

The Five Most Important Things In Your Life: Part 3

You may be seated. Greetings everyone in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ! I thank God today, and every day, for this opportunity to stand behind this anointed desk which we Christians call a pulpit. I'm grateful for this opportunity to bring to you the word of God, as the Lord has laid it upon my heart.

What I would like to talk to you about today are the five most important things in your life. I want everyone here to think about what the five most important things in your life are. Most of you have been here as I presented my list during the first two parts, so you'll know where I'm heading. For those of you who've heard the first two parts, I would hope that you have fervently prayed over that list, and I would hope that you've made it your own.

As we have done in the previous lessons, we will be discussing the prioritization of our lives. We all need to prioritize whether we know it or not. We prioritize things either consciously or subconsciously. Those who prioritize subconsciously are more apt to forget things, or the order of those things that need to be done. As an example: When you go to the grocery store, do you finish your shopping faster or slower if you make a list? Do you get everything you came to get if you don't make a list? Do you buy more items or fewer items when you don't make a list?

I don't know about you personally, but when I go to the store, I get done quicker, buy fewer items and get everything I came to get when I make a list. If I don't make a list, it takes longer because I have to go down every row just so I don't miss anything, which takes longer. I buy a lot of things I would never have bought, and I still manage to miss items I needed to get. That's why prioritization is important.

Today, we will discuss what I believe the prioritizations should be for a Christian. You've hopefully made your own list of the most important things in your life; I will now give you mine. The five most important things in your life; in my personal opinion, are as follows: And I ask that you repeat them with me. The very first is:

1. Your personal, intimate, eternal, relationship with God.
2. Your personal, intimate, till death do us part, relationship with your spouse.
3. Your personal, intimate, until they leave home, relationship with your children.

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4. Your personal, intimate, till the rapture, relationship with your local church.
5. Your personal, intimate, till you retire, relationship with your job.

Since this message is titled: Part 3. You have probably figured out that we are going to be talking about “Your personal, intimate, until they leave home, relationship with your children.” If you will stand and turn with me to our text today:

Genesis 4:1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

You may be seated

If you are at all familiar with the bible; and especially the first few chapters of Genesis, you will know that the first thing God did was create the heavens and the earth. The things that are therein; and that are in the sky above, and in the seas below.

On the 6th day; God made man and he was finished. He rested on the seventh day. God now had someone to worship him, to fulfill the most important thing in their life. To have that personal, intimate, eternal, relationship that God desires to have with His people.

Now this is not scriptural, but it has been said that on the eighth day God made woman and man was finished. And the ladies said “Amen”, and the men said “Oh my”. At this point God has provided the basis for the second most important thing in your lives. Your personal, intimate, till death do us part, relationship with your spouse.

Due to the failure of man and woman to eat of the tree of life, and their failure in the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; they were kicked *out* of the Garden of Eden. Therefore, in order for the species to survive, God created procreation. In other words he created the desire for sex, which has been a blessing and a curse ever since. A blessing in marriage, and a curse outside the bonds of holy matrimony.

As a result of sex, there was an obvious end result called children, thus the basis for this lesson today. The third most important thing in your life:

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Your personal, intimate, until they leave home, relationship with your children.

There are many things that can be said about children, many good and occasionally a few bad. I personally love children very much, and would still love to get married and have children some day. You may say, Bro. Johnson, children at your age? I would say unto you that there are desires in the heart of a man or a woman that never fade. God has put the desire in the hearts of men and women to reproduce. I still have that urge strongly and I am continuing to prepare for what I believe to be that eventuality.

Now the bible has been used as an anagram:

Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth

And I have sought the mind of the Lord and studied those instructions in order to learn what I should know and do when the time comes that I am to raise up those future children of my flesh to serve the Lord. A very small portion of that study will be presented to you today in this bible study. The foundation for a major portion of the rest of our study can be found in the following text:

Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

All that I have learned about what is important in the raising of children can be found in this text. It sounds very simple, but it's far more complex than we have time to discuss today. However, I will try my best to make a few points about training up a child before I close this message.

There are three stages of training up a child as I see it; and they are as follows: Telling, teaching, and training. Many people try to reduce this to two, sometimes very indistinct stages. Those stages are known as "Telling and Yelling". I find this method to be very ineffective and I will address that issue later in this lesson.

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In the first stage of training we *tell* our children what to do*repeatedly!* They don't know much of anything and don't have the mentality or other needed skills to move it to the next level. Unfortunately, we often use the word "No" in their training far more often than we use the word "Do". We not only need to teach them what not to do, we need to be just as diligent to teach them what they should do.

I firmly believe that if we will tell our young children what to do, then give them positive reinforcement for manifesting that proper behavior. They'll be a lot less trouble in the future as well as have a teachable spirit when the time comes for teaching.

