration of society and of culture."

"If we don't solidify the foundation of the family, the nation will forever be doing patchwork."

"You can't build a skyscraper culture on a family foundation that has the stability of a chicken coup."

"The marriage maker, the family maker, knows more about marriage and family than you do."

"When you understand your role in the family and live it for the King and His kingdom...you can experience family as the Creator intended it to be."



MESSAGE TWO

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Ephesians 5:22-28 (NASB)
 22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.
 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.
 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself.

MESSAGE GOAL:

This sermon will help people understand what male leadership should look like within the family unit.

INTRODUCTION:

A man one day was on an airplane next to a fellow traveler. The fellow traveler began a conversation with the man. The man happened to have his wedding ring on his right hand instead of his left hand. The fellow traveler noticed the wedding ring and asked if he has married. The man said yes. So the fellow traveler asked why he wore his wedding ring on the wrong hand. And the man answered, "Because I married the wrong woman."

A lot of men feel like they have married the wrong woman, just like Adam who blamed God for the wife He had given him. Adam said, in essence, The woman You gave me has gotten us into all this mess (Genesis 3:12). But that's where the kingdom concept of what it means to be a man and what it means to be a husband comes in. Remember, when God came looking for the couple He had created, God didn't call for Eve or the couple as a whole, He called for Adam. Why? Because at the heart of God's kingdom agenda for the husband is bearing responsibility for the family regardless of who is at fault.

Taking ownership as a husband is critical if a man wants to

be who God created him to be. God created Adam and instructed him to live life under divine rule and to lead his family to do the same.

SERMON POINTS:

1. MEN, RECOGNIZE THAT GOD HAS A PURPOSE FOR YOU. (EXODUS 34:23)

- God called all the men of Israel to present themselves before the Lord three times each year.
- God told the men in Israel that if they would submit to His rule, He would protect their land from invaders.
- Our culture is in the middle of a crisis of manhood and we're experiencing God's curse as a result.

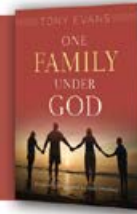
2. HUSBANDS, LEAD YOUR FAMILIES IN SUBMISSION TO GOD'S RULE. (1 CORINTHIANS 11:3)

- God's covenant order places God the Father as the head of Christ, Christ as the head of man, and man as the head of woman.
- Throughout the Old Testament, God referred to Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not as the God of Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel.
- God always starts with the man because man bears the responsibility of preserving His image and passing on His blessing to the family.
- To be kingdom men, husbands must lead their families and operate in submission to God's rule.

3. WIVES, REMEMBER THAT GOD HAS ESTABLISHED YOUR HUSBAND AS THE HEAD OF YOUR FAMILY. (EPHESIANS 5:2)

- Biblical headship can be defined as governing authority.
- Husbands have been authorized by their authority, Jesus Christ, who was authorized by His authority, God the Father, to bear the responsibility for their families.
- Headship does NOT allow the husband to abuse or make selfish or arbitrary decisions that don't benefit his wife and family.





- Headship DOES mean that the kingdom husband maximizes the gifts God has given His wife and that he accepts the responsibility for the wellbeing of his marriage and family.

4. HUSBANDS, SACRIFICIALLY LOVE YOUR WIVES AND FAMILIES

- **Husband as Savior:** Just as Jesus Christ sacrificed His life on the cross to save people, the husband should sacrifice his selfish desires for the good of his wife and family (Ephesians 5:25).
 - God commanded Adam to protect the garden from the Serpent.
 - Likewise, husbands must protect their families from the schemes of Satan.
- **Husband as Sanctifier:** Husbands must set their wives apart and make them feel unique, special, and one-of-a-kind (Ephesians 5:26).
 - When kingdom husbands love their wives as Christ loved the church, the family becomes a transforming environment for the wife.
- **Husband as Satisfier:** Husbands must love their wives as much as they love themselves (Ephesians 5:28).
 - When kingdom husbands love their wives as Christ loved the church, the family becomes a transforming environment for the wife.
 - When men don't live as kingdom husbands, their prayers are hindered (1 Peter 3:7).

literally, and sanctified them for special occasions. We treat them with care and we wash them by hand when they're dirty. Then we carefully place them back in the locked cabinet until the next Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner. In the same way, the husband is to play a role in setting his wife apart, to make her feel special, unique, and precious to the Lord.

QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:

"Taking ownership as a husband is critical to you being the man you were created to be."

"We have a crisis today and it's a crisis of manhood."

