

Scripture Memory Passage - Deuteronomy 6:6-7

A 58-story high-rise luxury apartment building in San Francisco, complete with a 75-foot indoor lap-pool, a health club and spa, an in-house cinema, and a restaurant and wine bar run by a celebrity chef, named the Millennium Tower. Penthouses in the Millennium Tower have sold for more than \$10 million. But despite the glitz and glamour of the interior finishes and amenities, the Millennium Tower is in trouble. One resident of the Tower noticed six years ago while practicing golf putting in her 57th-floor apartment that the ball kept veering to the same corner of her living room. Go down to the five-floor underground garage, where the resident's Porsches and Lamborghinis sit parked and you'll see walls that have cracks running floor-to-ceiling. The Millennium Tower was completed seven years ago, and so far has sunk 16 inches. But it's not sinking evenly, having a 2-inch tilt at the base, translating to roughly 6-inches of lean at the top. The problem, experts are finding, is with the foundation. When a foundation fails or begins to give way, everything connected to that foundation is affected. It's true if it's a building, but it's also true of the foundations of society. *Because the family is a foundational component of society, our enemy seeks to undermine, deceive, and destroy the family.* It was in the Garden of Eden that the family was first attacked, and the results of that failure are still present today. **God created the family as a pillar of society and a witness to the gospel.**

Scripture Passage: Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Ephesians 5:22-6:4

This morning we're looking at our 6th Core Value for Pillar Bible Fellowship - Strengthening the Family Unit. In the 5 years we've been together as a church, the topic of marriage and family has become an even more hotly-debated topic in our nation.

The Current Cultural Crisis

1. June 26, 2015 Obergefell vs. Hodges decision by SCOTUS requiring states to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples.
2. Proposed California Senate Bill 1146 Dr. Kurt Krueger, president of Concordia University Irvine, in a letter about this bill, said, "The bill effectively eliminates the religious exemption under current law that allows Christian colleges and universities to operate in accordance with their beliefs, including the freedom to hire only Christian faculty and staff." The Bill was amended before being passed, but it signals a significant step toward limiting religious freedom in our nation.
3. It seems that every few months another prominent evangelical person or church speaks up in support of gay marriage. There are two that I know about from just this last week.
4. But not only on a national level and on the political stage, but how many of us are aware of families in crisis in our neighborhoods, our own communities? It is here that we see the pillar of society giving way, the tower of our nation beginning to lean because of the fracturing at the foundation. We're living in a divorce-riddled society, where covenant commitments are abandoned when feelings of love wane. Marriage vows are changed from, "till death us do part" to "as long as love shall last." We're living in a society where personal happiness is the chief end, and the hard work of training up children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord is forgotten (Eph. 6:4). Young men aren't trained up to be men like Joseph and Joshua and Caleb, Daniel or John the Baptist, but looking out only for their own interests, objectifying women instead of being chivalrous and respectful and Christ-like. Young women aren't trained in character like Sarah and Ruth, Mary and Elizabeth and the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31, who have the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious (1 Pet. 3:4).

Transition: When the foundation of the family erodes, it is no surprise that the nation reflects and amplifies the erosion. Our Core Value isn't a political one, but a biblical one, that should cause us to consider the Bible's teaching about the family, and to thoughtfully and courageously apply the teaching of the Bible in our families and in our church.

The Need for Careful Consideration of the Bible's Teaching

1. Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25 Here we see God's blueprint for the family. God, as Creator and designer, has graciously given us instruction for what the family is, how it is to be understood, and how the relationships within a family are to work.
 1. God's design of the family began with Adam and Eve, created by God and designed to be together in a one-flesh, lifelong and monogamous relationship. Marriage as a covenant commitment involving one man, one woman, and God, can't be overstressed. Marriage isn't the invention of man, but the creation of God.
 2. Marriage is a complementary relationship. Adam was the head of the family, given the responsibility of following God's commands to work the Garden and not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Adam was to be protector and provider, keeper of the Garden and steward of God's creation. Eve was created as a helper for Adam, equal in dignity and value and honor with Adam, but different than him in role and purpose. The title of "helper" is actually a title of great honor, because God uses it of himself repeatedly in Scripture (**Deut. 33:7; Ps. 70:5; 121:1-2; 124:8; John 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:7**). Eve, under the loving leadership of her husband Adam, was created to be at Adam's side, aiding him so they could fulfill God's cultural mandate to them.

