

The March Toward Globalism (Part 4)

Childrearing

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We are going to begin today in II Timothy 3, which is where we left off in the previous sermon.

II Timothy 3:1-5 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

II Timothy 3:12-13 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

The purpose of my previous sermon in this series was to suggest to you that operations by Satan for the Beast's end-time appearance and worldwide dominance have been underway for a long time in this nation. I am talking about well over a century or more, and one of the major ways he uses to accomplish his goal is to intensify self-centeredness in our youth that can then be applied to specific areas of life as an adult. Now the breeding ground to intensify self-centeredness is childrearing, and when God and His child-training instructions are abandoned.

I mentioned to you that God clearly counsels parents to correct their children consistently, and in measure, using both verbal rebuking and spanking. The purpose of those two is to drive foolishness—and self-centeredness is foolishness—from the child's heart.

There are clear reasons why Satan is focused on childrearing to reach his objectives. One is that children are literally defenseless. They are the most vulnerable to the persuasions of his methods, and the most easily manipulated in our culture. Brethren, mark this down in your mind: They are not born with the restraint of self-control. Anybody with a baby ought to know that.

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At the beginning of that sermon, I wanted to deal with the reality of our time—the times we live in—so that we might be motivated to make the best use of God's child-training instruction. The very first statement Paul uses describing our time we live in is verse 2, which says "men will be lovers of themselves." This clearly defines self-centeredness, and by placing that characteristic first on this list of characteristics, it appears that Paul is saying that self-centeredness is the fountainhead—the source, the generator—of the characteristics that follow.

Now these behaviors, when combined with what Paul says in Romans 1, give us a clear picture of the evil conduct that is shaping the world we live in, making it so depressing, and even dangerous to life and limb. But all the while these evil characteristics are being displayed in the people in the cultures; this also shows that they are not being held in restraint by the people. Human nature is running loose in the people's lives, thus clearly showing that their religion is having little affect on their conduct. Thus Paul says, "They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof."

Satan has clearly succeeded in producing cultures that keep people distracted and consuming their time with less important activities, thus they are diverted from what should be the main objective in the life that we have been called to.

We would very much like these times to be over, and to be over quickly, but I want us to be reminded by something Jesus said in John 8.

John 8:31-32 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide [live in, or continue] in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Truth sets free. Truth is reality. Consider this in regard to the times that we are living in. The Father and the Son have clearly shown that we must face the realities of the end time, and persevere through them. He has not taken us away from them, and He has not changed those awful evil realities. They are growing worse. It even says, "Evil men shall grow worse and worse."

God is the very epitome, the standard of love, truth, and wisdom, and because He is this way, therefore there can be only one answer to what we face in the dilemma of these times. Going through these times is necessary preparation and testing for what lies beyond. If we did not need it, it would not be going on, and we would be elsewhere. God has not moved us, so the conclusion has to be He desires that we persevere through these times.

The times contain practical lessons and opportunities useful for the shaping of us for the Kingdom of God and our experiences during this time will glorify God, or He would not require these things of us. So we must get it into our head to not let these attitudes slide into depression and needless anxiety. We need to stop giving in to *complaining*.

Israel, it seemed, murmured all the time. We have to stop giving into complaining even if that complaining is only to ourselves, and get on with using our faith positively in prayer, in Bible study, in overcoming, in serving, and learning to love each other, because the reality is that things will not get any better by complaining. It will not change a thing!

Toward the end of that sermon, I also went through the last six or seven verses of Ezekiel 33 to show you that God clearly reveals that Israel will not repent. In addition to that, neither will real Christians be accepted by this present evil world. Past history clearly confirms this fact. This reality we now live in is pretty much setting the stage for the Tribulation and the Day of the Lord. They may still be several years off, but events are moving more rapidly than in the past.

What we see happening around us was not accomplished in just one generation. Satan has been working diligently through many generations to undermine the fabric of the entire culture.

I want you to take a look again at a number of scriptures important to this series in Romans 9. I just want to really get one segment out of this.

Romans 9:22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction.

The word I want there is "prepared." The vessels of wrath are *prepared* for destruction, and by the process of elimination, Romans 9:22 shows that the one who is preparing "the vessels of wrath fit for destruction" is none other than Satan the Devil. God is preparing the vessels of good. Satan is running his system, getting ready for things.