"You can't be a savior unless your willing to pick up a cross. But when you pick up your cross, you draw people to redemption."

"Maybe your wife is waiting to see her savior so that she can respond in biblical submission and follow you as you follow Christ."

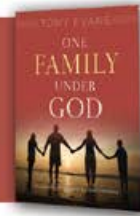
"Being a kingdom man means that the woman you live with knows she's in a class by herself."

"Your wife won't mind you leading her as God's kingdom representative if she knows she's being considered in the decision making."

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

A HUSBAND'S RESPONSIBILITY: Why do football team owners fire coaches when their team isn't doing well? The coach isn't the one who fumbles the ball, makes bad passes, or misses games. But they fire coaches because coaches bear the responsibility for their teams. Likewise, when a family gets out of spiritual alignment, God will hold the husband accountable because God has given him responsibility over the family.

HUSBAND AS SANCTIFIER: Many people have two kinds of dishes—everyday dishes and special use dishes. We keep the everyday dishes in the cupboards along with all the other eating utensils and baking dishes. We run the everyday dishes through the dishwasher and toss them back into the cupboard when they're clean. But we often keep the special-use dishes, the fine china, in a separate, locked cabinet. We have set them apart,



MESSAGE THREE

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 11:8-10 (NASB)
8 For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; 9 for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. 10 Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

MESSAGE GOAL:

This sermon will help people understand what God's role for women should be within the family unit.

INTRODUCTION:

Perhaps you have heard the story of a husband who was very upset with his wife. She had accidentally left the car running and he was livid. He bolted into the house and said, "I don't know how God could have made someone so beautiful and yet so dumb." Of course that made his wife angry so she said, "I'll tell you why God did that. He made me beautiful so you would love me but he made me dumb so I would love you."

I know many women feel unappreciated and unrecognized for their contributions to the home, family, and society. But women must have a kingdom view of what it means to be a wife. If women adopt the view of the culture, they open the door to Satan who will come into the family and bring disharmony. When God made Eve, He did so as part of His covenant for the outworking of His plan in history—His kingdom agenda. God created Adam first and then He designed Eve because Adam was to be responsible for the marriage. But Adam was not to be alone. God fashioned Eve as Adam's helper—someone who came alongside him with all of her gifts, skills, and abilities, to be recognized and appreciated, but to be under Adam's legitimate authority. Let's explore what it means to live as a kingdom wife.

SERMON POINTS:

1. WOMEN, GOD HAS A PURPOSE FOR YOU. (EPHESIANS 5:22)

- Biblical submission means that a woman willingly places herself under her husband's authority because of her submission to the Lord.
- A woman has a greater obligation to the Lord than to her husband.
- When a husband leaves the Lord, he loses his

legitimate authority over his wife.

- God's design for marriage has nothing to do with the equality and worth of the man and the woman, but it has to do with a differentiation in their roles and responsibilities.
- In the garden of Eden, Satan tempted Eve to become the leader of the marriage and got Adam to become the passive responder. When their roles got reversed, chaos and sin entered the picture.

2. WIVES, REALIZE THAT GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO SUBMIT TO YOUR HUSBANDS. (1 CORINTHIANS 11:10)

- "Wife" is a role designed by God, not just a title.
- The wife must submit to her husband "because of the angels."
- Angels have the role of assisting and supporting mankind according to God's will.
- When the roles in marriage get reversed, it interferes with what God wants to do in the marriage and it prevents the angels from providing their supernatural assistance.

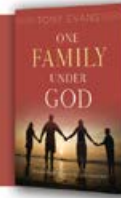
3. WIVES, FOLLOW SARAH'S EXAMPLE OF SUBMISSION. (1 PETER 3:6)

- Sarah recognized Abraham's God-given authority even though Abraham didn't always follow God or put Sarah's best interests first.
- God honored Sarah's faithfulness by blessing her with a miracle baby, Isaac, at the age of 90 (Genesis 17:17).
- When kingdom wives place themselves under the legitimate authority of their husbands, they open themselves up to God's blessing.

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

BIBLICAL SUBMISSION: When you get onto the onramp for the freeway, you have to follow some rules. If there is a Volkswagen driving down the highway and an 18-wheeler is entering the highway from the onramp, what happens? Even though the 18-wheeler is stronger and bigger and has more tires, it has to yield to the tiny Volkswagen because it





has the right-of-way. As a wife, you may feel like you are the 18-wheeler and your husband is the Volkswagen. Yet God has given you the yield sign as long as your husband is exercising legitimate authority.

