

Exposing the Family

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[0 : 0 0] If you have your Bibles, I want you to turn to Matthew chapter 5. Matthew chapter 5, a boy came to his dad and said, Dad, I just turned 16, or this year I'm going to turn 16, and I wonder if you'd buy me a car for my 16th birthday.

And his dad said, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll sign a contract with you that if you make all A's and if you read your Bible daily and if you get a haircut, then I'll buy you a car for your birthday.

And the time went by and the boy's 16th birthday was approaching and he came to his dad and said, Dad, I got straight A's in school and I read my Bible daily.

Now what about that car? And he said, that's good, son. I'm proud of you. You made straight A's. You've read your Bible. You hadn't got a haircut. And he said, well, Dad, I've been reading the Bible and I found out that Jesus had long hair.

And his dad said, that's right. And he walked everywhere he went. It's tough to raise a family today.

[1 : 1 6] It is. And family matters. And so I want to spend some of these hot days this summer talking about family matters.

I'll give you four reasons right off the bat why I believe raising a family is tough today. For one, we're a fallen people. We were born in sin.

We have a sin nature to us. And we live in a world of sin. And we all willfully sin. You combine that together and it makes for a fallen world, which makes every relationship more difficult.

And so that plays into some of it. Not only that, but our world is dark. We live in a dark world. And it's getting darker. And, you know, when we say world, really what we think about is America.

I mean, that's really typically what we think about. And we feel like that whatever's happening in America, that must be what the whole world's doing. Well, I'm telling you that that's not necessarily the case. But in our world, right here amongst us, we live in a dark world, goofy stuff, that is kind of unexplainable in a lot of ways.

[2 : 3 6] It's going on around us. And not only that, but our world is filled with social media. And I really believe that it is a primary factor of why it's tough to raise a family today.

Because on social media, either everybody is perfect, or they're not. And they're telling you everything that's wrong.

One or the other. There's nobody that's normal on social media, except for y'all. There's nobody else that's normal on social media. Everybody's always perfect. And grand places are either, they're dismal, and they need to speak to the Lord.

Instead, they just post it, you know. So, and that makes us vulnerable. It makes us vulnerable to the temptation to try to be like somebody else.

It makes us vulnerable to depression, to temptations as well as depression. All kinds of dangers. Because of the evils of social media. It's not all bad. But there's so much of it bad, that it has really changed our culture and changed our world.

[3 : 46] And lastly, the fourth thing is, we're in a war. And I'm not talking about the Middle Eastern war. And I'm not talking about a political war.

I'm not even just necessarily talking about a cultural war. We're in a spiritual war. And I plan to spend all of this fall talking about the depths of the real war that's going on around us.

But it affects us at the house. It does. And when you put that we're all a fallen people together with, we're in a war, that makes for a dark situation.

We live in a dark world. You're exposed to the darkness. Your family's exposed to the darkness. As much as we don't want it to be, you're influenced by the darkness. And your family is influenced by the darkness.

The Apostle Paul put it this way in Ephesians 6, verse 12. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

[5 : 01] Please acknowledge and let's fight it accordingly. Because family matters and because it does, I want to talk about family matters this summer.

And I want to begin with a passage that's got a phrase that just stuck out to me. I kind of hung on. It's in Matthew chapter 5, beginning in verse 14.

And Jesus said, You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand and it gives light to all the house.

In the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

I want to focus today on the last phrase of verse 15. And the last phrase of verse 15 says that we are to shed light to all in the house.

[6 : 08] How do we do that? Be a lampstand. Lampstands are often mentioned in Scripture. They're used instead of a light bulb.

And they are to shed light on many manners. The lampstand that stands out to me the most is first described in Exodus chapter 25, along with a lot of other instructions about the tabernacle holy place.

And very specific instructions are given for this lampstand. It's a large floor-standing oil lamp that stands with six additional branches on it, each that look like an almond bloom.

Each bloom holds oil that is to be lit. And that was in the tabernacle, strategically placed in front of the curtain of the Holy of Holies, across from the table that held what was called the bread of presence.