Now we look out on a world that in every area, whether it is political, legal, economic, academia, entertainment, and religion, the power of God is denied so that virtually every aspect of life is anti-God and unethical; thus, despite professions of belief of conduct, their conduct denies Him and His power to change hearts. So the laws that we have, the public programs established, the legal decisions rendered, and the way we use our prosperity is unbiblical. Satan has accomplished much of this by means of child-training

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methods, deceiving people into not rearing children God's way.

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

This may be the best-known childrearing verse in the Bible. I have generally taught this verse in the past, focusing on the word "train." This word "train" has the sense of narrowing, hedging in. A child has to be hedged in. The child's view of things needs to be narrowed.

The verse's main purpose is to show that there is a very definite way, path, or standard, and that purpose is to show righteous results in the child's character if the parents are following it. Of course it implies *God's* character. God's name is not mentioned there, but it is part of His Book, and it is definitely part of His book of wisdom, and it is wisdom to rear a child by a method whose purpose is to develop, we will say, the rudimentaries of God's character.

The emphasis in this verse is on redirecting the child's *self*-will away from serving the self, and toward God. A child is born with an awful lot of self-will. That is one thing it has a lot of. The child has to be bent in another direction, and that is toward God, and not allow his self-will to just ramble on and continue to develop.

That is all well and good. But in a recent study I have come to understand the implications of this verse, and that they are much broader than they appear on the surface. For example, the word "train" can also be legitimately defined as "initiate," meaning getting the child started in the right direction. Now if you use "initiate," it has a tendency to mean, or to imply, that the child has some responsibility as well. You get him started. You push him, but he has to respond. We will see more of this later on in the Book.

There is yet another aspect to this verse that fits well, using the word "initiate" rather than the word "train." The Hebrew more literally says, "at the mouth of his way." In other words, train or initiate the child "at the mouth of his way." The word "mouth" indicates a beginning, at the start. In other words, by translating it that way, it means you begin with the child when the child is very, very young; see, "at the mouth of his way."

There is a third shade of meaning to this word. We are going to go to the good old book of Deuteronomy. This is rather interesting. This is actually the law about sending a man off to war.

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Deuteronomy 20:5 "Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying: 'What man is there who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it.'

That word "dedicate" is translated from the same Hebrew word as "train" in Proverbs 22:6. It is exactly the same word. It can also be translated as "initiate."

Let us go to I Kings 8:63. This is when the temple was built.

I Kings 8:63 And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered to the LORD, twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated [trained, initiated] the house of the LORD.

When that word "trained" is used in that sense, it means "dedicate," and it means "set apart." It is a synonym for sanctify. Very interesting. Thus the Hebrew of Proverbs 22:6 can read, "Train [initiate or dedicate] the child in *his* way." It does not say "his" in English, but it does say "his" in Hebrew. So I put the emphasis on the word "his." This is because the Hebrew does not necessarily mean *God's* way, but the *child's* way. The *Soncino*, which is the Jewish commentary, puts this emphasis on the child's way in their explanation of the verse.

Before I go any further, I really feel that the English translations are actually better here than the Hebrew commentary, but I want to give you this anyway because it is an alternative. It can be correct, but it is secondary, I believe, to the way the English translates it. The *Soncino*, the Hebrew commentary, puts the emphasis on the child's way.

I am going into this because the practical application of this is that God is requiring of parents that they *study* their child to discover the gifts the child has been given and the personality expressed so that these best fit certain occupational activities in life. The parents are to recognize their child's individuality and guide him in the direction that is going to lead him to make best use of his life. He is in effect saying that there is no one size that fits all in terms of helping the child to achieve the most within what is fitting for his gifts.

So, we can reach a conclusion: God does want children who are developed by their

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parents to have good character as adults, but He does not want square pegs in round holes in terms of an occupation either. He wants children to be prepared to use their talents and abilities in the occupation that fits their gifts. I wonder how many of us actually do that.

I will tell you, there is a lot contained in that verse. One of the greatest detriments to both aspects of child-training is for the child to be reared permissibly. A permissibly-reared child is one who is irresponsibly taught, whether purposely or by neglect, to feed his self-centeredness in gratifying his desires with little or no self-control.