MARITAL MISALIGNMENT: There was a businessman who had a demanding day ahead of him and was already late for work. He turned on the car, put it in reverse, and punched the button on the garage door opener. Nothing happened. He hit it again and again. Still nothing. Frustrated, he put the car in park and called the garage door repairman. The garage door repairman told the businessman to walk over to the garage door and find what looked like canisters at the bottom left and bottom right of the door. The repairman asked, "Are the red lights at the center of the canisters pointed exactly at each other?" The business man noticed that the red lights in one of the canisters were not in alignment. The repairman said, "That's your problem. When the red lights are not in perfect alignment, the door can't receive the signal to open." After the business man shifted the canister a little bit, the red lights matched up, the door opened, and he was off to tackle his busy day.

One of the reasons many marriages are characterized by chaos is because many women push and push and push to try to get their husbands to move. But as a kingdom woman, you've got to determine if you're in alignment with the role God has given you. Husbands have to answer their own questions before God. But if Christian marriages are going to function as God intended, wives must operate under their husbands' headship and they must affirm that they recognize the authority God has given them.

QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:

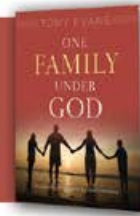
"When God made woman, He did so as part of His covenant for the outworking of His plan in history."

"You can't rewrite the Bible because people have misused the Bible. We've got to give it its right interpretation."

"The Greek word for submission means to willingly place yourself under the authority of another."

"Just as the man is not to overrule Jesus in his life, the woman is not to overrule her husband in her life."

"When Satan can reverse roles he can create chaos and keep God out of the way and demonstrating his power in the family."



MESSAGE FOUR

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Ephesians 6:4 (NASB)

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

MESSAGE GOAL:

This sermon will help people understand how parents should raise their children to embody, reflect, and replicate the image of God.

INTRODUCTION:

A mother and a daughter were shopping at the grocery store. The daughter kept misbehaving so the mother said, "Stop it, Suzanne. I'm going to spank you, Suzanne." But the daughter kept acting wilder and wilder. So the mother said, "Can't you hear me, girl. Suzanne, you better settle down or you're going to be in trouble!" The proprietor at the grocery store, after watching the scene and the little girl's disobedience, came over and knelt down in front of the little girl. She said, "Suzanne, you really need to listen to your mom and obey her." But the mother said, "Actually, my name is Suzanne. My little girl's name is Betty." The mother was correcting herself.

That sounds like our society today. We have a generation of out-of-control kids and the parents are the ones who are trying to keep themselves under control. That sounds a lot like Isaiah 3:3-5.

In Isaiah's day, the culture had so disintegrated that the children were living in rebellion against their parents. In fact, the absence of parenting is one of the reasons for a chaotic culture. Parenting has been turned over to the government, to schools, and even to churches. But God has given parents the responsibility of parenting their children and raising them to responsible adulthood. God commanded the first parents He created, Adam and Eve, to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. But not just to fill the earth with kids who looked like them and bore the same name. God commands parents to raise the next generation who will mirror the image of God. The biblical goal of parenting is to raise children who embody, reflect, and replicate the image of God and promote the kingdom of God. But when parents lose sight of God's goal, then parenting becomes whatever we want it to be.

SERMON POINTS:

1. PARENTS, RAISE YOUR CHILDREN TO REFLECT GOD'S IMAGE. (EPHESIANS 6:4)

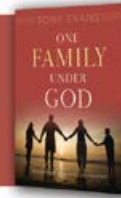
- The biblical goal of parenting is to raise children who embody, reflect, and replicate the image of God and promote the kingdom of God.
- Parents must train their children "in the Lord," which means to teach them how to live out their faith under God's rule.
- Mothers and fathers must pass down kingdom values to their children, who will in turn pass them down to their children.
- Parents must do the hard work of correcting their children and bringing them up "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).
- The Lord models parenting by disciplining His children because He loves us and wants us to reflect His holy character. (see Proverbs 3:11-12 and Hebrews 12:4-11)

2. ESTABLISH A BIBLICAL VALUE SYSTEM FOR YOU CHILDREN.

- The job of parents is to establish the value system of children to reflect the value system of the kingdom of God.
- Saul's trip to recover his father's donkeys led him When parents miss this kingdom role, you wind up with chaos in the culture—crime, a loss of personal identity, and the redefinition of values.
- Parents should filter out non-kingdom values and filter in kingdom values based on the Word and will of God.
- If parents don't raise their kids with kingdom values, their kids will get their values somewhere else—from the culture, from the media, or from their friends.
- When parents don't discipline their children, society has to set up systems to provide the missing discipline.