Now, the bread of presence was 12 loaves that were replaced every week on the Sabbath. And those 12 loaves there would be removed on the Sabbath, and the priest would eat them and use that as their bread supply.

[7 : 34] And then the new loaves would be replaced on that table week after week. And the point of that is, well, the reason almond blooms are used is because the Hebrew word for almond means early, early waker.

In other words, God's watchfulness and vigilant response to us. It's kind of like an almond. It kind of shows the signs of the times. It blooms early.

And because of that, in the same way, God is well aware of our circumstances. And it reminds us of that. The showbread there, the bread of presence, there's 12 loaves because of the 12 tribes.

God provides for every one of his people. And the names, the nearness and the provision of God all is symbolized in that bread. And the point of all that is, God provides.

He steadily provides our needs. His blessings come again and again. That bread was always there. The light always shone on that bread.

[8 : 43] And one of the priests' primary job was to make sure that that lampstand never burned out. It was the single source of light in the tabernacle, except for God's presence in the inner sanctum.

And that light was placed there, get this now, to shine on the ever-present loaves of bread called the bread of presence.

In other words, people were always to know of God's provision and God's presence. And in the same way, just like Jesus told us, we need to shed light for our family in all the house, in many ways.

I'll tell you four things you ought to expose your family to. One is you ought to expose your family to his care. Expose them to God's care. The care of the Lord for your family. Everything that you have came from the Lord.

I hope you realize that. And when you realize that, I hope you'll tell your family that. Families need to know that. We need to acknowledge that. And we need to know it a lot because we're often to forget it.

[9 : 58] That means that you tell them a lot. That means that you faithfully give to the Lord your tithe and your offering. And sometimes, when you give your tithe and offering, you're going to do without some things that you wish you had.

You're going to do without some things that you want. Don't be afraid to explain the choices that you make. Tell your family, a lot of people replace the tithe with another vehicle.

A lot of people replace the tithe with recreational toys. Or they take weekend outings that we don't take. Or they get another house. We don't do those things. We give to the Lord. He provides our needs.

Could we have more stuff? Yes. But we believe everything that we have is the Lord's. And that we ought to honor Him with it. Kids will trust the Lord and watch Him provide our every need.

That needs to be a shining lamp in your house at all times. At every meal, in every trip, in every good gift along the way, and every time you cannot get exactly what you want, you need to be reminded and you need to remind those around you, God provides.

[11 : 13] We can trust in God. He'll provide. He'll take care of it. So be clear to your family. God's not taking what I give to Him. I give it to Him.

I give Him cheerfully to God because I want to bless God. God's blessed me. And there's no ties to this.

I don't give so that God will get me out of a hole. That's prosperity theology and it's not in Scripture. No, you give to God because you trust Him. You give to God because you love Him.

You give to God because He's been more generous to you than He ever should have been. And so therefore we give faithfully to God because I want to bless God. Not because I owe Him everything because I couldn't give Him anything anyway.

There's nothing I got that would be enough to repay what Christ has done for my life. So I give out of obedience to Him because He tells me to and I also give it because I want to bless the Lord with what I have.

[12 : 16] He's given us all we have and I want to be an obedient blessing to Him. And I think that your left hand don't need to know what your right hand's doing. I believe you ought to give in confidence to the Lord and leave it between you and the Lord.

But at the same time, without the details, you need to share with your family and you need to let them know what God gives to us has been entrusted to us by God and we give back to Him obediently and we trust Him for the difference.

And if you don't do that, you should do that because you can do that. You can trust Him for the difference. I promise you. Expose Him to His care.

Expose Him to His lead. Expose His lead. Psalm 119, 105 says, Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Not only do you give God the credit for everything in your family, but you teach your children to look to the Lord and to praise the Lord as you watch Him work.

But you also look to the Lord in the decisions that you make. Something is going to guide you in the decisions that you make. And that might be money.