If the child ages without the discipline to restrain his urges for self-gratification, then regardless of the field of endeavor he is in as an adult, virtually everything he does is tainted by self-concern, and not the fear of God, nor concern for others, nor concern for property.

Understand that self-concern, of and by itself, is not evil until it is intense enough to override concern for others, including God Himself, and concern for things. It will then produce idolatry, murder, lying, stealing, rape, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, coveting, and destructiveness.

Satan focuses on getting parents to either ignore completely or simply neglect their responsibility before God of instilling in the child proper respect for God, for parents, themselves, for others, for property, and for danger as well, but he will surely promote ignorance, carelessness, and pleasure by any means.

By focusing on allowing the child to focus on the fulfillment of his desires, the child follows the natural course to ever-expanding lawlessness all the way through life by simply absorbing Satan's spirit in the combined influence of the conduct and attitudes that are exhibited in the world. And the parents, by their neglect or their ignorance, are in reality just pushing the child in that direction, and the child is helpless before being confronted by Satan's world. This is why Mr. Armstrong said, and he said it in my presence a couple of times, that the greatest gift God can give a child is parents who really love him, because those parents will protect that child from Satan by the way they love him.

Remember always that when the child is born he has no built-in restraints to these worldly influences. It is the parents' responsibility to build in those restraints. I can say that dogmatically. Who is it that builds our character? It is God who builds our character. We simply respond to His childrearing techniques that He does by His Spirit. God is the pattern parents need to follow as much as they can, of course doing it physically.

Never forget that Satan is both cunning and persistent. What he does to aid the parents' neglect is to keep them ignorant of God, keep them distracted and busy with a whole collage of fast-moving activities bombarding their minds so that the children are pretty much ignored in favor of what the parents consider to be more important matters.

As we ended, I was just beginning to touch on what is written as important to deflecting Satan's persuasion. This you need to get. What is it that is important we need as parents to deflect Satan's persuasion?

Ephesians 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.

This verse is actually exceedingly important because it provides a bridge of instruction that Paul gives prior to it, but more importantly it also provides the foundation and the overall solution to what follows, and what follows is an exceedingly important admonition.

First I want you to recall that in the previous sermon I mentioned that this verse marked the transition of subject material within the epistle. I mentioned at that time that in my Bible the publishers made a distinct break in the printing and placed a title over the break so that we would take notice of the subject break. In other words, the publishers recognized that this is an important verse, and so they drew attention to it by that means.

Second, also recall that Satan is named "the prince of the power of the air" in Ephesians 2:1-3, and to recall with this that we all have come out of the system that he dominates.

Paul is again bringing our attention to Satan in Ephesians 6:10. So Ephesians 5:18 bridges between those sections, and thus the subject material beginning in 5:18 is sandwiched between the teachings on Satan.

A third thing is to recall that the overall subject of Ephesians is unity. All three of these elements come together to impact on the subject that follows Ephesians 5:18.

In Ephesians 5:19-21 Paul addresses church relationships. Beginning in verse 22, it is marital relationships. In Ephesians 6:1-4 it is child relationships. We will not go this far, but in Ephesians 6:5-9, he addresses employee/employer relationships.

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In Ephesians 5:18, Paul charges us to be filled with the Spirit, because that is the overall solution to relationship challenges in all four categories.

I want you to pay special attention to this because I told you in a previous sermon that Satan has used God's childrearing way, but he turns everything 180 degrees in his attempt to produce the characteristics he desires in *his* children.

Let us be reminded of something. Jesus said this to the Jews of His day:

John 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. . . .

This is how I know that he turned everything God says about childrearing 180 degrees. He will use the words, but his intent is always to destroy and to produce something far different from what God wants us to produce.

John 8:44 When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

From there I want you to go to Matthew 12:25-26. Jesus is again speaking.

Matthew 12:25-26 But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?"

I went to these two verses for a very distinct reason. I want you to connect this, at least in thought, to Romans 9:22. What is Satan preparing the vessels of wrath for? He wants to be their father. He wants them to be in his kingdom. He has a kingdom. He is a spiritual father, but he is the creator of the vessels of wrath. Brethren, that is what he has been doing all the time. He is running, as it were, parallel to God, but God is producing children for *His* Kingdom; Satan is producing children for *his* kingdom. Satan, in a sense, is using as it were, the plan that God has laid out in His Word, but Satan has turned everything 180 degrees in order to produce a captive people for his kingdom.