3. LET GOD TRANSFER HIS VALUES AND BLESSING TO YOUR FAMILY FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION. (DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9)





- In the Old Testament, God identified Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob because He wanted to transfer His kingdom values and His image through the family.
- God wants parents to teach His law and His values to their kids both informally and formally.
- Parents should teach kingdom values informally through the normal circumstances of everyday life, “when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.” (Deuteronomy 6:7)
- Parents should teach kingdom values formally through Bible studies and family devotions and over time disciple them to spiritual maturity. (Psalm 128:3)
- God intended much of family life to be lived “around the table” where parents sit down to teach their kids about God and how His Word has relevance for everyday life, to encourage them, to correct them, and to prepare them to live as image bearers in society.

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

ESTABLISHING KINGDOM VALUES: Years ago, when you walked through the airport security, they had magnetic scanners that beeped when you had metal in your pockets. Then you had to back up, empty your pockets of your keys and loose change and walk through again. But every once in a while, you could walk through the magnetic scanners with your keys and several dollars worth of change and the scanners wouldn't beep. And that's because the magnetic scanners had to be re-calibrated every so often so they would keep sensing metal in travelers' pockets. But if over time the sensors lost their sensitivity, they would let people through with metal, possibly even weapons, in their pockets. Unfortunately today we have a generation of children whose consciences don't beep because their moral sensors haven't been calibrated. The job of parents is to establish the value system of children to reflect the value system of the kingdom of God. If parents don't raise their kids with kingdom values, their kids are gonna get their values somewhere else—from the culture, the media, their friends.

Teaching biblical values to children: After they're planted, it takes olive trees fifteen years before they start producing olives. For those fifteen years, the farmer tends the tree, prunes it regularly, and makes sure that its roots grow deep down into the soil. Then after fifteen long years of preparation, the olive tree starts

producing olives. Because its roots grew strong and deep, the tree will continue producing olives for thousands of years. There are some olive trees in Israel that have been bearing olives since Jesus walked the earth. Likewise, parents must take time to help their children grow deep roots into the soil of God's Word in order to prepare them for a lifetime of fruitfulness to the kingdom of God.

QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:

“The absence of parenting is one of the keys to the chaos of culture.”

“Here is the biblical goal of parenting: To raise children who embody, reflect, and replicate the image of God, promoting the kingdom of God.”

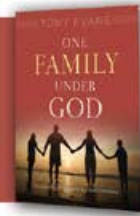
“We're in a chaotic situation today and it boils down to kingdom values not being transferred from mother and father to children.”

“The job of parents is to establish the value system of children to reflect the value system of the kingdom of God.”

“If parents aren't raising their children with kingdom values, those kids are going to get some values elsewhere. But they'll be cultural values, or peer values, or media values.”

“We've got a generation of unblessed children so we end up with unblessed adults having their own families.”

“We have a generation of young people today who aren't being corrected at home so society has to set up systems to correct them.”



MESSAGE FIVE

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Ephesians 6:1-3 (NASB)
1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), 3 SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.

MESSAGE GOAL:

This sermon will help people understand what God role for children should be within the family unit.

INTRODUCTION:

There used to be a time when if adults were walking down the street and they came upon a group of teenagers, the teenagers would step aside to let the adults pass by. By doing this, the teenagers were showing respect for their elders. But today it's not like that. Today when adults are walking down the street and they see a group of teenagers, the adults move out of the way to let the teens pass. That's because there has been a great reversal in roles. Adults often feel intimidated by young people, and many young people have developed an attitude of dishonor and rebellion.

Today, children take their parents to court if they don't like the way they're being raised or if they want to be independent of their parents. But it's interesting that these same kids who declare their independence from their parents still want to depend on them for some of the basic necessities of life. We're living in a day when many children don't even think they need their parents. Technology has made it so that they can go to their rooms and do their own thing with their own TV, iPhone, iPad, iTunes—except when it comes to eating, then they want to know what their parents have done to put food in the refrigerator.

We have raised a generation of young people who have little respect for their elders and even their parents. But in the kingdom agenda—the way God wants His kingdom to work—children have a responsibility to their parents. Paul makes that clear when he commands children to obey and honor their parents in Ephesians 6:1-3.