[13 : 33] And that might be opportunity. And that might be power. And that might be popularity. It might be good old mammon. And mammon is a transliterated Greek word that speaks of the stuff that we accumulate because of the money that we make.

That's your stuff, you know. The stuff you don't want nobody messing with. That's your mammon, you know. That stuff you save up for and you get, you know, and you treasure that, that's your mammon.

That's your stuff. Stuff's fun. It can also be very deceptive. I love what Lou Holtz said. I heard him say one time, he said, if you want to be happy for an hour, eat a steak. If you want to be happy for a day, play golf.

I bet he ain't played with me, but anyway. If you want to be happy for a week, go on a cruise. It's kind of like a prison with good food.

You can't go anywhere. If you want to be happy for a month, buy a car. If you want to be happy for a year, win the lottery. But if you want to be happy for a lifetime, you put your faith in the Lord Jesus because he'll never let you down.

[14 : 53] My friend, that is so very true and you don't need anything to get in the way of your devotion to the Lord. So, be careful that your mammon or your stuff doesn't dictate your life.

And the best way to ensure that is that God stays at the center of your life and your family's life is to keep the word of God at the center of your life.

Let the word of God light your path. Let your family know who leads the way. It's a dark world, but the word of God empowered by the spirit of God will navigate us through it.

Jesus said in John 12, verse 35, he said, the light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have light, lest darkness overtake you.

The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he's going. Parents, let the word of God guide you every day.

[16 : 03] Listen, I'm glad you're here. We got great attendance for a middle of the summer in June. Not a special day. Father's Day was great attendance. I appreciate you being here if you were here.

If you wasn't here, shame on you. I hope it was something extraordinary. But now, I'm glad you're here. But I want to be clear. I'll do everything I can to encourage you and to strengthen you in God's word every time you come in these doors.

I'll do everything I can, but I promise you it's not enough. You need the word of God in your life daily because when you go out at these doors, you'll face the world.

If you don't cut on some ball game this afternoon, you'll watch the news or you'll watch how somebody takes care of their mammon or whatever. We'll immediately get right back in the world.

And six more days of that before we ever get any spiritual nutrients is not enough. you'll be spiritually depleted. You need a plan and a pattern in your life to spend time in God's word daily and you need to tell your children how you can, they can trust God's lead.

[17 : 24] And when you do, I want you to watch. God will light your path. He'll light your path for your family. Even in the midst of the ever-surrounding darkness, God will light the path.

Not only spend time in the word of God, but share what he shows you to your family. Share it.

Just this past week, I was, Abby is here this week and she is in the car with me and she was charging her phone and the phone wouldn't charge and her mother had problems with that cord.

Abby said, the problem is there's a short in this cord. But she said, Daddy, I know where some more cords are. They're down in your chair in the den. But this is what she said.

She said, they're down in that Jesus chair. I had never called it that. But she knows. She knows.

[18 : 35] That every morning I get a cup of coffee and I sit in that chair and I read God's word and I pray for my family and I pray for my church.

And I don't know what she meant by that. But when I said it, when I heard her say it, I thought, Lord, may some of that trickle down and let her know that her daddy needs the word of God daily.

expose them, folks. Expose them to the darkness. And I don't mean, please don't get this wrong.

Ephesians 5 lets us know where we've come from. And as Christians, I'm not going to read the whole chapter. You can this afternoon. But how God has changed us.

Ephesians 5 tells us it challenges us to live that way that God has changed us. And Paul tells us to walk as children of light and to try to discern what's pleasing to the Lord.

[19 : 41] And he goes on to explain that we are to expose the darkness. Call it for what it is. Live a life contrary to the darkness of the world. He then tells us to watch how we walk.

Ephesians 5, 15 through 17 says this. Look carefully then how you walk. Not as unwise but as wise making the best use of the time because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. Listen. When we shed light in our daily walk we expose the wrong in the world by not participating in it.

By not pandering to it. Don't get lost in this world folks. Not parading it before our kids. We serve a holy God and we are to strive to be holy and that word means set apart for his purposes.