Now back in thought and place to Ephesians 5:18. Paul is making a vivid contrast of the

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opposite side of the same coin. Each side represents a way of life. Satan's way is on one side. God's way is on the other side, and we are charged with the responsibility of which will we do? One or the other.

Ephesians 5:18 reads: "Do not be drunk with wine in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit." Now the world is spiritually drunk on the wine of its endless spiritual fornication with the world. We have to come out of the world, but we still must do some choosing. The word "dissipation" draws attention to what this spiritual drunkenness produces.

A more accurate English synonym of the word "dissipation" as it is used here, (not that the use of the word "dissipation" here is wrong) but the word "excess" is actually more correct. "Do not be drunk with wine in which is excess." There are a number of other synonyms of the word "excess" that are very good to understand what Paul is getting at here; for example: prodigality, wantonness, recklessness, willfulness, profligate, uncontrolled, and unbalanced in conduct.

The other side of the coin—the spirit-filled Christian life—is being self-controlled, and guided by God's Spirit. Let us begin to tear this apart. "In the spirit" is a contrasting way, going in an opposite direction actually. "In the spirit" indicates "within the spirit," meaning "within the *bounds* of the spirit," or "within *agreement* with the spirit."

Do not forget that the Holy Spirit, as used here, indicates the essence of the mind of Christ. I Corinthians 2:16: "We have the mind of Christ." That is what we are talking about, and we have got to use the mind of Christ. You cannot just sit there doing nothing. It has been given to us to make use of so that we might grow and bring glory and honor to God. So Paul is making a contrast between the foolishness and uncontrolled behavior of a person who is physically drunk, and a person directing his life in controlled balance guided from within by faith, using the knowledge, understanding, and wisdom given by God.

All of us have lived lives in spiritual drunkenness of this world. A chemical drug, including alcohol, physically depresses the higher centers of our brain, and under its influence one gradually loses control of normal thinking processes, and it will eventually put one to sleep. When you are asleep you do not have any control at all.

What Paul is getting at here is that being drunk with the wine—(and of course you understand the spiritual wine is the wine of this world)—all by itself produces greater excess, and its effects continue.

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From here we are going to go to Luke 15. We are also going to go back to Ephesians 5, which is a very important chapter, and what we are looking at is exceedingly important as to how to solve these problems of relationships in the church, marital relationships, child/parent relationships, and employee/employer relationships.

Let us go to Luke 15. This is in the prodigal son parable. Remember, I told you "prodigality" is a synonym for "excess."

Luke 15:13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.

That word "prodigal" is the same word that is "under dissipation," and it is the same word that is "under excess."

Luke 15:14 But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want.

Look at the direction his life is going.

Luke 15:15 Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

The first thing you know he was eating swine's food.

If you are using the KJV, that version will have either the word "prodigal" or "riotous" there.

Back now to Ephesians 5:18 in thought. Paul is saying that even as being physically drunk produces prodigal wasteful living in which one squanders his physical wealth, in like manner being spiritually drunk on Satan's way of life wastes one spiritually. It is sheer foolishness. Foolishness is what we are supposed to drive from our children.

Being spiritually drunk eventually impoverishes one spiritually, which is what the parable of the prodigal son shows. Notice what Paul then counsels in Ephesians 5:15. Just before we get to verse 18, this verse is the lead-in to it.

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Ephesians 5:15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise.

The word "circumspectly" means wisely, sensibly, controlled, orderly, with discretion, judgment, and balance.

Please do not forget that we are not getting away from the childrearing thing here, but he is giving us objectives in our childrearing, and to help set the stage we have to understand where we are beginning. We are beginning with the world, but we are moving toward the Kingdom of God. Paul is giving an overall solution here.

You have probably heard a person described as being talented, or wonderful, or able, but unfortunately this person cannot control his temper, or he cannot control his tongue. He just blurts things out. That person is not completely controlled by the Spirit of God. That person is still spiritually drunk to some degree, as witnessed by the fact he cannot control his members.

Life in the spirit is the opposite of what is being described here. Life in the spirit preserves, and yet it increases, and that is good. The prodigal son threw away his life with both hands without thinking of end results. Sheer foolishness. He lived excessively.