SERMON POINTS:

1. CHILDREN, REALIZE HOW IMPORTANT YOUR OBEDIENCE IS TO GOD'S KINGDOM

- Obedience plays a crucial role within the context of God's kingdom agenda.
- God expects all Christians to obey Him so that His blessing may rest on them.
- God calls believers to obey the governing structures He has placed over them.
- Even Jesus Christ had to learn obedience to God the Father. (Hebrews 5:8)
- If you want your heavenly Father to honor you, you must obey Him.

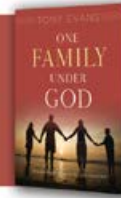
2. HONOR AND OBEY YOUR PARENTS OUT OF RESPECT FOR GOD. (EXODUS 20:12)

- Children have a God-ordained obligation to honor and obey their parents.
- Obedience means that a child will honor the desires, requests, and requirements of their parents as long as the child still looks to his or her parents for protection and provision.
- Children should show their parents honor by revering them and holding them in high esteem.
- Grown children must honor their parents by supporting them in their old age. (1 Timothy 5:4)
- In ancient Israel, when children rebelled against their parents, the parents were to bring the rebellious kids to the elders. (Deuteronomy 21:18-19)

3. REMEMBER THAT GOD WANTS TO BLESS YOU WHEN YOU OBEY YOUR PARENTS. (EPHESIANS 6:1-3)

- In both the Old and New Testaments, God's command to honor and obey parents is connected with a blessing.
- When children honor their earthly mother and father, God will honor them and allow them to live out the full number of days He has ordained for them.
- Jesus modeled both honoring one's father and receiving honor from one's father. Jesus came to glorify His Father and God the Father glorified Jesus. (John 13:31-32)





- Children who have not honored their parents must do whatever it takes to make things right.

4. LOOK TO YOUR PARENTS AS THEY REFLECT GOD'S IMAGE.

- Parents must model obedience to their kids by honoring and obeying the Lord.
- Parents should pass on God's wisdom to their children. (Proverbs 1:8)
- Parents should teach their kids the importance of submission to God, to parents, and to the authorities God has placed over them.

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

BIBLICAL OBEDIENCE: A son was watching his favorite TV show when his father came into the living room and said, "Son, please go empty the trash." The son replied, "I don't feel like it." Stunned by his son's response, the father said, "Son, I'm not interested in having an emotional conversation about your feelings. I'm just interested in you emptying the trash." "But I'm watching my favorite show," whined the son. "Son, your favorite show has to wait because your father has given you an instruction." Parents must teach their children that obedience doesn't depend on emotions but on honoring their parents as the authority God has placed over them.

QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:

"We have raised a generation of children who have little regard for their elders and even their parents."

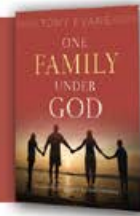
"Obedience means that a child will honor the desires, requests, and requirements of their parents as long as they are still looking to their parents for protection and provision."

"To honor means to hold in high esteem."

"You are to support your parents as they get older."

"When God sees you honoring your earthly father and mother, you will get honor from your heavenly Father."

"If you have been dishonoring to your parents, change it, and I mean, right now!"



MESSAGE SIX

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 7:27-39 (NASB)
27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife. 28 But if you marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you. 29 But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened, so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none; 30 and those who weep, as though they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as though they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as though they did not possess; 31 and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away.

32 But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; 33 but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, 34 and his interests are divided. The woman who is unmarried, and the virgin, is concerned about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. 35 This I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord.

36 But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter, if she is past her youth, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, he does not sin; let her marry. 37 But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will, and has decided this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well. 38 So then both he who gives his own virgin daughter in marriage does well, and he who does not give her in marriage will do better.

39 A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

MESSAGE GOAL:

This sermon will help singles understand how to use their time without the

demands and constraints of marriage to build intimacy with God.

INTRODUCTION:

I'm sure many singles feel like they are in a holding pattern. Like when you're flying on an airplane, just about to begin your descent, and the pilot gets on the intercom and tells all the passengers that they're in a holding pattern. Hour after hour the plane just circles but doesn't land. The passengers become more anxious wondering when they will land so they can get to their destination.

Many singles feel frustrated, alone, just waiting for their status to change. As they circle in the holding pattern on singleness they ask God, "How long, Lord, will I feel alone? When can I land and find a mate?"