We don't wonder in the dark and the only way to keep from wondering in the dark is to stay near the light. You better pay attention to that. I love the old hymn. Not all of it but I love this verse.

[20 : 54] It says this. Prone to wonder Lord. I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love. Here's my heart. Oh take and seal it.

Friend if you don't pay attention to the traps of darkness you will wonder right into them and you'll take your dear family with you.

See it for what it is. The evil one is at work around us. Don't fall for that. Don't take your kids down the wrong way. Don't be permissive in what you allow them to venture into.

Don't do it. It's not worth it. You have to recognize the darkness for what it is and then call it for what it is. Expose it to your family. The will of God is that we live for the Lord and by doing that we expose our family to what is right.

We expose them to his care. We expose them to his lead. His will is also to stay away from what is dark and ungodly. Don't bring that garbage in your home.

[21 : 57] Don't encourage it. Don't allow it. Don't be silent about it. Expose the darkness. Call it for what it is. Please.

Because if you don't this world will get us in a whirlwind friend. We'll lose our train of thought. We'll head the wrong way.

Lastly, expose the truth. Expose the truth. Jesus made it clear in Matthew chapter 5 that we are to spread the light of the love of God.

That's not only speaking of philanthropy and charity work. It speaks of the gospel. It don't do any good to do a bunch of nice things for somebody and then let them go to hell without ever hearing the gospel.

it speaks of the gospel and Jesus is the only way to heaven. John 14 6 he said I'm the way the truth and life and no man comes unto the father but by me.

[23 : 05] You need to talk about that. Start with your family. Mix it in with the provisional talk. How God provides.

Keep it coming. Think about the stuff that you see on TV. Think about the stuff you hear in songs. See others do. Even watch us do.

Either it is consistent. The other day we were in the car. I talked about my radio station last Sunday. I'm going to get into that again but a song came on.

We were in the car and a song came on. It's a horrible song. It's horrible. I said girls have y'all ever paid attention to that song. Debbie said let me tell you about that song daddy. She said you gave me permission to buy that song on Apple Music years ago without listening to it.

And then when you heard it you went what are you doing with that song? What are you doing with that? Don't you dare play that song. And what I'm saying is folks if we go to sleep we don't pay attention to what we're doing.

[24 : 14] we expose others to things that they don't need to be exposed to. Think about the stuff that you watch on TV.

Think about the stuff you hear in songs. Think about the stuff you see others do. Think about the stuff you even watch others do. And either it is consistently bad those things or it is inconsistently good because none of us are perfect.

And so that's why your family needs the gospel just washed over them again and again. Combat the world's influences with the gospel.

You see a mean man somewhere that man needs Jesus. You see a mad woman somewhere that woman needs Jesus. You see somebody that's messed up on the street.

We saw a guy the other day in Pickens was riding down the road he's having a fight with himself. I think he won but he's having a fight with himself. You know what he needs? He needs Jesus.

[25 : 29] That's what he needs. Tell him folks need Jesus. Shed light on every dark situation and let me remind you of where we started.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket but on a stand and it gives light to all in the house.

In the same way let your light shine before others so that they may see your good deeds and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. let me point out that the light of God's love is to give light to all the house not just at supper with the memorized prayer not just at bedside for a good night prayer let it be the whole house let it be out in the yard whatever you're doing as God gives you opportunity point your family to the Lord shed light on the greatest truth shed light through this church and I know I'm talking about family but your family will be drastically impacted by your church your family will be drastically impacted by your involvement in the church or your lack of involvement in the church so make it a priority in revelation the message of the church is seen as a golden lamp stand and

John relays the message of Christ to the church of Ephesus that was not living fervently for the Lord they wasn't horrible they just wasn't doing some things right and they were living a compromised life they had they had one foot in the world and one foot in step with God now think about this for a minute if I've got one foot on the bank of the river and I've got the other foot in the river where am I at am I on the bank or am I in the river I'm already wet folks I'm in the river and the reality is you can't you can't live for the world and live like the world you'll live like the world period you've got to keep a balance there in your life to not be half way not be compromised when you live a compromised life you are living in and of the world and do you know what the