A Christian "in the spirit" realizes that he has a solemn responsibility, and acts as a wise steward to preserve, to build, and to grow. What drugs do is suppress one's reasoning powers, thus opening the door to one's basic carnal conduct, and that nature then takes control. That person thinks he is being stimulated, but in reality he is exhausting himself. He temporarily feels better, loses his sense of fear and his ability to discriminate, and his judgment suffers.

Now in contrast to that physical effect, God's Spirit energizes us spiritually and motivates us toward a different direction in life. It encourages one to use one's faith in God. One's mind is expanded toward the Kingdom of God, and one is becoming in the image of Jesus Christ in attitude and conduct. We are learning that this way—"in the spirit"—is not easy, and it does not come quickly.

Brethren, there is a reason why Israel's wilderness journey took forty years. That reason is to show us the slow development that Christianity requires. We do not grow in a moment of time, and we, like children, as compared to God, foolishly want too much too soon, and by nature we want to be permissively pampered. So we murmur. Is that not what a baby does? "Waah!" "Take care of me right now!" "Pamper me!"

Paul is really vivid once you begin to look and see what he is saying there. It takes a while to research and tear these things apart, but the teaching is there. Do you know that most Israelites failed because they lacked patience, faith, and perseverance? They somehow never got the picture, and so, as Hebrews describes, their bodies were strewn from one end of the wilderness to the other end, and by the time they got there, out of the original generation that started out, only two men made it, and maybe their families made it with them. I do not know, but God only names Joshua and Caleb.

That is why I said this way is not easy, and yet Satan has succeeded in deceiving the world into thinking Christianity is as easy as falling off the curb. *"All you do is accept Jesus, and that's it!"* No! God has to rear us as children, and that takes time. You can be sure He studies us to lead us in the direction we should go. All we have to do is to emulate His practices on us (which is pretty hard to do), and we can succeed.

God is saying that most of the Israelites failed because they lacked all three. Their desire to be gratified immediately destroyed them.

Now if we keep on keeping on in our mind in God's way, we will be stimulated and expanding in the right direction, and we will begin to want to contribute, to help, to serve, and to love, and to sacrifice. We will desire the expansion of the Kingdom of God, and more greatly desire to glorify God in our own little corner of things as we grow. Slowly the right balance concerning the realities of life apart from God, and the realities of this deathly world, will take hold, and as the peace and joy of God's Spirit balances our attitudes in life, we can approach the challenges of this way with understanding.

Life in the spirit also stimulates us to a true conviviality and fellowship with others of the same mind. There are those in the world who insist that one cannot have conviviality in fellowship with others unless alcohol is present, because it stimulates *their* conviviality. But brethren, that is using a chemical as a substitute for what God will supply by His Spirit, and that chemical eventually depresses conviviality, and instead it will produce prodigality. It is a bad bargain, because God's Spirit will produce conviviality with love.

What is it we have seen here while concentrating on Ephesians 5:18? It is the overall subject of this series: The march towards globalism. Satan has been preparing for the end-time with vigor, using a sneaky, seemingly innocuous, but in reality an evil and cunning wisdom. Remember that he artfully practices gradualism—the frog-in-the-water routine.

He rarely confronts humans directly as he did to Christ and to Adam and Eve. His specialty is deceit. His lying is directed toward persuading people to ignore and neglect

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God, and our duty toward Him, as well as pursuing good relationships between each other in the church, which is God's family, and building good marital relationships. Producing good child/parent relationships is very high on the list of duties, and they must be sought, being filled with the spirit while avoiding entanglements with Satan's world. In other words, these responsibilities cannot be pursued separated from our personal relationship with God. That is the overall sense of Ephesians 5:18.

If we are going to have good relationships within the church, it is going to be because our relationship with God is good. If we are going to have good marital relationships, it is because our relationship with God is good. If we are going to have good parent/child relationships, it is because our relationship with God is good, and if we are going to have good employee/employer relationships, it is because our relationship with God is good. They all flow from that one source because we are empowered by the Spirit of God, and where we are, God is. He is the God who is there.