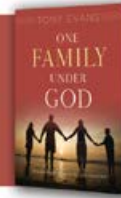
Well, God has a word for singles—and it's a strong word. Before God created a family in Genesis, He created a single man and a single woman—Adam and Eve. After God created Adam, he walked with God and knew his calling to name the animals. After God fashioned Eve, all Eve knew was her relationship with God. Before God took Eve to Adam, they were two single individuals who depended wholly on their relationships with God.

Marriage and family are supposed to reflect something bigger than just alleviating loneliness. Marriage and family must reflect God's kingdom. God had to orient single Adam and single Eve to Him before He could bring them together in marriage. The most important thing a single Christian can do is get connected with God. If, as a single person, you're just waiting for God to hook you up with your mate, but you're not using your time without the demands and constraints of marriage to build intimacy with God, you're missing the most important thing. If you're just waiting for a human relationship and you're not focusing on your vertical connection, you're going to live in a frustrating holding pattern over which you have little or no control.

SERMON POINTS:

1. *SINGLES, DISCOVER THAT GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOU IS TO BUILD INTIMACY WITH HIM.*





- God has a specific purpose for the “holding pattern” of singleness.
- God wants single believers to focus on their relationship with Him.
- Use your freedom as a single person to build intimacy with God and serve others.

2. TRUST GOD AND WAIT ON HIS TIMING. (1 CORINTHIANS 7:27)

- God wants singles to learn to trust Him and patiently wait for His timing to get married.
- When single individuals refuse to wait for God’s timing to get married, they may rush into marriage with the wrong person.
- Singles must remember that marriage is a form of bondage because husbands and wives must make all of their decisions with their spouse in mind.
- Single Christians should maximize their freedom and not seek to be bound to a spouse.

3. DEVELOP A HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE AND LEARN TO BE CONTENT IN YOUR SINGLENES. (1 CORINTHIANS 7:31)

- God wants single Christians to develop a heavenly perspective on their singleness and to develop a kingdom-oriented mindset.
- Adam learned to operate under God’s rule and to be content while he was single.
- God wants single Christians to develop contentment, which means they will be at ease in their situation, even if they would prefer to be married.
- Fulfilled, content singles have learned to operate under God’s kingdom rule and they know that God has a calling on their lives.
- Frustrated singles place their focus on a human relationship and miss out on God’s divine calling during their singleness.

4. USE YOUR FREEDOM TO FOCUS ON PLEASING GOD. (1 CORINTHIANS 7:32)

- Single Christians must use their freedom to develop undistracted devotion to the Lord.
- Single Christians can’t function as “kingdom singles” if they are focusing on the mate they don’t yet have.
- Single Christians should have a mindset that recognizes that they are kingdom Christians who are to fulfill God’s

kingdom purposes in their single state, and also later in their married state, if that is God’s will.

- Single Christians have the freedom to use their gifts, talents, skills, and experiences for God’s glory and to advance His kingdom.
- If a single Christian’s focus is on the Lord and working for Him, God will take care of him or her.

5. WAIT FOR THE CHRISTIAN MATE GOD HAS PLANNED FOR YOU TO MARRY. (1 CORINTHIANS 7:39)

- When the time is right, God will bring the right mate—a Christian mate.
- Single Christians must not settle for non-Christian mates because they’re tired of waiting on God.
- God has custom-made a mate for the single Christians whom He wills to get married.
- Single Christians must wait for the right person whom God has designed for them—it will be worth the wait!

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

DEVELOPING A HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE: There was a little boy who lost his contact while playing with his toys. He got down on his hands and knees and searched but he couldn’t find it. After a while he asked his mother to help him find the missing contact lens. Within 30 seconds the boy’s mother found it! The little boy asked his mother how she found it so quickly. She said, “Son, you were looking for a contact lens. I was looking for \$150 dollars!” Your perspective determines what you see. If you have an earthly perspective, you’re going to be frustrated because you can’t find what you’re looking for. But when single Christians develop a heavenly perspective in the midst of their singleness, they will find God’s purpose for their singleness—to love and serve Him.

FINDING CONTENTMENT IN GOD: Queen Elizabeth the first never married. She always felt the pressure to get married. One day someone asked her, “Why won’t you get married?” And she answered, “I’m already married. I’m married to the kingdom of England.” See, she had a kingdom perspective toward her nation. And that kingdom perspective gave her fulfillment and contentment as a single woman and ushered in the Elizabethan age of progress. When single Christians find fulfillment and contentment in their relationship with God, they will fulfill their kingdom destiny.