Lord told the church of Ephesus about their compromised life in Revelation 2 verse 5 he said remember therefore where and do the works you did at first if not I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place unless you repent in other words what he was saying is you will lose your witness if you're to shed light on things I'll take your lampstand you'll lose your witness now listen he might have been talking about the preacher they'd lose a preacher but bigger than the loss of the preacher is the loss of the witness don't lose your witness do not burn out the Olympics of trials have started and we were in Indianapolis a week ago and man they were talking about how we were there one week there was 11,000 messengers and their families and so we were there one week the next week was going to be the

[29 : 05] Olympic swim trials and then Taylor Swift was coming and so man all up and up were about all of it and now that they've been swimming this week I've seen it on TV and they're right down the street from where we were and all that stuff the Greeks had a race in their ancient Olympic games that was unique the winner was not the runner who finished first the winner was the runner who finished with his torch still lit and that's what our job is we will light our world when we expose his care shed light on the provision and promise of the Lord talk about it tell them about the days before they were born tell them about the hard times tell them how you had to rely upon the Lord how God provided for you when you relied upon the

Lord expose them to his lead follow his lead and shed light on his path and talk about that talk about how you're going to trust the Lord with this talk about how you're going to trust God to provide for that expose them to the darkness shed some light on what in the world's going on call an ace an ace call a spade a spade expose the truth and let me be clear about something the truth is a person when somebody says well my truth is this that's hogwash my truth there is the truth period your marginalized relative thinking is not real truth it's compromised truth is a person and his name is Jesus and you need to share the truth you need to share

Jesus with your children and then just live it before them with every head bowed and every eye closed I want you to know something it ain't too late it's not too late some of you may have listened today and looked back and see mistakes that you made along the way I want you to know you still got influence you still got influence you got influence on the kids in your home you got influence on the grandkids that see you from time to time or maybe a lot you've got influence on the kids in this church just a couple of weeks ago we had dozens of kids in here for vacation

Bible school learning of the truths of God's word several of them wrote down they want to know more what it means to give their heart and life to the Lord Jesus we have a job to do folks and the most basic thing we can do and the best thing we can do is just live our faith out before folks live it out live it privately and then live it publicly and you can't have one without the other it's not real if you try to do it public and don't do it private and if you do it private and it's real it's going to come out it's going to be seen so tell folks about it don't have them wonder what the world is different about him what's different about her don't make them ask that question tell them the difference that Christ has made in your life so this day I'm telling you today let's just say Lord Jesus I want to live from you from this day forward there are patterns in my life there are habits in my life maybe even strongholds in my life that

I need to change and today dear God I commit to change them and I ask that you help me to influence others but God do a work in me maybe you're here this morning and you've never accepted the Lord Jesus Christ you've never asked him into your heart you've never confessed your sins to God you've never come into relationship with Christ and I want you to know that opportunity is here for you today today is the day of salvation there's any yearning in you at all to come to the Lord you didn't come up with that on your own that's God doing that he's working in you he's drawing him to himself to himself so you respond to that in obedience we'd love to guide you in what it means to give your heart and life to the Lord Jesus maybe you're here and you are a Christian and you know that but you've never publicly acknowledged that through baptism I or a pastor pray with you however you feel led to do that maybe

[34 : 31] God's drawing you to this church maybe this is the place that God would have you to plant your life we'd love to guide you in what that means I don't know what God said to you I know what he told me to do and I've tried to be faithful to do that I just ask the same of you be faithful just do what God tells you to trust him you can trust him do what God would have you to do Lord Jesus I love you I thank you Lord for your love for us and I ask your God that you'll help us to be obedient to walk in a way that pleases you dear father and I pray right now we'll be obedient to obey you in these next few moments dear God and let that begin a life of obedience from this day forward in Jesus precious name amen