1. This is why the temptation in the Garden wasn't just an individual attack, but an attack on marriage and the family. The serpent went to Eve. Adam was to be her covering, but instead he was sitting idly by and disengaged.
3. Also, the man and his wife were to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" (**1:28**). An essential part of God's creation of the family is the procreation of the family.
2. **Deuteronomy 6:1-9** Having established that God created the family unit with intention, how is that family supposed to keep it's focus and intention? By training, instruction, teaching, spiritual discipleship in the home.
 1. Generational, as this was something from their fathers (**v.3**) and was to be passed to future generations (**vv.2, 7**).
 2. From our study of the New Testament Deacon on Monday mornings we learned and discussed what it is to be a teaching father. Elders and deacons are to be exemplary in this, but the expectation of this is for every Christian father.
 1. **1 Thessalonians 2:11-12** "*For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.*"
 3. **v.6** God's Word is to be upon the hearts of the parents. The heart is the center of the person, the seat of their thoughts and emotions. **How you think, how you act, how you speak, how you respond, it is all to be from a heart Grounded in God's Word. It is as the parents hearts are shaped by God's Word that they are able to rightly shape their children, and the fathers bear the primary responsibility in this. They are to teach diligently, not just when it's convenient or circumstances make it necessary. They are to talk of and teach from God's Word in their home, in public, at night and in the morning. This is a vitally important work.**
 1. Alexander Strauch quotes Elton Trueblood, "We have, in the life of the family, a bigger stake than most of us can ever have in our employment. We can change business associates . . . we can leave a poor job . . . but we cannot change *sons*. If we lose the struggle in our occupational interests, we can try again, but if we lose with our children our loss is terribly and frighteningly *final*."
3. These principles of Strengthening the Family Unit are expanded even further in the NT. In **Ephesians 5:22-6:4** Paul deals at length with marriage and family. This is written to believing husbands and wives, and shows the power of God's redemptive work as it relates to the family. This is the gospel-witness of the family.
 1. **vv.22-24** Paul says that the wife is to submit to her husband. This isn't servitude or subservience, where the wife is inferior to the husband and does whatever he commands. Instead, in obedience to God she acts as a help to her husband like Eve, voicing her thoughts and ideas, and submitting to her husband so long as doing so doesn't require disobeying God.
 2. **vv.25-30** Paul says that the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. How did Christ love the church? He gave up his life to sanctify her, cleanse her, to purify her and present her in splendor, as holy and without blemish. This is how a husband is to love his wife. A husband who is loving his wife in this way will make the submission of the wife a delight rather than an obligation.
 1. **A couple of years ago we bought a used truck after much searching. We made arrangements to drive to Forest Grove, where the truck was, to look it over and test drive it. We were satisfied with the truck, but there were a couple things that didn't work, which we didn't know about until we were there in person. So the time came for negotiation. The cost to make the repairs would be a few hundred dollars, so we offered a few hundred dollars less than his asking price. He then countered our offer, but instead of countering with a higher price, he countered with a lower price than we had offered. We were delighted to accept and we drove the truck home that day.**
 2. **Men, husbands, your leading of your wife should be that way. You should be so giving, so loving, so sacrificial, so interested in her best interests that she is delighted to accept your leadership. Nathan even mentioned it last week, and it bears repeating - think about what you would want for yourself, and do that for your wife.**
 3. **vv.1-4** Paul states that the children's responsibility is obedience (**Acts 12:13** open the door) to their parents, and he reminds them that there is a blessing in this.

1. Paul also tells us something about how the children are to be brought to a place of obedience, and it isn't by harsh rule. The fathers are to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, not provoking their children to anger. The children's obedience should be a glad obedience to loving and teaching fathers and mothers.