The second stage of training is the *teaching* stage. This is the stage where they're old enough to be taught basic bible doctrine. They can be taught things such as:

- The books of the bible.
- One God scriptures.
- Water baptism scriptures
- Holy Ghost baptism scriptures.
- Holiness scriptures, etc.

This is the time where you not only tell them *what* they should do, but *why* they should do it. If you only tell your children to do things at this stage and not why they should do them, you'll only frustrate them. This is where most parents get into the "Telling and Yelling" mode instead of the "Telling and Teaching" mode.

It says in:

Ephesians 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

We're to teach our children using wisdom, not anger. If you're yelling at your children, you're lacking in wisdom. If you tell your children to do something and they don't do it. Make it "*painfully*" obvious to them that it is in their best interests to do what they're told in the future. Proverbs puts it this way:

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Proverbs 22:15 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

Proverbs 23:13-14 Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. **14:** Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

Proverbs 29:15 The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.

There is a time to spank a child, and it varies with the child as to how often it should happen. Some may not ever need one; some may need one *daily* for a while until they get the big picture. *Any* spanking must be done with *moderation* lest you abuse your child. If you'll start at a young age, you may never have to spank your child after about age 7 or 8. They will have learned early on that it's going to cost them something more than it's worth, if they disobey their parents.

I don't believe there is ever a time to yell at your kids. If you are yelling, they have controlled you, rather than you controlling them. They will also learn to tune you out and that it's proper to yell and scream at those they love. Tell your children what to do in a controlled voice and spank them if the situation demands it. Use means other than spanking when appropriate, such as: take away something they really want or love for a period of time. Sit them in a corner, etc. Spanking is *always* a last option!

Always let them know that you hate having to discipline them because you love them so much, and that you *will* discipline them because you love them too much to let them get away with it!

This is what you call a teachable moment. Let them know that Jesus died for them so that their sins can be forgiven. But he didn't die so that they can keep on sinning. When they're disobedient to their parents they're sinning, and it's better that you punish them rather than God having to do it!

Lastly, we have the training stage. This is where I believe the church has failed its children. We have told them *what* to do; we've even taught them *why* we do it. Some churches fail to do even that. The one area where we're lacking is in the arena of training of our children "*how*" to live for God.

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How many of you know there is a distinct difference between teaching someone to do something, and training someone to do something? For those who don't, here's an example:

Let's say you have a man child. You want him to grow up to be a major league pitcher so he'll be rich and famous; and then buy you a new house....Cash!!!! Just kidding! Now you can enter the first stage of learning and "Tell" your child he needs to learn how to throw a baseball. You can then go to the second stage of learning and have him read up on where to throw the ball and how to throw the ball. At this stage, your child has still never even picked up a baseball. How many of you think he's ready to pitch a no-hitter?

Until you take your child out and put a ball in his hands and practice with him, I said and "practice with him", and "practice with him", and "practice with him" on throwing the ball, he is never going to be able to throw the ball proficiently enough to strike out his little sister, much less a major league batter.

Until you *tell* your child they need to pray, they will not pray. Until you teach your child *how* to pray, they will not pray effectively. Until you *model* prayer, and actively *engage* them in the practice of prayer, they will not develop the *habit* of prayer or reap the benefits of an effective fervent prayer life.

They will never have prayer ingrained in their heart; instead it will only be a head prayer; until they have been rooted, and grounded, in heartfelt, Holy Ghost anointed prayer unto the Lord God Almighty!

Now let's talk about the five most critical areas where we need to train our children.

1. To love and serve God

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: **5:** And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

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The first thing a Jewish child is taught is that the Lord our God is one Lord. Then they are taught to love the Lord their God with everything they consist of, their heart, their soul, their mind, and their strength.

This; is what we are to teach our children. How to love God with their whole being! With all that is within them! We can do no less in the sight of God and in fact we need to do much more. We not only need to *teach* our children, we need to *do* as **Proverbs 22:6** says; We need to *train* our children to love God

Are you modeling your love for God before your children? It's been said that what a child learns is more caught than taught. This "do as I say, not as I do" type of training which seems to be so popular these days leads only to hypocrisy.

If we want our children to grow up to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, we have to live it in front of them. We have to *tell* them about the love of God. We have to *teach* them about the love of God and *how* to show God we love Him. Then we have to *model* for them how to love God. We need to *engage* them in the practice of showing God that we love him!

2. Integrity

Revelation 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

A man or woman of integrity need not fear that they will take part in this judgment. They will be of the sheep and not of the goats. They will stand in confidence in the salvation of the Lord their God. But how will your children know what integrity looks like unless you tell, teach, and train them in the principles of integrity?

There's a time tested principle that seems to be all but forgotten by the Christian church at large; however it is used very effectively by the devil. It's called discipleship. You have to spend time with those you're trying to tell, teach, and train in the ways of the Lord.

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Why do you think the devil is so successful at keeping people lost in sin? It's because his children disciple converts, and potential converts. They teach them how to be evil by inviting them to parties and to bars. They model evil before them and invite them to participate. They offer friendship and camaraderie, things the church too often neglects.