God's Spirit, which empowers us, is given by God. It is a gift so that we can accomplish God's way, and without it we have no enabling godly spiritual power. It is given by God within the relationship through consistent prayer, spending time with Him through consistent Bible study, meditation, occasional fasting, and obedience, and a good, submissive attitude meeting the challenges of life by faith. By these we are enabled to meet and conquer the artful deceptions and allurements of Satan's world, and to meet the relationship challenges that will occur in God's way of life.

There is another piece of understanding contained within this section that I think is helpful. Do you remember "the law of first mention" rule? God tends toward establishing things in patterns, one of which is His tendency to place the most important first in a series, and then less important things arranged in order following the most important. A series in which this is very easily seen is "the fruit of the Spirit": **love**—the most important of all; **joy**; (Hey! That is pretty important, right after love); **peace**—by which we are enabled to overcome. We need peace to overcome. And on and on it goes.

There is a very clear pattern there. I am not saying it is always this way, but it is nonetheless a general truth. There are two of these in this series of teaching, and one of them, I think, you will find very surprising.

In this series of teaching on relationships He always addresses the one under authority first. Is that not interesting? Is that not what He did with Adam and Eve? He addressed the one *under* authority first—Adam and Eve. They were under His authority.

Let me explain Ephesians 5:18 just very briefly. Everyone is included there—everyone

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under God, so that is addressed to everybody. That is the implication.

In verse 21, again we have a situation in which he is addressing a whole group of people, so there is no particular one who is over authority except Him, so what is the advice? He gives the same direction to everybody at the same time—"submitting to one another in the fear of God."

Now with the wives it begins to become very clear. In verse 22, he addresses the wife before the husband.

In Ephesians 6:1, he addresses the children first, who are under authority of the parents, before he addresses the ones in authority.

Beginning in verse 5 of chapter 6, he addresses the servants before he addresses the masters.

The second series is regarding the relative importance of each relationship in reference to the other relationships.

In Ephesians 5:18 God is implying that the relationship with Him dominates *all* relationships and is the most important of all. So that one comes first.

The second one, in verse 21, because it appears so highly rated by God, is the one which might be surprising to your mind. *Relationships within the church outrank all other relationships, except the one with Him personally.* If we look at it in this way, it is more important than husband/wife relationships. It is more important than child/parent relationships. It is more important than employee/employer relationships. Now why? The answer is really very simple. We may have to think about it for awhile. It is because it is **His family!** That is so simply said, but His family comes first, outside of Himself.

Interestingly, thinking on Bill's sermonette and what he was talking about, which was about relationships within the church, right in Ephesians 4, Paul is talking about unity. We will read verse 16.

Ephesians 4:16 From whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

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So our major responsibility in life is to glorify Him, and His family, which is the still-forming Kingdom of God. "Seek you first the Kingdom of God, and all these things will be added unto you." Do not blow off relationships in the church as being unimportant. They are exceedingly important! What Bill said in his sermonette has to be meditated upon because we are being held responsible by God to make acts and decisions of love. Remember, love is not a feeling. Love is making the right choice according to God's standard. There is to be no disunity in His family for which we are to be held responsible.

Now where do the barbs that create disunity in the church come from? We bring it in from the world. We bring it in from our relationships in the world—the way the world conducts life, its beliefs and ideas, and the attitudes we learned and adopted in the world. The world is dominated by Satan, and we learn the wrong things, and then we bring it into the church, and think that everything is hunky-dory. No, it is not. We have to learn to do things the way God does, and then we will be a family that is truly created in His own image. This is why John says in I John 2: "Love not the world," because that is where the bad things that create disunity in the church come from.

The third relationship in importance is the marital relationship. We will not go into that at all in my series here because Martin has been covering that very thoroughly. The fourth relationship is the child/parent relationship. And the fifth one is employee/employer relationships.

What have we seen here today? We have seen a brief overview of the confused, chaotic, Satan-inspired-and-driven world—the *cosmos* that he has created. That is a system produced by his deception which has led its citizens into neglecting the truths of God.

I think we have also seen enough evidence to help us understand that other than our own personal responsibility to submit to God in our relationship with Him, that as parents ourselves, child-training God's way is perhaps our most important responsibility. Why? Because on child-training's quality, the long-term quality of any family—God's too—in any culture is produced. That is why Satan gives it so much time and attention.

We will stop here, and God willing, we will continue on the next time.