The Need for Courageous Application of the Bible's Teaching

1. Because God created Adam and Eve for each other, put them in the Garden to work it together, and united them in the one-flesh relationship, this means that we're going to courageously stand for a biblical view of marriage. Earlier this year we elders published a statement regarding marriage, gender, and sexuality, and our position as a church. But we need to also live out our beliefs, doing the work of treasuring our own marriages.
2. We're going to continue to emphasize the need for men to lead in their homes and in the church. Even this morning, as we see a number of men absent because of military obligations, we recognize that a lack of men has a tangible effect on the church; there's a noticeable void. **Men, let's not let a week pass where we're not checking in with each other, asking about Scripture reading, prayer, questions about how the family is doing, and how we can be praying for one another.**
3. Similarly, this means that we're going to continue and work to increase in our valuation and appreciation of the women, wives, and mothers God has blessed us with. To celebrate the special gifts they bring and their vital contribution to the church and the home, and to encourage them to serve and grow in the areas of ministry God has for them.
4. This means we're going to continue to set a biblical standard for the family and the church. It probably goes without saying that the Bible's standard is a high one, and none of us will ever be able to say we've achieved it. But that won't keep us from giving it a grace-driven effort, to work toward this and continue to grow in this. And *when* we fail (not if), we need to be gracious toward each other, forgiving one another and encouraging each other and seeking to build one another up. Let's make this, not the pointing out of faults and failures, but offers of encouragement and help and care and prayer.
5. This means that the structure of our Sunday morning will be purposed to help strengthen families instead of weaken them. Like any strengthening exercises we do, it typically involves some discomfort in the process. But we believe it's valuable and worthwhile. We don't want families split up as soon as they walk through the doors here, and we want to be purposeful and give you the opportunity to be training up your children to hear and receive the preaching of God's Word and to participate in the worship service. (Note **Eph. 6:1-3** addressed directly to children)

Conclusion: Our battle is not against flesh and blood. There is a spiritual battle taking place. **God created the family as a pillar of society and a witness to the gospel.** *Because the family is a pillar of society, our enemy seeks to undermine, deceive, and destroy the family.* Church family, let's work together in this Core Value to Strengthen the Family Unit, to build strong families, and so testify to the grace of God at work among us, to the glory of God.

Family



Table Talk

November 6, 2016

GOD'S TRUTH

God created the family as a pillar of society and a witness to the gospel!

Family Discussion

1. Do you know what a family is?
That may seem like a simple question, but it is a very important one.
2. How important is the family to God? Why?
3. Who you are today, and who you will become as an adult, is uniquely shaped by the foundation of your family. Through instruction, training, and spiritual discipleship your beliefs and character are developed. How has your family shaped you?
4. How important is it then for your family to be kept strong in the Lord? How can our families be kept strong?
5. What lasting effects will there be from a strong godly family?
6. Spend time in prayer for the strengthening of your family through humble obedience to our mighty God.

Key Verse

"And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 ESV)

TABLE READING

Lead your kids into God's Word...

SCRIPTURE MEMORY:

DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7



1. GENESIS 1:26-28, 2:18-25
2. DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9, 1 TIMOTHY 3:2-5; EPHESIANS 5:22-6:4
4. DEUTERONOMY 6:6-9; JOSHUA 24:15; EPHESIANS 5:15-17; 1 THESSALONIANS 2:11-12
5. MATTHEW 5:13-16; EPHESIANS 6:13; 2 THESSALONIANS 2:15

"AND THESE WORDS THAT I COMMAND YOU TODAY SHALL BE ON YOUR HEART. YOU SHALL TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY TO YOUR CHILDREN, AND SHALL TALK OF THEM WHEN YOU SIT IN YOUR HOUSE, AND WHEN YOU WALK BY THE WAY, AND WHEN YOU LIE DOWN, AND WHEN YOU RISE. YOU SHALL BIND THEM AS A SIGN ON YOUR HAND, AND THEY SHALL BE AS FRONTLETS BETWEEN YOUR EYES. YOU SHALL WRITE THEM ON THE DOORPOSTS OF YOUR HOUSE AND ON YOUR GATES." - DEUTERONOMY 6:6-9 (ESV)