What does God say about the importance of children?

Psalms 127:3-5 Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. **4:** As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. **5:** Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

If our children are so important to God; and for some of us, "children" is in the future tense. Then why don't we make time for them in order to disciple them in the ways of God. This is how we'll train them! We'll *tell* them to be honest, we'll *teach* them the scriptures that tell them how to be honest, we'll *train* them by modeling honesty before them and *require* honesty of them! Without training, what has gone on before will probably be in vain.

3. Financial Responsibility

Malachai 3:7-10 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? **8:** Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. **9:** Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. **10:** Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

How do you expect your children to know how to handle money if you don't teach them? You need to *tell* them at an early age to pay tithes on their

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allowance. You need to *teach* them the scriptures that tell them to pay tithes, and to not borrow money. You also need to *model* that behavior before them. If you don't pay your tithes, but make excuses as to why you can't pay your tithes, do you honestly think your children are going to pay their tithes? I think not. Ensure your children pay their tithes at the same time that you pay yours. This way they are partners with you in the principle of giving tithes and offerings. Let them see you giving joyfully, not grudgingly!

4. Intramarital relationships

Ephesians 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. **23:** For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. **24:** Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. **25:** Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

You need to tell children what their roles are in a family at an early age and expand those roles and expound upon the fulfillment of those roles as your children grow older.

Boys need to know that it's very wrong to hit a girl. Girls need to know that it's wrong to provoke a man to hit her. I say that last part only because I have seen women dare their husbands to hit them. Telling them they're too chicken to hit them.

Ladies, if you do that to a man, you're challenging his manhood and if he's never been trained to never hit a woman, you're very likely to get what you asked for. That said, I certainly do not believe that it's ok to smack her if she says that. I would never hit a woman, but any woman who would say something that illogical is obviously in dire need of counseling, or a brain transplant.

For the men who are single, don't marry a woman that loves to start fights; in fact, don't even date one like that! For the women that are single, don't marry a man with a hot temper. Sooner or later he's going to lose his temper with you and he will probably hit you. The bible tells us to not make friends with an angry man. I feel that most certainly applies to marriage.

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If you want to know how a man will treat you after you get married, watch how he treats his mother. If he treats her badly, he will treat you badly. If he treats her with respect, and is a gentleman around her, there is a very good chance that he will treat you the same way. That said, if any man treats you disrespectfully, dump him like a jug of soured milk.

I will say this over and over again; you need to model the behavior you want your children to emulate. If you want them to treat their future spouses correctly, you need to model that behavior before them. You need to instill right behavior in your children early. Brothers and sisters are never to pick on each other; they are to protect each other, and to love each other. Easier said than done, I know, but you need to give it a try. The earlier you start; the more chance you have for success.

Men, you need to love your wives and show them that you love them. Women you are to reverence your husband, which means you're to show him respect, to submit to his leadership, even when you feel he's doing the wrong thing. If you'll do this, he will love you, he won't be able to help himself. At least if he's a real man instead of a wannabe.

5. The principle of leaving and cleaving

Ephesians 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

I think we covered this pretty thoroughly in the last part, but it is important enough to go over it again. Parents, you only have a short time in which to teach your children everything they need to know in order to be a success in life. Probably no more than 18 years for most of you.

In that time period you have to teach them how to love God, have integrity, financial responsibility, love their spouse, and then it's time for them to leave. Parents, when your kids say "I do", it's time for you to say "I don't". Young people, when you tell your new spouse "I do", it's time to tell your parents "So long".

That doesn't mean you can't visit your parents or your in-laws. It does mean that you can't live with them according to the bible. If your finances are

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too poor for you to live in a place of your own, then you're too poor to get married.

The bible is very clear. It says "Leave your Mother and Father" and it also says to "Cleave to your Wife". Men, this means that as of the time of your marriage, she is the most important woman in your life, and she will be until death do you part. Ladies, once you get married, that man becomes the most important man in your life, and he will be until death do you part.

Mom and Dad, use wisdom with your children. Do not tell them how to run their marriage. You were supposed to do that *before* they got married. Once they're married, let them figure it out.

That doesn't mean that you don't let them know that you're there for them if they need advice on anything. It does mean that you wait until they ask you for it before you give it. They're adults now; treat them with the same respect you would show any other adult. They will love you for it in the long run.

If the musicians will come at this time:

God created man to worship him above all things, and our relationship with Him is above all others. Then God gave man that precious thing called woman, and his relationship to his wife is second only to his relationship with God. Then God gave children to the man and the woman, and their relationship to their children is only behind their relationship to God and their spouse.

Your children are so very important; don't ever sell them short on time! Take the time to *tell* them, to *teach* them, and then to *train* them how to be Christians first, and then how to be adults. It's not a request; it's a commandment of God. If we will all stand at this time. **(Closing Prayer)**